

# **WURWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

## **YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

### **SPIRITUALITY IN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

**SWK 6689**

**FALL 2019**

#### **Course Description**

Spirituality is an important aspect of human experience and development. Spirituality reflects a holistic perspective for social work practice that addresses the interrelationship between spirituality and the biological, psychological and social dimensions of human experience. "Social work scholars usually distinguish between spirituality and religion. Spirituality relates to a universal and fundamental aspect of what it is to be human – to search for a sense of meaning, purpose, and moral framework for relating with self, others and the ultimate reality. In this sense, spirituality may express itself through religious forms, or it may be independent of them. Religion is an institutionalized pattern of beliefs, behaviors and experienced, oriented toward spiritual concerns, and shared by a community and transmitted over time in traditions" (Canda & Furman, 1999)

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:

- 1      **UNDERSTAND THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SPIRITUALITY**
- 2      Understand ethical principles for spiritually sensitive social work
- 3      Recognize spiritual diversity for social work practice
- 4      Create a spiritually sensitive context for practice
- 5      Develop spiritually sensitive practice skills
- 6      Experience meditation as a spiritual practice
- 7      Recognize the role of religion in social work practice
- 8      Understand a holistic perspective of social work practice that connects the biological, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions of human experience.

#### **PLAGIARISM**

Students should remember that the school will not condone plagiarism in any form and will sanction acts of plagiarism. A student who presents someone else's work as his or her own work is stealing from the authors or persons who did the original thinking and writing. Plagiarism occurs when a student directly copies another's work without citation; and when a student paraphrases major aspects of another's work without citation; and when a student combines the work of different authors into a new statement without reference to those authors. It is also plagiarism to use the ideas and/or work of another student and present them as your own. It is not plagiarism to formulate your own presentation of an idea or concept as a reaction to someone else's work; however, the work to which you are reacting should be discussed and appropriately cited. Any student who can be shown to have plagiarized any part of any assignment in this course will automatically **FAIL** the course and will be referred to the Associate Dean for disciplinary action that may include expulsion.

#### **HIPAA ALERT**

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work, will need to be de-identified. What

this means is that any information that would allow another to identify the person needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if it will not allow for identification.

### **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who are enrolled in this course and who will be requesting documented disability-related accommodations are asked to make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services, Rochelle Kohn, Beren Campus, 917-326-4828, [rkohn1@yu.edu](mailto:rkohn1@yu.edu), Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, [akelsen@yu.edu](mailto:akelsen@yu.edu), during the first week of class. After approval for accommodations is granted, please submit your accommodations letter to Disability Services Office immediately.

### **E-RES (Electronic Reserve)**

Most of the articles mentioned in the curriculum are available on electronic reserve [E-RES]. You can access the full text articles from your home or from a university computer at no charge.

### **How do I Use E-RES?**

1. Go to the library's online resources page: [http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online\\_resources.asp](http://www.yu.edu/libraries/online_resources.asp)
2. Click on E-RES. If you are off-campus, at this point you will be prompted for your Off Campus Access Service login and password.
3. Click on "Search E-RES" or on "Course Index," and search by instructor's name, department, course name, course number, document title, or document author. [all Foundations courses will be listed under Levy, the sequence chair]
4. Click on the link to your course.
5. Enter the password given to you by your instructor.
6. Locate and click on the item you wish to view. Titles beginning with "A", "An", or "The" are alphabetized under "A" and "T" respectively.
7. When the article text or book record appears on the screen, you can print, email, or save it to disk.

To view documents that are in pdf format, the computer you are using must have Adobe Acrobat Reader software. You can download it FREE at [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html)

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

Learning will occur through a variety of experiences and methods such as lectures, class discussion, film, meditation practice and feedback.

### **GRADING CRITERIA**

Classroom attendance and participation will be factored into the overall grade. Written assignments will constitute 75% of the grade. Class participation will constitute 25%.

The following criteria will be used for grading: completeness of the assignment; clarity of thought and communication; correctness of the language; ability to apply course content and readings to the assignments; appropriateness and fullness of documentation; evidence of interest in learning from the written assignments and classroom discussions.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

Learning Objectives: 1-4

### **A. WEEKLY LOG**

The purpose of the log is to record weekly, your observations, reactions and experiences with:

1. Ideas from the readings on spirituality and classroom discussion.
2. Meditation Practice. Note questions you have. Identify pleasant and unpleasant experiences. Indicate what you observed/learned about yourself.
3. Experience with other spiritual practices, such as: contributing to others, making time for connectedness, being compassionate and developing a peaceful mind.
4. Writing down your goals.

Each week select an article from the assigned readings or chapter from a text. Discuss the key concepts and ideas and what meaning they have for you.

Learning Objectives: 1-2,5-8

### **B. FINAL ASSIGNMENT**

Choose one of the topics that deals with Spirituality in Social Work Practice. Discuss the following questions:

1. What major understandings have you acquired about the subject?
2. What impact has this knowledge had for you personally and professionally?
3. How might you apply what you have learned to your practice?

Draw upon the required readings as well as references from the bibliography. Feel free to include other sources.

## **TEXTS FOR THE COURSE**

Canda, E.R. & Furman, L.D., (2010, second edition) *Spiritual diversity in social work practice; The heart of helping*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013, updated version) *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. New York: Bantam Books.

## **UNIT I-II Understanding the Meaning and Significance of Spirituality and Religion**

Covers Learning Objectives: 1,2,4,7

### **Learning Themes**

1. Defining spirituality.
2. Compassion the heart of spirituality.
3. Ethical principles for spiritually sensitive social work.
4. An open conceptualization of spirituality.
5. Relationship between religion and mental health.
6. Benefits of religious faith.
- 7.

### **Required Readings:**

Canda, E.R., & Furman, L.D. (2010). *Spiritual diversity in social work practice: The heart of helping*. (Chapters 1 & 2).

Lardner, L. (2004). *The lost art of compassion*. San Francisco: Harper Collins. (Chapter 3).

Sermabeikian, P. (1994) Our clients, ourselves: the spiritual perspective and social work practice. *Social Work*, 39, 180-183.

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Canda, E.R., & Furman, L.D. (2010). *Spiritual diversity in social work practice; The heart of helping*. (Chapter 4),

- Cnaan, R.A., Boddie, S.C., Danzig, R. A. (2004). Teaching about organized religion in social work: Lessons and challenges, *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work*, 34 (3) 67-84.
- Cooper, D.A., *Three gates to meditation practice: A personal journey into Sufism, Buddhism, and Judaism*. Woodstock, Vermont: Skylight Paths Publishing.

### **UNIT III     Spiritual Diversity For Social Work Practice**

Covers Learning Objectives: 2,3,4

#### Learning Themes

1. Spiritual diversity in the United States
2. Connections between spirituality and social work
3. Ethnic, gender and sexual orientation diversity and spirituality
4. Religious traditions and social work practice.

#### Required Readings:

- Canda, E.R., & Furman, L.D., (2010). *Spiritual diversity in social work practice: The heart of helping*. (Chapters 3 & 4)
- Faver, C.A., (2004). Relational spirituality and social caregiving. *Social Work*, 49(2), 241-249
- Haight, W.L., (1998). Gathering the Spirit at First Baptist Church: Spirituality as a protective factor in the lives of African-American children, *Social Work*, 43, 213-221.

### **Unit IV     Creating A Spirituality Sensitive Context for Practice**

Covers Learning Objective: 2-4, 5-6, 8

#### Learning Themes

1. The helping relationship and process
2. A holistic approach to social work practice
3. Understanding and assessing spiritual development
4. Ethical guidelines for spirituality-based practice.

#### Required Readings:

- Canda, E.R., & Furman, L.D., (2010). *Spirituality diversity in social work practice: The Heart of helping*. (Chapters 6,7& 8).
- Hodge, D. R., (2001). Spiritual Assessment: A review of major qualitative methods and a new framework for assessing spirituality. *Social Work Vol.46*(3), 203-211.

### **Unit V     Spiritually Sensitive Practice Skills and Techniques**

Covers Learning Objectives 5-6,8

#### Learning Themes

1. Examples of spiritually oriented helping techniques
2. The practice of mindfulness: Paying attention
3. The power of breathing
4. Being in your body: the body scan
5. Sitting meditation
6. Loving Kindness
7. Cautions and indications

#### Required Readings

- Aponte, H. (2003). The soul of the marriage and family therapist. *Family Therapy Magazine*, 2(5), 14-19.
- Becvar, D. S. (2003). Utilizing spiritual resources as an adjunct to family therapy. *Family Therapy Magazine*, 2(5), 31-33.
- Canda, E.R., & Furman, L.D., (2010). *Spiritual diversity in social work practice: The heart of helping*. (Chapter 9).

- Kabat-Zinn, J., (2013). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress pain and illness*. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, 9.
- Salzberg, S. (2002). *Loving kindness: The revolutionary art of happiness*. Boston: Shambala. (Chapters, 2, 3)
- Sheridan, S. J., (2000). Honoring angels in my path: Spirituality sensitive group work with persons who are incarcerated. In Abels, S.L., (2000). *Spirituality in social work practice: Narratives for professional helping*. Denver, Love Publishing Company.
- Westbrooks, K. (2003). Spirituality and therapy: insights from intimate conversations. *Family Therapy Magazine*, 2(5) 20-25.

## UNIT VI      **Mindfulness and Meditation**

Covers Learning Objectives: 1-4, 5-6, 8

### Learning Themes

1.      The nature of mindfulness.
  2.      Benefits of mindfulness.
  3.      Attitudinal foundation of mindfulness practice.
  4.      Cultivating mindfulness in everyday life.
  5.      Mindfulness and social work practice.
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6.      Historical roots of meditation
  7.      Varieties of meditation
  8.      Common characteristics of meditation
  9.      Capacities learned in meditation
  10.     Potential of meditation for the social work practitioner and client
  11.     Practice of mindfulness meditation
  12.     Cautions and contraindications to meditation practice

### Required Readings:

- Borysenko, J. (1987). *Minding the body; mending the mind*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co. (Chap. 4, Mindfulness and the discovery of the self).
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living*. (Chap. 2, The foundation of mindfulness practice: Attitudes and commitment; chap. 8, A day of mindfulness).
- Toll, E. (1999). *The power of now*. Movato, CA: New World Library. (Chap. 1, You are not your mind), pp. 9-26.
- Kabat-Zinn, J., (2013). *Full catastrophe living: using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. (Chapters 3, 4 & 7).
- Keefe, T., (1986). Meditation and social work treatment: In F.J. Turner (ed). *Social Work Treatment: Interlocking theoretical approaches*. New York: The Free Press.
- Logan, S.L., (2000). Meditation as a toll that links the personal and the professional. In Abels, S.L. (Ed.). *Spirituality in social work practice: Narratives for professional helping*. Denver, Love Publishing Co.
- Hanh, T.N., (1991). *Peace in every step: The path of mindfulness in everyday life*. New York: Bantam Books. (pp. 5-47).
- Borysenko, J. (1987). *Minding the body; mending the mind*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co. (Chap. 2, Getting back into control).

## Unit VII Mind / Body Connections

Covers Learning Objectives: 1-2, 6

### Learning Themes

1. Dualism between mind and body.
2. Focusing on the whole person.
3. Interdependence of physical and mental health.
4. The psychology of positive emotions.

### Required Readings:

- Borysenko, V. (1987). *Minding the body, mending the mind*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company. (Chap. 1, The science of healing: Chap. 7, Healing the emotions).
- Pert, C.B. (1997). *Molecules of emotions: the science behind mind-body medicine*. New York: Simon & Shuster. (Chap. 9, The psychosomatic network: A concluding lecture).
- Langer, E. J. (1989). *Mindfulness*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Books. (chap. 10, Minding matters: Mindfulness and health).
- Siegel, B.S. (1986) *Love medicine & miracles*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers. (Chap. 2, The healing Partnership).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bennett-Goleman, T. (2001). *Emotional alchemy: How the mind can heal the heart*. New York: Harmony Books.
- Benson, H. (1975). *The relaxation response*. New York: Avon Books.
- Borysenko, J. (1987). *Minding the body, mending the mind*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- Bullis, R. K. (1996). *Spirituality in social work practice*. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.
- Bullis, R. K. (2001). *Sacred calling, secular accountability; Law and ethics in complementary and spiritual counseling*. Philadelphia, PA: Brunner Routledge
- Dass, R., Gorman, P. (1985). *How can I help? Stories and reflections on service*. New York: Alfred. A. Knopf.
- Epstein, M. (1995). *Thoughts without a thinker*. New York: Basic Books.
- Goleman, D. (Ed.) (1993). *Mind/body medicine*. Yonkers, NY: Consumer Reports Books.
- Gopin, M. (2004) *Healing the heart of conflict*. Rodale, Inc.
- Hallowell, E. M. (1999). *Connect: 12 vital ties that open your heart, lengthen your life, and deepen your soul*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Hanh, T.H. (1991). *Peace is every step: the path of mindfulness in everyday life*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Holden, R. (1998) *Happiness Now!* London: Hodder and Stoughton.

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Where you go there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York: Hyperion.
- Karen, R. (2001). *The forgiving self; the road from resentment to connection*. New York: Doubleday.
- Ladner, L. (2004). *The Lost art of compassion*. San Francisco: Harper.
- Langer, E. J. (1989). *Mindfulness*. Ambridge, MA: Perseus Books.
- Lerner, M. (2000). *Spirit matters*. Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads Publishing Company.
- Leshan, L. (1981). *How to mediate*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Lowenberg, F.M. & Dolgoff, R. (1992). *Ethical decisions for social work practice*, Itasca, Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc.
- Mipham, S. (2003). *Happiness: A Guide to developing life's most important skill*.
- Pelletier, K. R. (1977). Mind as healer mind as slayer: A holistic approach to preventing stress disorders.*  
New York: Dell Publishing.
- Pert, C. B. (1997). *Molecules of emotion: The science behind mind-body medicine*. New York: Simon & Shuster.
- Ricard, M. (2003). *Turning the mind into an all*. New York: Riverhead books.
- Sharon, S. (1995). *Loving Kindness: The Revolutionary art of Happiness*. Boston: Shambala.
- Siegel, B.S. (1986). *Love, medicine & miracles*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.
- Sperry, L. (2001). *Spirituality in clinical practice: Incorporating The spiritual dimension in psychotherapy and counseling*. Philadelphia, PA: Brunner-Routledge.
- Tolle, E. (1999). *The power of now: a guide to spiritual enlightenment*. Novato, CA: New World Library.
- Walsh, R. (1999). *Essential spirituality; The 7 central practices to waken heart and mind*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Weil, A. (1995). *Spontaneous healing*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Welwood, J. (2000). *Toward a psychology of awakening*. Boston, MA: Shambala Publications.
- Wuthnow, R. (1994). *Sharing the journey: Support groups and America's new quest for community*. New York: The Free Press.