

**Course Syllabus**  
**Southeast Missouri State University**

**College of Health and Human Services**

**Course: Child Advocacy II: Professional and System Responses to  
Child Maltreatment**

**Course Number: HS 401**  
**New: Fall 2013**

**I. Catalog Description and Credit Hours**

Systems approach to professional responsiveness to allegations of child maltreatment. Emphasis on child crime identification, investigation, and prosecution. 3 Credit Hours

**II. Prerequisites:** HS301 or by consent of instructor.

**III. Objectives**

- A. Understand and interpret the criteria for alleged maltreatment.
- B. Explain the difference in system responses between civil and criminal proceedings
- C. Identify relevant legal statutes, the case work process, and potential complications.
- D. Explain the key components of the investigative process and the roles of each member of the multidisciplinary team.
- E. Demonstrate beginning interviewing skills essential to child maltreatment investment and prosecution.
- F. Identify the challenges associated with child witnesses (i.e., recantation, suggestibility, memory, and the impact of multiple interviews).
- G. Explore perpetrator issues and characteristics
- H. Discuss how demographic factors (i.e., race, class, sexual orientation, religion, and gender) might influence the investigative process

**IV. Student Learning Outcomes**

- A. Describe key components of the investigative process
- B. Analyze the criteria for alleged maltreatment
- C. Identify perpetrator issues and characteristics

**V. Expectations of Students:**

- A. Attend class and actively participate in discussions and classroom activities.
- B. Consistently be familiar with, and conversant on all reading as assigned;

- C. Complete all assignments by the due dates. Assignments may include observing relevant court proceedings.
- D. Submit written assignments when due;

Additional expectations may be specified by individual instructors.

## **VI. Course Content**

I. Course Overview	3
a. Intro to child maltreatment systems	
b. Ethical, legal, moral and professional obligations	
II. Initial System Response to Child Abuse	3
a. Criminal and civil response to child abuse	
b. State and federal legislation	
c. Review of the role and laws related to mandated reporters	
III. Systemic and Coordinated Responses to Child Maltreatment	3
a. Overview of different systems involved in addressing child maltreatment	
b. Health care and mental health systems	
c. Role of children’s advocacy centers	
IV. Forensic & Clinical Response to Child Maltreatment	3
a. Confidentiality and privilege in child abuse cases	
V. Understanding and Practicing Cultural Diversity in Child Maltreatment Investigations	3
a. Race	
b. Religion and ethnicity	
c. Gender and sexual orientation	
d. Class and socioeconomic status	
VI. Working with Non-Offending Parents of Child Victims of Abuse	3
VII. Forensic Interview Protocols: A Comparison	3
a. Overview of forensic interviewing protocols	
b. Preparing for the interview	
c. Interview guide	
VIII. Observe forensic interview and practice interview stages	1
a. Review forensic interviewing protocols	
b. Establishing rapport/nonverbal communication	
c. Environmental considerations	
d. Relationship between child and interviewer	
IX. Roles & Responsibilities of the Medical Professional	3
a. Medical providers – who can be involved?	
b. Medical evidence of child maltreatment	
c. Reporting and treatment issues	
X. Controversial Issues in Investigations, Interviews and Prosecution of Child Abuse	6
a. Documentation of interviews	
b. Use of anatomical diagrams	
c. Use of anatomical dolls	
d. Interview instructions and truth-lie discussions	
e. Child witnesses in court and courtroom modifications	
f. Child witness testimony via closed-circuit television	

XI. The Dynamics of Child Sexual Abuse	6
a. Challenges to disclosure	
b. Child Sexual Abuse Accommodation Syndrome	
c. Allegations made during divorce/custody situations	
XII. Communicating with Children	3
a. Question types in the interview	
b. Linguistics and questioning children	
c. Establishing a narrative	
d. Clarification questions	
e. Memory and suggestibility in the interview	
f. Open-ended questioning	
g. Alternative hypotheses/explanations	
h. Introducing topics	
i. Impact of multiple interviews	
XIII. Adult and Juvenile Sex Offenders - Treatment and Consequences	2
a. Defenses used	
b. Characteristics of perpetrators	
c. Treatment vs. punishment of sex offenders	
d. Differences between adult and juvenile offenders	
XIV. Courtroom Procedures and Roles of Criminal Justice Professionals	3
a. Charging decisions	
b. Plea negotiations	
c. Pre trial motions	
d. Defense and prosecution approaches	

**VII. Textbooks**

**Primary**

American Prosecutor's Research Institute (APRI) (2004). *Investigation and Prosecution of Child Maltreatment* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

**Supplemental:**

Brittain, C. R.; & Hunt, D. E.,(Eds). (2004). *Helping in Child Protective Services: A Competency-Based Casework Handbook* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Crossen-Tower, C. (2014). *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect* (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Boston: Pearson.

**VIII. Basis for Student Evaluation**

Exams/Quizzes	50%
Course Project	25%
Additional assignments	25%

90 – 100 %	A	60 – 69%	D
80- 89%	B	below 60%	F
70-79%	C		

**IX. Academic Policy Statement**

Students will be expected to abide by the **University Policy for Academic Honesty** regarding plagiarism and academic honesty. Refer to <http://www6.semo.edu/judaffairs/code.html>.

**X. Students With Disabilities Statement**

If a student has a special need addressed by the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** and requires materials in an alternative format, please notify the instructor at the beginning of the course. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate special needs. Refer to <http://www.semo.edu/ds>.

**XI. Academic Integrity Statement**

Questions, comments or requests regarding this course or program should be taken to the instructor. Unanswered questions or unresolved issues involving this class may be taken to: