I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is the introductory course into child advocacy. This course covers the history, comparative perspectives, the legal framework, responses to child maltreatment, the skills necessary to do the work, other pertinent issues pertaining to child maltreatment and child advocacy, and the future. The field of child maltreatment is fraught with controversy. Much of the class focuses on these controversies. The approach of the course will be from a variety of diverse, professional perspectives including the perspectives of prosecution versus defense work. The course is designed for students majoring in criminal justice, education, social work, sociology, psychology, nursing, paralegal, or other areas where knowledge of child maltreatment and advocating for children might be necessary. Much of the work will be hands-on.

II. RATIONALE:

Professionals working in fields of education, nursing, criminal justice and human services routinely interact with children and families. Increasingly, professionals are expected to recognize and to effectively intervene into suspected child abuse and neglect situations. But such intervention requires understanding and critical analysis. This course will assist students to evaluate the critical elements of suspected abuse and neglect and prepare them to be competent practitioners.

V. INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A: Understand the historical trends in child maltreatment and child advocacy.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
A-1: Explain the history of the treatment of children
A-2: Compare U.S. history with other industrialized nations
A-3: Explain how social welfare policies related to children have developed

GOAL B: Understand the philosophical underpinnings of responses to children and child maltreatment.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
B-1: Analyze different beliefs through time and culture
B-2: Discuss how the responses to child maltreatment is thus impacted

GOAL C: Understand values and perceptions and the impact those could have on practice.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
C-1: Recognize their values and beliefs and gain insight on how they may interfere with objectivity when working with a client
C-2: Analyze case studies to review and problem-solve options using sound reasoning
C-3: Distinguish between actual fact, and interpretation of an incident offered as fact
C-4: Evaluate case decisions based on strengths, weaknesses and possible biases.

GOAL D: Explain both civil and criminal laws involved in child maltreatment in selected states.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
D-1: Be aware of child maltreatment laws
D-2: Analyze the effectiveness of the laws and the unexpected outcomes.
D-3: Explain various legal and political perspectives related to child maltreatment and understand opposing positions

GOAL E: Become knowledgeable about the complexities of working in the field of child maltreatment.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
E-1: Understand how to identify and respond to child maltreatment
E-2: Be able to analyze case studies using evidence-based research
E-3: Practice the skills necessary to work in child related fields

GOAL F: Identify the multi-disciplinary team members responsible for investigating and responding to child abuse and maltreatment

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
F-1: Understand the roles of the various professionals working in the field and their different world views
F-2: Discuss how various professionals treat situations differently based on their professional socialization
F-3: Understand how to work effectively with individuals from different professions.

GOAL G: Use appropriate written and oral communication skills.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
G-1: Communicate information orally using acceptable standard American English grammar
G-2: Present written information using standard APA style