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412.648.8714

## Adoption and Foster Care Mini-Elective

Spring 2017

<u>Course Dates:</u>	March 7, 14, April 4, 11 Tuesdays, 7:00-9:00 PM
<u>Maximum Students:</u>	15
<u>Class Year:</u>	MS1
<u>Course Director:</u>	Sarah Springer, M.D. Marianne Novy, Ph.D.
<u>Contact Information:</u>	Marianne Novy, Ph.D. <a href="mailto:mnovy@pitt.edu">mnovy@pitt.edu</a>
<u>Registration:</u>	Betsy Nero, Office of Medical Education <a href="mailto:betsy@medschool.pitt.edu">betsy@medschool.pitt.edu</a>

### Description:

This course will deal with health care, medical and mental health needs, and developmental issues in adoptive and foster families. A family where (some of) the children arrived in another way than birth to the parents may deal with lack of medical history, a past of trauma and neglect, questions about secrecy and stigma, and identity issues, sometimes complicated by racial or national difference. This course will help pediatricians and doctors in family practice provide support before and after children's arrival and through their growth, and will help other doctors when their patients are adoptees (approximately 5% of the US population) or were formerly cared for by foster families. It will provide viewpoints from medical and professionals, adoptees, and adoptive parents, using guest speakers and film clips. There will be a lot of time for discussion and Q and A.

### Objectives:

1. To help develop clinical skills for working with a large and often misunderstood minority.
2. To develop greater understanding of adoption and foster care in biological, psychological, and social context.
3. To gain awareness of community, print, and electronic resources, for further understanding and referral to patients.

### Requirements:

Attendance at all four sessions and submission of a one-page email response to the faculty shortly after each of the first three

### Pre-Requisites:

None. If there is room, students from other health profession schools may be accepted

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **ADOPTION AND FOSTER CARE**

**March 7, 14, April 4, 11**

Day of week and time of day: Tuesday 7:00-9:00 pm

Class location: Scaife Hall—Rooms 510 and 511

#### **Course Director(s):**

Marianne Novy, PhD.

Sarah Springer, M.D.

**Participating Faculty:** Same

#### **Course Objectives:**

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**Texts:** No books but occasionally handouts will be used

**Week One** – Overview of medical, mental health, developmental issues for children in adoptive families, foster care, kinship care; language

**Week Two** – Medical issues, including mental health; effects of neglect and trauma; new arrival and first year issues; visitor Kelly Ryan-Schmidt (social worker at TRAC),

**Week Three** – Developmental and social issues, including racial identity and issues faced by transracial adoptees/families, changing understanding of adoption at different ages, school issues, issues about medical history, searching, etc. ; visitor Liberty Ferda (domestic transracial adoptee)

**Week Four** – Summary/wrap-up: successes and long-term needs after growing up in adoption/foster care/kinship care; panel with adopted adults ( Libby, David Schoenewolf, others (some young), adoptive parents, e.g. Ali Patterson

**Course Requirements:** Attendance at all four sessions and submission of a one-page email response to the faculty after at least one of the early sessions