

# SW4SB3: Critical Child Welfare: From Theory to Practice I

* January 6 – April 7, 2020, Wednesdays, 2:30 – 5:20 p.m.
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# Course Overview

## Course Description:

This is an advanced course that helps you develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to undertake child welfare work. Attention is also paid to you developing an understanding of the social and political factors that shape the way practice is imagined and delivered.

This advanced child welfare course (SW 4SB3) builds on child welfare courses SW 4W03 and SW 4SA3. These three courses, and the interconnected field placements, form the school’s Preparing for Critical Child Welfare Pathway (PCPCW).

You must complete this course (SW 4SA3) with a minimal average grade of C+, and have instructor approval, to progress to the final Pathway course (SW 4SB3).

## Course Objectives:

At the end of this course you should:

* Have a critical and in-depth understanding of the knowledge child protection work is based upon, and to be able to appropriately apply this knowledge
* Understand and demonstrate the practice skills and attitudes needed in child protection work
* Understand your attitudes, the ways other people experience your attitudes and work (especially when under stress), and to adjust as necessary
* Work as a team member, including knowing how to support others, how to ask for support for yourself, and how to critically reflect on your role, contribution, and performance as a team member
* Work under multiple forms of pressure
* Recognize and constructively work with conflict
* Investigate, interview, assess, and work collaboratively in cases of child abuse and neglect
* Recognise issues of risk and be able to formulate safety plans
* Address child protection cases with an open mind and fluid thinking
* Recognise how every way you think is also a way of not thinking
* Work anti-oppressively in a child protection setting

## Course Format

This course makes extensive use of problem-based learning, role-play/case simulations, and reflexivity. This problem-based learning model informs course readings and assignments—as a result there are no pre-set readings in this course—instead you are presented with child welfare practice puzzles and you are expected to seek out and critically engage with the literature, research, and other forms of knowledge needed to explore and solve these puzzles. During this process you should expect to read between 2-4 articles a week, plus reading and engagement with media reports, tweets, and other sources, so that you develop and maintain an up-to-date understanding of child welfare knowledge, events and discourses. Through these processes, the course dynamically matches your (and other students in the class) current child welfare practice knowledge, skills and attitudes with those known to be at the leading edge of critical practice.

## Required Texts:

Readings are identified and sought out by you and other students in this class as a part of the course problem-based learning approach.

# Course Requirements/Assignments

## Requirements Overview and Deadlines

| Description | Due | Value |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 0. Learning portfolio (not graded) | N/A | N/A |
| 1. Present knowledge project |  | 10% |
| 2. Readings recommendations & review |  | 10% |
| 3. Data project |  | 20% |
| 4. How to do child welfare well” paper (x2) |  | 40% |
| 5. Interview on understanding child welfare and doing it well |  | 10% |
| 6. Participation | Ongoing | 10% |

Please note:

Assignment 5: is the final assignment for purposes of the Late Withdrawal Policy.

## Requirement/Assignment Details

### 0. Development of Learning Portfolio (not graded)

You should be tracking your own learning and development through this advanced course (SW 4SA3) and the subsequent advanced course (SW 4SB3). This tracking is not graded, but is important, because where you and other students in the class are in this development will be constantly used to shape the course content and the ways we engage with it—so pay attention to this topic—because this enables the course to be customized to your learning needs.

1. Presenting knowledge project

Working as a member of your knowledge project small from last semester, present the knowledge you developed. You will be evaluated based on the ways you make this knowledge relevant to the field, and also your understanding about the strengths and limitations of the knowledge you developed.

2. readings recommendations and review

Select one week to find, recommend and review for class readings on that week’s topic. Share one-week before the class two readings on the class topic, readings should be either seminal or published in the past 3-years. Take 10-minites of the class time to present a critical appraisal of these readings and respond to class questions. Grading will be based on the relevance of the readings, a sound critical appraisal, and your ability to respond to questions.

### 3. Data project

Examine service or outcome trends in data available at your placement agency, compare these with provincial and national data, examine what research has to say about these issues. Prepare a paler that describes and explains the local treads, contextualise these in the context of provincial and national trends, and then draw on research to better explain and interpret this trend. Where appropriate make evidence informed decisions about how issues that cause or arise from the trend are or need to be addressed. More details will be provided in class.

### 4. How to do child welfare well

Write two papers on some aspect of your learning about how to do child welfare well. Back up your arguments and pay special attention to how such “doing well” will work or not work in specific situations and for specific populations. Critically engage with evidence for and against your position. Do not feel obliged to stick to a single position, but instead engage with nuances and complexities. More details will be provided in class.

### 5. Interview on understanding child welfare and doing it well

A panel of experts will interview you as a group on your understanding of child welfare and how to do it well. The panel composition is to be determined but will most likely be made up of CAS Directors of Service or Executive Directors, service users, and policy makers. Grading will be 50% as a group, and 50% your individual contribution to the interview (not individual contribution means speaking but also listening well, staying on topic, and making space for others to speak).

6. Participation

Learning in this course requires exposure to, and interaction with, ideas, media and exercises presented in the classroom. Attendance and participation are therefore essential. Participation is graded on taking part in an active and constructive manner and enabling others to do the same. It also involves engaging with literature and knowledge related to the course and sharing these with others, along with taking part in graded and non-graded group activities. If you anticipate difficulty attending and participating, please speak with the instructor.

# Assignment Submission and Grading

## Form and Style

In this course there are no traditionally written papers, but there is written work. Ensure that all your written work contains a title page with your name, student number and e-mail address. Number all pages (except title page & do not count title page in the number count). Referencing must be in accordance with the current edition of the American Psychological Association Publication (APA) Manual.

Throughout the course you are expected to make use of and cite appropriate sources, which can include Indigenous [oral or written], professional and social science literature, or other relevant sources etc. When submitting any written assignment, you should keep a spare copy.

## Avenue to Learn

This course relies on Avenue to Learn <http://avenue.mcmaster.ca>. You should be familiar with this system before starting the course. When first logging into this system, please set up a “profile” and upload a profile photo. Uploading a photo is very helpful so that the instructor and others in the class can quickly learn names. If you have privacy concerns, there is no need to complete a profile or post a photo.

Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss with the course instructor.

## Submitting Assignments & Grading

All written assignments are to be uploaded to Avenue to Learn. Instructions will be given in class.

## Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. In this course, papers will be submitted and returned, and grades communicated, in electronic format via Avenue to Learn.

## Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

## Course modification policy

The instructors reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. If modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

# Student Responsibilities

Adult learning principles are employed; you are expected to think critically and be self-reflective. It is anticipated that you and other students will contribute to class learning by bringing, sharing and exploring their own ideas and by helping to make the class a place for others to do the same, and by contributing to the creation of a respectful environment conducive to learning.

You should read material in preparation for class, attend class on time and remain for the full duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class, students are to return from the break on time.

In the past, student and faculty have found that non-course related use of laptop computers and hand-held electronic devices during class to be distracting and at times disruptive. Consequently, during class, students are expected to only use such devices for taking notes and other activities directly related to the lecture or class activity taking place.

Please check with the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices in the classroom.

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes. If you anticipate difficulty with this, please speak with the instructor. Missing a substantial number of classes often results in essential course requirements not being met (these must be met to pass the course). Students who are close to missing 20% of classes must contact the instructor to discuss.

## Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

## Authenticity/Plagiarism Detection

In this course, we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). To see the [Turnitin.com Policy](file:///C:\Users\Lorna\Documents\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\J07G1XFK\www.mcmaster.ca\academicintegrity)

## Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicAccommodation-StudentsWithDisabilities.pdf) policy.

## Accessibility Statement

The School of Social Work recognizes that people learn and express their knowledge in different ways. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessibility in the classroom, and working towards classrooms that welcome diverse learners. If you have accessibility concerns or want to talk about your learning needs, please be in touch with the course instructor.

## Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students requiring a RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](https://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca/current-students/riso) about how to request accommodation.

## E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, they may not reply.

## Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

### McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

### Extensions and Incomplete Courses

Extensions

All instructors understand that life situations sometimes make it very difficult to hand in an assignment on the date it is due. If you need more time to complete an assignment, talk with your instructor – in advance of the assignment deadline! Once you and your instructor have agreed on a new due date, it is your responsibility to submit your assignment on time. If you find yourself unable to meet deadlines in more than one course, please reach out to Tammy Maikawa, Administrator ([millet@mcmaster.ca](mailto:millet@mcmaster.ca) ) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair ([prestosl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:prestosl@mcmaster.ca) ). We are here to support you to think about options (such as reducing your course load) that can take the stress off and contribute to your success in the program overall.

Incomplete courses

If you are not able to complete all of your assignments by the end of term, you have the option of contacting the instructor to request an Incomplete (INC) on the course. If the instructor agrees, (taking into account the amount of outstanding coursework and the time it will likely take to complete), the instructor will enter the grade you have so far in the course (the default grade) and the course will appear in Mosaic as INC (incomplete).

The School’s requirements for completing courses depend on a) the nature of the course (whether it is a foundation course\*, or a social and political context course) and b) when you are hoping to start placement. For example, a student who has an incomplete in a foundation course cannot start placement. Please see the [Policy on Extensions and Incompletes in the BSW Program](https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/resources/general-school-policies/policy-on-extensions-and-incompletes-october-2017.pdf) for more details.

At approximately 52-60 days after the end of term, the Mosaic system will automatically change an INC to the default grade. Depending on the default grade, this might affect your standing or progress in the program.

*As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your progress in the program, please connect with Tammy Maikawa, Administrator (*[*millet@mcmaster.ca*](mailto:millet@mcmaster.ca) *) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (*[*prestosl@mcmaster.ca*](mailto:prestosl@mcmaster.ca)*)*

# Course Weekly Topics and Readings

| DATE | CONTENT (schedule and sequence subject to change) |
| --- | --- |
| Jan 8 | 1/ Review of course content and development of learning plans and assignments |
| Jan 15 | 2/ Presentation of knowledge projects |
| Jan 22 | 3/ Doing Child Welfare Well: Views from Government (guests from Ontario Ombudsman’s Office) |
| Jan 29 | 4/ Doing Child Welfare Well: Views from Government (guest from Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services) |
| Feb 5 | 5/ Forensic interviewing (guest of a specialist in this area) |
| Feb 12 | 6/ Doing Child Welfare Well: Views of mothers (guests of mothers with CAS involvement) |
| Feb 19 | READING WEEK (no class) |
| Feb 26 | 7/ Re-visioning Child Protection (Online guest Dr. Abul Khan child welfare specialist from Melbourne, Australia)  Khan, A. K., Miles. D., Francis., A. (2018). Re-visioning Child Protection Management Embedded in Family Empowerment. Children Australia, *Children Australia 43*(3), p. 208-216.  Khan, A. (2015). Child protection: Need for family focused approach. Social Work Journal, 3 (2), 136–147.  Platt, D., (2008) Care or Control? The Effects of Investigations And Initial Assessments on The Social Worker–Parent Relationship. *Journal of Social Work Practice: Psychotherapeutic Approaches in Health, Welfare and the Community, 22*(3), P. 301-315, DOI: 10.1080/02650530802396643 |
| Mar 4 | 8/ Interviewing children (Guests: Children) |
| Mar 11 | 9/ Clinical Supervision (Guests: CAS Supervisors & Field Instructors) |
| Mar 18 | 10/ Supporting children & carers in Foster Care & Kin Care (Guests children’s workers and resource workers) |
| Mar 25 | 11/ Gaps in Child Welfare |
| Apr 1 | 12/ Group Interview (Guests: Directors of Service, Executive Directors, & Service Users) |
| Apr 8 | 13/ Course conclusion |