

**WURZWEILER SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK<sup>®</sup>  
YESHIVA UNIVERSITY**

**SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE WITH MILITARY FAMILIES  
AND SOLDIERS  
SWK 6821  
Fall, 2017**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Social Work Practice with military families and soldiers is an elective course that focuses on the specific problems of those who serve in the military with a focus on the needs of family members and children and the response of social workers to those needs. The course will explore the nature of war, its impact on those who are wounded - physically and mentally -- and their loved ones/caregivers. The course content will look at theories, research and intervention strategies for social workers who choose to work with this population.

Students will be introduced to a theoretical orientation to combat stress management which acknowledges the stressors of war and the adaptations made by those engaged in battle. In addition, students will be provided with an overview of the management of various war related physical and mental health challenges for the returning war veteran. Particular emphasis will detail the impact of the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on returning veterans and their family members with emphasis on the management of those suffering with PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury and substance abuse problems. Intervention strategies specifically designed for work with the war injured and their families/caregivers will be introduced.

Readings from the text will be used as well as numerous journal articles to further understanding of the scope of military related social work practice.

**COURSE COMPETENCY OUTCOMES**

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

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly. They will employ a strengths based perspective based in person-in-the environment. They will engage in life-long learning, supervision, and consultation to enhance their knowledge and skills needed to work effective with service members, veterans and their families and communities (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.1).
2. Apply social work ethical principles that guide professional practice. They will be able to recognize their personal values, make informed ethical decisions, and manage professional boundaries. They will be able to recognize and understand the military

culture with an emphasis on mission, service, honor, and cohesion and the potential value and ethical issues that can be provoked (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.2).

3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments. They will analyze relationships between the client, family and worker and use appropriate practice models. They will understand the unique relationships between the client, family, and the military (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.3).

4. Engage diversity and difference in practice. They will manage potential conflicts between personal feelings and institutional responsibility, recognize and communicate their understanding of the importance of difference in shaping lives, gain self-awareness to eliminate their personal bias. They will communicate with a culturally responsive approach toward service members (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.4).

5. Locate, evaluate, and analyze current research literature related to military social work and evaluate research to practice with service members, veterans, their families and their communities. (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.6)

6. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment. They will use conceptual frameworks to guide the process of assessment, intervention and evaluation including a recognition of the impact of military transitions and stressful life events throughout the individuals' and family's life course. (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.7).

7. Respond to contexts that shape practice. Practitioners in military social work are knowledgeable about the histories, traditions, and mission of those who serve/served and the current trends in the service delivery system to meet the needs of service members veterans, their families and communities. (CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.9).

8 Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities . They will engage, asses, intervene, and evaluate their clients (CSWE Advanced Competencies 2.1.10 a, b, c, and d).

## **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; 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.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Given the nature of classroom discussion and the presentation of case materials and at times personal revelation in class, students are reminded that the same commitment to confidentiality with clients extends to classmates. What is shared in class stays in class.

### **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*, Abby Kelsen, Wilf Campus, 646-685-0118, *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)**

Many 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.
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4. Click on the link to your course.
5. Enter the password given to you by your instructor - **BESWK**.
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)

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Beder, J. (Ed.) (2016) *Caring for our Military*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 978 1138119529. New paperback \$50.00, also available as an e-book at Barnes and Noble.

Beder, J. (Ed.) (2012). *Advances in Social Work Practice with the Military*. New York: Taylor & Francis. ISBN: 13: 9780415891349. New paperback: \$37.28 at Barnes & Noble.

### **SUGGESTED TEXTS**

Figley, C, Nash, W. (Eds.) (2007). *Combat stress injury: Theory, research, and management*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 1397804594334. New \$35.14, used \$29.89 at Barnes & Noble.

Herman, J. (1997). *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence - From domestic abuse to political terror*. New York: Basic Books. ISBN: 13-978046508703. New \$12.60, used \$ 7.95 at Barnes & Noble.

Rubin, A., Weiss, E., & Coll, J. (Eds) (2013). *Handbook of Military Social Work*. Wiley. **This is an e-book available through the YU library**; search for book title and download assigned chapters.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

1) Each student (or pair of students) will interview an active service member or Veteran and present a 20-minute overview of the interview to the class. Each service member and Veteran deals with the impact of the military in a different way; members of the military have had differing experiences. The goal of the interview/presentation is to present as many of those experience as feasible. Questions to consider during the interview:

- why did you join the service?
- how old were you when you joined?
- what was your experience at the recruiting station?
- what was the primary motivation that made you join?
- what was the reaction of your family and friends when you told them you joined?
- what did you pick the branch you joined?
- describe your orientation experience and first few days.
- where were you stationed?
- what were those first few weeks like for you?
- what was the experience transitioning from civilian to service member?
- did you keep in touch with family, friends, how?
- what was the service like for you?
- Tell me about a few of the most memorable experiences.
- did you see active combat? How was that?
- how long were you deployed or away from family?
- did your military experience influence your thinking about war or active service?
- how was the reintegration experience for you? For the family?
- what do you think is important for social workers to know about military service?

(CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.3, 2.1.6, 2.1.9)

2) Each student will pick an area of interest/topic covered in class or in your readings or outside class content. The student will then discuss the topic and provide an overview of the problem/issue and its characteristics. When available provide statistical data on the topic. Explore what services are available for this population; are there any gaps in resources available? What does the most current research suggest in terms of management of this particular topic? What would be the best social work approach to management of this population?

Several sources are required and the paper should be between 8-10 pages.

(CSWE Advanced Competency 2.1.3, 2.1.6, 2.1.7)

## **Evaluation**

This course will be graded in the following manner:

- 75% written assignments/class presentation
- 25% Class participation and attendance

## **Unit 1. Introduction to military life, warfare**

Sessions 1 - 3

Classroom focus - Overview of the experience of being a service member in battle; identification and discussion of combat stress, identification of the physical and mental challenges of being at war.

### Required Readings:

Beder (2012), Chapter 1 – The importance of understanding military culture; Chapter 2 – No one leaves unchanged.

Beder (2016). Chapter 1 – Military cultural competence; Military culture and veteran transition; Chapter 4 – Women service members and Veterans.

Pease, J., Billera, M., & Gerard, G. (2016). Military culture and the transition to civilian life: Suicide risk and other considerations. *Social Work*, 61(1), pp. 83-86.

Flynn, M. & Hassan, A. (2010). Unique challenges of war in Iraq and Afghanistan. *J. of Social Work Education* 46(2). pp. 169-174.

### Suggested Readings:

Figley - The stressor of war, pp. 11-32; Chapter 3 - Combat/operational stress adaptations and injuries, pp. 33-64.

Friedman, M. (2005). Veterans' mental health in the wake of war. *New England Journal of Medicine* 352(13), pp 1287-1290.

Gawande, A. (2004). Casualties of war - Military care for the wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 351(24), pp. 2471-2475.

Pease, J., Billera, M., Gerard, G. (2016). Military culture and the transition to civilian life: Suicide risk and other considerations. *Social Work*, 61(1). 83-86.

## **Unit 2. The lasting impact of war; Combat trauma**

Sessions 4, 5, 6

Classroom focus - Exploration of post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury; impact on the service member and his/her family.

Required Readings:

Beder (2012) – Chapter 3 – Treatment of post traumatic disorder; Chapter 4 – Care coordination in military traumatic brain disorder’ Chapter 5 – Working with survivors of military sexual trauma.

Beder (2016) – Chapter 12: Traumatic brain injury and Chapter 14: Treating co-occurring disorders in the returning warrior.

Suggested readings:

In Figley, Chapter 6 - Combat stress management: The interplay between combat, physical injury, and psychological trauma, pp. 119 - 136. Chapter 7 - Secondary traumatization among wives of war veterans with PTSD, pp. 137-157

Friedman, M. (2006). Posttraumatic stress disorder among military returnees from Afghanistan and Iraq. *American Journal of Psychiatry* 163(4), pp. 586-593.

Hoge, C., McGurk, D., et al. (2008). Mild traumatic brain injury in US soldiers returning from Iraq. *JAMA*, 358(5), 453-463.

DiNola, G (2008). Stressors affecting military families during military deployment. *Military Medicine* 173(5), pp. V-VIII.

Tanielian, T., Jaycox, L., Schell, T. et al. (2008). *Invisible wounds of war: Summary recommendations for addressing psychological and cognitive injuries*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation.

Warner, C., Appenzeller, G. et al., (2008). Soldier attitudes toward mental health screening and seeking care upon return from combat. *Military Medicine*, 173(6), 563-569.

Rabstejnek, C. (2008). Family’s expressed emotion to returning to citizen soldiers. *Military Medicine*, 173(7), pp. XI-XV.

**Unit 3. Reintegration - Special Populations**

Sessions 7, 8, 9

Classroom focus - Discussion and exploration of the impact of deployment and subsequent reintegration.

Required Readings:

Beder (2012) - Chapter 9 – Those who have served in Afghanistan/Iraq; Coming Home; Chapter 6 – When they return from Afghanistan/Iraq: The needs of the wounded. Chapter 10 – Family resilience and the fortunes of war.

Beder (2016) - Chapter 3 – Older Veterans; Chapter 7– The impact of war and deployments in young military connected children; Chapter 8 – Caring for Caregivers; Chapter 10 – Sexual and gender minority Veterans; Chapter 16 – Moral injury.

Bowling, U. & Sherman (2008). Welcoming them home: Supporting service members and their families in navigating the tasks of reintegration. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(4), pp.451-458. **E-Res**.

#### The Children

Lincoln, A. & Sweeten, K. (2010). Considerations for the effects of military deployment on children and families. *Social Work in Health Care*, 50(1), 73-84.

Leskin, G., et al., (2013). Family centered programs and interventions for military children and youth. In Rubin, Chapter 24, 427-442.

### **Unit 4. Social Work in the Military**

Learning Objectives – 4,5

Sessions 10,11

#### Required Readings

Manske, J. (2006). Social work in the department of Veterans Affairs: Lessons learned. *Health and Social Work*, 31(3), pp. 233- 238. **E-Res**

Pehrson, K. (2002). Boundary issues in clinical practice as reported by Army social workers. *Military Medicine*, 167(1), pp. 14-23. **E-Res**

Rubin, A. & Harvie, H. (2013). A brief history of social work with the military and veterans. In Rubin, Chapter 1, 3-20.

Wheeler, D., & Bragin, M. (2007). Bringing it all back home: Social work and the challenge of returning veterans. *Health & Social Work*, 32(4), pp. 297-301. **E-Res**

### **Unit 5. Interventions**

Sessions 12-13

Classroom focus - Discussion of clinical treatment approaches used by social workers working with wounded service members and their families/caregivers.

#### Required Readings

Beder (2012). Chapter 11 – Assessing and responding to suicidal risk; Chapter 14 – Clinical overview of assessment and treatment of substance abuse disorders; Chapter 15 – Animal assisted intervention; Chapter 16 – VA Integrated care.

Beder (2016). Chapter 15 – Occupational therapy for our military; Chapter 17 – Telebehavioral health; Chapter 18 – Traditional and whole health and patient-centered care at the VHA: An overview.

Patel, B. (2015). Caregivers of Veterans with invisible injuries: What we know and implications for social work practice. *Social Work*, 60(1) 9-17.

Weiss, E., DeBrarer, T., et al., (2013). Theory and practice with military couples and families. In Rubin, Chapter 26, 467-492.

#### Suggested Readings

In Herman, Chapter 7 - A healing relationship, pp 133-154, Chapter 8 - Safety, pp. 155-174, Chapter 10 - Reconnection, pp, 196-213, Chapter 11 - Commonality, pp. 214-236.

Basham, K. (2007). Homecoming as safe haven or the new front: Attachment and detachment in military couples. *Clinical Social Work Journal* 36, pp. 83-96.

Burda-Chmielwski, R. & Nowlin, A. (2013). Preventing and intervening with substance use disorders in active duty military settings (2013). In Rubin, Chapter 13, pp. 209-224.

Davidson, P., & Parker, K. (2001). Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR): A meta analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 69(2), pp. 305-316.

Sneath, L. & Rheem, K, 2011). The use of emotionally focused couples therapy with military couples and families. In Everson and Figley, (Eds). Families under fire, 2011, Routledge, 127-153.

## **Unit 5. Impact on Social Workers**

Sessions 14

Classroom focus - To develop an understanding of the stressors that social workers may face in working with the war wounded, introduce the concepts of compassion fatigue and burnout and suggestions for self-care.

#### Required Readings

Beder (2012) – Chapter 18 – Cost of caring; Chapter 17 – Ethical considerations.

Suggested Readings

Adams, R, Boscarino, J. & Figley, C. (2006). Compassion fatigue and psychological distress among social workers: A validation study. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 76(1), pp 103-108.

Bride, B. (2007). Prevalence of secondary traumatic stress among social workers. *Social Work*, 52(1), pp. 63-70.

Cohen, M. Gagin, R., & Peled-Avram, M. (2006). Multiple terrorist attacks: Compassion fatigue in Israeli social workers. *Traumatology* 12(4), pp. 293-306.

### Additional References

- Ainspan, N., Bryan, C., & Penk, W. (Eds). 2016). *Handbook of Psychosocial Interventions for Veterans and Service Members*. New York; Oxford.
- Bride, B. , Radey, M. & Figley, C. (2007). Measuring compassion fatigue. *Journal of Clinical Social Work*, 35, 155-163.
- Bride, B. (2007). Prevalence of secondary traumatic stress among social workers. *Social Work*, 52(1) , 63-70.
- Canfield, J. (2005). Secondary traumatization, burnout and vicarious traumatization: A review of the literature as it relates to therapists who treat trauma. *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 75(2), 81-88.
- Daley, J. (2003). Military social work. *International Social Work* 46(4), 437-448.
- Figley, C. (1995). *Compassion Fatigue: Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder in those who Treat the Traumatized*. New York: Brunner-Mazel.
- Finkel, D. (2013). Thank you for your service. NY: Sarah Crichton Books.
- Genry, J.E., Baranowsky, A., & Dunning, K. (2002). The accelerated recovery program (ARP) for compassion fatigue. C. Figley (Ed.), Treating compassion fatigue (pp. 123-37).
- Hall, L. (2016). *Counseling Military Families*, New York; Routledge.
- Henderson, J. (2007). US Army social work care manager program: An initial program Analysis. *Military Medicine* 172(5), 533-538.
- Iraq War Clinician Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed/(2004). National Center for PTSD. Department of Veterans Affairs.
- Klay, P. (2014). *Redeployment*. New York: Penguin Press.
- Laurence, J. & Matthews, M. (2013) *Oxford handbook of Military Psychology*. NY: Oxford university Press.
- Lucas, G. (2016). *Military Ethics*, New York; Oxford.
- National Social Work VA Health Administration (2008). Washington, D.C.
- Palm, K., Polusny, M. & Follette, V. (2004). Vicarious traumatization: Potential hazards

- and interventions for disaster and trauma workers. *Pre-hospital and Disaster Medicine*, 19(1), pp. 73-78.
- Rahia, N. (1999). Medical social work in the US armed forces. J.G. Daley (Ed.), *Social work practice in the military*, pp.107-121. NY: Haworth Press.
- Robichaux, R. Keesee,N. (2008). What can social workers do for warriors in transition? *US Army Medical Department Journal*, 25-26.
- Rubin, A., Weiss, E. & Coll. J. (Eds), (2013). *Handbook of Military Social Work*. NY: Oxford.
- Serve, Support, Simplify (2007). Report of the President's Commission on Care for America's returning wounded warriors. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.
- Shay, J. (2002). *Odysseus in America: Combat trauma and the trials of homecoming*. New York; Scribner.
- Sherman, N. (2015). *Afterwar: Healing the Moral Wounds of our Soldiers*. New York: Oxford.
- Sprang, G., Clark, J., & Whitt-Woosley, A. (2007). Compassion fatigue, compassion' Satisfaction, and burnout: Factors impacting a professional's quality of life. *Journal of Loss and Trauma*, 12(259), 259-280.
- Stamm, B.H. (2012). *The ProQOL manual*. Baltimore, MD: Sidran Press.
- Tyson, J. (2007). Compassion fatigue in the treatment of combat-related trauma During wartime. *Journal of Clinical Social Work*, 35, 183-192.
- U.S. Government Accountability Office. GAO-07-606T DOD and VA Health Care: Challenges Encountered by Injured Service Members during their Recovery Process, March 2007.

