SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Spirituality in Social Work Practice

SW 723 Winter, 2017   Thursdays  9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Course Location:  SSWB B760

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Office: 2852 SSWB
Scheduled Office Hours:
Mon. 10-12 noon & Wed. 1:30-3:00 p.m.

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Email: debmatt@umich.edu

Office Hours:  I am available in the classroom prior to and after class to discuss questions and concerns. I am happy and available to make individual appointments as needed.

Email: Please allow 24 hours for email response Monday-Friday. Email is not monitored on weekends. Please put SW723 in the subject line.

Students are responsible for reading the syllabus which serves as our guiding contract agreement for the term and for also reading class information and assignment instructions posted on Canvas and tracking due dates.

Given the pervasiveness of religion and spirituality throughout people's lives and cultures, social workers need to understand religion and spirituality to develop a holistic view of the person in environment and to support the professional mission of promoting satisfaction of basic needs, well-being, and justice for all individuals and communities around the world.”

Students are responsible for reading the syllabus which serves as our guiding contract agreement for the term and for also reading class information and assignment instructions posted on Canvas and tracking due dates.

WELCOME TO THIS CLASS
It is an exciting to have you be a part of this first 3 credit hour course on Spirituality in Social Work at UM SSW. May this class take us forward in developing the knowledge, skills and competencies to demonstrate our readiness and responsiveness to meet the spiritual needs of our clients. I look forward to what we will experience and learn together as we engage our mind, body and spirit in this meaningful topic!

ABOUT THE COURSE
This course provides a framework of knowledge, values, skills and experiences to promote culturally competent, ethical, spiritually-sensitive Social Work practice which takes into account diverse expressions of spirituality. In adopting a holistic perspective to guide practice, spirituality will be viewed as a vital and essential dimension of the bio-psycho-social assessment
and treatment planning process. This course will explore the rationale and need to integrate assessment and interventions related to spirituality in social work in a manner that supports cultural humility, social justice and competent practice. It will examine spirituality as rooted in the history of Social Work practice as well as exploring how to best define, integrate, and use spiritual assessment and interventions in addressing presenting client issues. The relationship between spirituality and considerations related to gender, ethnicity, culture, race, sexual orientation, ability, social economic status and age, as well as spirituality across the life span will be explored. Spiritual assessment and intervention related to specialized areas such as trauma, addiction/recovery and mental health will be addressed including research on the links between religious/spiritual beliefs and practices and physical, mental and behavioral health. Specific methods and interventions will be highlighted and applied to practice. Relevant readings, discussion, case presentations, and experiential exercises will be used to deepen one’s competence and comfort level in integrating spirituality into practice. Students will be asked to explore their own spirituality as it relates to professional identity and Social Work practice effectiveness. Ultimately, we seek to develop effective assessment and intervention skills by which spiritual strengths and resources can be tapped to better assist clients.

This course is not designed to be a review of specific religious belief systems. For those desiring more information about specific religions, the following link may be helpful to you as well as additional resources provided in course handouts. [http://pluralism.org/religions/](http://pluralism.org/religions/)

This class affirms that spirituality and faith traditions are experienced in very diverse ways. Thus, honoring differences and practicing sensitivity to different expressions and experiences of spirituality and religious practice form the bedrock of our learning in service to our clients and our goal of effectively addressing their spiritual and religious concerns.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Recognize the inclusion of the spiritual dimension of the biopsychosocial spiritual perspective as essential in holistically understanding individuals in the assessment and treatment planning and intervention process.
2. Demonstrate awareness of spirituality in the content of person-in-environment and culture and its impact on client coping with suffering, loss, injustice and attempts to heal, endure and reach one’s goals.
3. Understand and respect a variety of expressions of spirituality with and without relationship to religion.
4. Identify and critically reflect on diverse spiritual/religious perspectives and their implications for Social Work practice
5. Formulate qualities of a spiritually sensitive helping relationship and be able to apply a framework of spiritually in Social Work practice that is inclusive and respectful of diversity.
6. Develop skills necessary to assess the roles of spirituality and of religious practices in the lives of social work clients and to evaluate the potential place of spirituality in the helping process.
7. Identify and utilize different assessment models and tools for assessing clients’ spirituality.
8. Identify and demonstrate various spiritually sensitive interventions and apply them to social work practice.
9. Articulate both the supportive and the oppressive role spiritual/religious perspectives have played concerning issues of human diversity and marginalizing and exclusion based on gender, race and ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, health and mental health and social class.

10. Examine and reflect on one’s own spirituality and the impact on the development of professional identity and one’s Social Work practice.

11. Establish familiarity with social research related to the application of spiritual practices in relationship to physical, mental and spiritual health and well-being.

COURSE DESIGN
This course uses a relationship-based engaged approach to learning in which we learn from and with each other. A variety of collaborative learning methods will be used to promote skill development including interactive lectures with active student participation, guest speakers, readings, in-class application exercises, role plays, practice clinical scenarios, videos and written assignments. Understanding core class concepts and the ability to apply these concepts will be emphasized.

RELATIONSHIP TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES
Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed throughout this course and will be highlighted in the content of commonalities and differences in spiritual and religious traditions, beliefs, expression, and the role of protective factors and social support in health status and disease outcomes.

Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed by examining the potential impact of spirituality/religious beliefs and practices on social justice both in the United States and globally. Key spiritual diversity dimensions will be examined as both a source of support as well as promotion of marginalization, exclusion and oppression for disenfranchised populations. This course emphasizes the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through review of the literature regarding connections between health (physical, mental, behavioral) and spiritual beliefs, behaviors and affiliations and the implications for practice, policy and research. Behavioral and Social Science Research will be presented throughout the course and will include findings from sociology, psychology, medical anthropology, social work, public health, medicine, nursing, and health services research related to spirituality and health.

RELATIONSHIP TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES
Social work ethics and values will be addressed in the context of the NASW Code of Ethics. This course will increase awareness of the intersectionality of medical ethics, social work ethics and bioethics. Students will evaluate ethical issues involved in medical-ethical issues and dilemmas and decision making in health social work and discuss the impact of the social worker’s values and reactions to these issues.

APPLICATION OF NASW CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL USE OF SELF
The social work program is one of professional preparation. In addition to acquiring theoretical knowledge, students are expected to acquire professional values, to integrate knowledge from a range of courses, to develop professional skills and be socialized into the profession.
The NASW Code of Ethics outlines a set of core values that form the basis of the Social Work profession’s purpose and perspective. The Code encourages behaviors which promote professionalism and respect for clients, colleagues and employers.

- It is expected that all students conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Ethics and demonstrate professional use-of-self behaviors in class including respect, courtesy and ACTIVE listening with fellow students, the instructor and guest presenters. “Social workers should treat colleagues with respect and should represent accurately and fairly the qualifications, views, and obligations of colleagues. Social workers should avoid unwarranted negative criticism of colleagues in communications with clients or with other professionals. Unwarranted negative criticism may include demeaning comments that refer to colleagues’ level of competence or to individuals’ attributes such as race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability.”
  NASW Code of Ethics (2008)
- As professionals, you are expected to maintain confidentiality and respect differences.
- You are expected to take personal responsibility and be committed to your own learning experience by being an active and responsible and response-able member of each class.

For further elaboration of the values and ethical standards inherent in social work, students are encouraged to access the Code of Ethics at: http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp and the Student Guide (Chapter 13).

**Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS)**
This course integrates PODS content and skills with a continued emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies related to spiritual and/or religious beliefs and practices that have promoted or impeded well-being and social justice.

Students are invited and expected to actively contribute from their experiences, field placement practice and knowledge of readings, etc. to help support and develop a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self- knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

**ABOUT MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY: LEARNING IS IN SERVICE TO OUR CLIENTS**

**RELATIONSHIP FOCUSED PARTNERSHIP: MUTUAL LEARNING COMMITMENT**
My commitment is to provide organized, meaningful course material and opportunities for learning in a respectful, safe and encouraging learning environment. Many times we approach learning experiences with expectations of what we will get from them. This model focuses on the professor’s giving information and the student’s getting information. Relationship-based learning means to me that we will be “giving, getting and growing” together as we learn from and with each other. Students are invited and expected to be active and engaged partners in the
learning process by coming to every class fully prepared, ready, willing and able to contribute to meaningful discussion and learning. Please feel free to contact and meet with me throughout the semester as needed with questions, concerns and suggestions. I look forward to what we will experience and learn together.

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY IN LEARNING

I invite you to come to this class with the intention that you are going to engage and connect with the experience.

Accountability shifts the focus from being not solely about what one is taught, to self-determination about what one consciously chooses to learn.

Your learning is not just about academic learning but also involves learning and improving life skills and professional use-of-self. Students are expected to take personal responsibility and be committed to their own learning experience by being active and response-able members of each class session. An optimal individual learning experience is one that is active, self-directed and requires engagement.

Guiding Principles and Commitments

Our commitment to learning is in service to our clients. We seek mutual growth, learning and benefit from sharing with each other. We respect even when we disagree or have conflict. We recognize and honor that each person is at a different point in their learning and life experience. We do not ridicule or belittle others. We do not assume or pre-judge the intent or motivation of others. We commit to not intentionally harm another nor to assume that harm was intended. We take responsibility for our actions and words. We seek to replace assumptions with curious questions and invitations to share and listen. We seek to diminish fear, shame and blame that immobilizes the learning process. We view mistakes and not yet “knowing” as a part of life-long learning and as preferable to stagnation and ignorance. We take responsibility for talking with people rather than about them. We find ways to be curious and humane in our interactions. We are committed to personal and professional growth and self-exploration.

Notice your preferences. Notice your resistance.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK

Please provide feedback on your learning needs, how the class is going for you and suggestions on what we can do together to improve throughout the class. We will do a mid-term and final evaluation, however the opportunity to respond to feedback is much more beneficial for the both professors and class members if it is ongoing and not just provided at the end of the term. You are encouraged to proactively address any concerns or needs as they arise.
INCREMENTAL SKILL BUILDING AND LEARNING

The class assignments are designed to be **INCREMENTAL**, building and demonstrating core competencies over time with a variety of **SMALLER** assignments rather than focusing on only a few larger assignments.

Assignments are designed to be incremental in nature to encourage progressive integration of concepts and skills rather than a more limited number of larger assignments. Incremental learning can be helpful in skill building and addressing our cumulative learning objectives. So, please consider not simply the number/frequency of assignments but also the total deliverables.

ASSIGNMENT PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS
Assignments are designed to use a variety of evaluation methods including written papers, classroom activities and discussions and in-class activities to allow opportunities to address strengths and preferences of diverse individual students. The goal of the course assignments is to promote integration and meaning of the material and competency in services provided to clients. You are empowered to self-direct your learning and assignments with some opportunities to choose areas of interest in some assignments.

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EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

PROFESSIONAL USE OF SELF

Respect for Others

- Students are encouraged and expected to demonstrate openness to ideas and perspectives different from one’s own interests, views, belief and preferences.
- Listening and learning require a safe place and we commit to provide this safe space in this class.
- Sharing differing ways of thinking and how one sees the world is not always focused on changing others’ minds, but about cultivating a **way of being with others that fosters curiosity** and a desire to see and hear another’s point of view.
- We will be mindful that in our desire to advocate for our beliefs and values, that **we do not commit the very acts of aggression, devaluation, marginalization, disenfranchisement and dismissal of others that we may have experienced and/or are trying to prevent.**

ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND HONESTY

Social Work students are held to the highest standards of academic and professional conduct. Cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit
for academic work through use of any dishonest, deceptive or fraudulent means. Plagiarism is one form of cheating and is unacceptable and inconsistent with the NASW Code of Ethics and the Code of Academic and Professional Conduct which applies to all students enrolled in the School of Social Work. Any form of cheating plagiarism and/or aiding and abetting dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the relevant assignment and is grounds for expulsion. You are responsible for understanding the meaning of plagiarism and can refer to the Student Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program or for further information see http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students.

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND PARTICIPATION
As a graduate student, class attendance, completion of assigned readings for each class, participation and engagement are highly valued as these behaviors contribute to the quality of learning for the individual and the class as a whole and contribute to our ultimate goal of service to our clients. Predictability, reliability and consistency (“being there”) are core to any strong relationship as well as being incredibly important to our clients and our employers. Thus, “being here” is an important competency for this class.

Beyond physical presence through attendance, class participation is vital to the learning experience of this course and focuses on being emotionally and intellectually present and engaged in class each week. Active engagement and sharing of your diverse ideas, perspectives and experiences are highly valued and expected. In service to our clients, we must learn to use our voices on their behalf and our learning is a part of using our voices for our clients. Thus, participating in class will be an opportunity to practice and develop this skill even when it is sometimes challenging and/or uncomfortable.

Students should be prepared each week to both be called on and to initiate knowledgeable sharing of their understanding, ideas, reactions and applications from readings in weekly class discussions and integration across progressive weeks. The quality and preparedness of responses illustrating completion of the readings will be used as a part of the assignment of grading for class participation and will differentiate grades of exceptional mastery (A) from grades of mastery (B).

ATTENDANCE: Please be here and be prompt.

You and Your Learning are Important to the Class

A significant part of learning in this course is interactive and experiential with discussion, in-class activities and guest speakers which cannot be fully replicated or replaced with make-up work. Therefore, both your learning and the learning of your colleagues is benefitted by your attendance.

The School of Social Work Class Attendance Policy states: “It is expected that students attend classes and instructors are encouraged to monitor attendance.” Attendance, participation and engagement are expectations and requirements. (See Student Guide).
Class grades include evaluation of attendance, participation and engagement. This class focuses learning and demonstrating competencies in service to our clients. **Grades are based on points earned through demonstration of competency and class participation.**

**Absences are not judged as “excused” or “unexcused.”** Life happens and each individual student may have absences from personal choices made regarding prioritization of competing demands as well as uncontrollable events. **Opportunity is given to learn and demonstrate missed competencies when you are absent from class for any reason.**

**More than three absences for any reason will result in non-credit, non-passing grade for the course due to the significance portion of the course missed.**

**Promptness in attendance** is also valued as it conveys professionalism, respect and courtesy and creates a safe environment for sharing among one another and our guest speakers. We will begin and resume class promptly after designated break(s).

Partial absences also negatively impact learning and will result in class participation deduction. A partial absence is defined as any one of the following: late arrival after class start time, late return from break after class has resumed and/or early departure before class ends and use of electronic devices for non-class related activities during class.

**COMPETENCY DEMONSTRATION MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS**

- Students are asked to notify me of any **planned** absence with as much advanced notice as possible and for an **unanticipated absence** when they are reasonably able to make contact.
- Make-up competency assignments should be initiated by the student and are to be **submitted no later than the second class period following the absence** unless otherwise agreed upon in advance and will be graded as Pass-Fail.
- **Since grades are based on demonstration of competency, students who choose NOT to submit competency make-up work within the required timeframe will receive a 3 point competency deduction per each class missed.**

**Standard Make-up Competency Assignment for All Absences**

1. Complete required readings or assignments due on the missed class.
2. Obtain any handouts, notes, announcements and any other information distributed/ covered in the missed class.
3. Review class Powerpoint posted on Canvas including watching any embedded videos.
4. Complete a 3 page double-spaced typed paper addressing:
   - **Integrative summary of your take-away understanding and learning/competency application from the assigned readings and the powerpoint. No APA referencing is needed for this summary.**

**Note Taking and Powerpoint Presentations**

Note taking is helpful to the learning process as it allows you to hear and translate concepts into your own words and this process has been shown to aide in learning. I share the following evidence-based abstract with you for your consideration regarding note taking. Given this research, I will not be posting powerpoints on Canvas **prior to class.**
"Taking notes on laptops rather than in longhand is increasingly common. Many researchers have suggested that laptop note taking is less effective than longhand note taking for learning. Prior studies have primarily focused on students’ capacity for multitasking and distraction when using laptops. The present research suggests that even when laptops are used solely to take notes, they may still be impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing. In three studies, we found that students who took notes on laptops performed worse on conceptual questions than students who took notes longhand. We show that whereas taking more notes can be beneficial, laptop note takers’ tendency to transcribe lectures verbatim rather than processing information and reframing it in their own words is detrimental to learning.” Mueller, P. (2014). The pen is mightier than the keyboard: Advantages of longhand over laptop note taking. Psychological Science: doi:10.1177/0956797614524581

USE OF PHONES, COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Our colleagues and guest speakers have a right to anticipate and expect our presence and professional use-of-self. Being present is more than just “showing up.” It involves presence. Presence is perhaps one of the most important interventions we offer to our clients and thus we will practice the art of presence in this class.

Research regarding portable technology (laptop computers, phones, PDAs, etc.) confirms that these devices can be a supportive classroom tool when used with a clear goal (i.e. note taking, interactive exercises) while also having negative consequences such as time spent on non-course tasks (i.e. emails, texting) and disruption to others (CRLT Occasional Papers, No. 30 Use of Laptops in the Classroom: Research and Best Practices).

To foster an environment of safety, openness and presence, the focus of class time will center on understanding and discussion of the content presented, asking questions, sharing integrative ideas, giving examples, writing notes, practicing active listening and presence, or otherwise deepening yours and other’s knowledge of the material in some way.

• Using electronic devices to assist in note taking and specifically directed class activities is encouraged for those who find this beneficial.
• If you feel you must monitor email and text messages, you are respectfully asked to do so during breaks and/or to leave the classroom to do so.
• Presence is a professional use-of-self skill. Use of non-class related computer/phone/electronic devices/reading materials will be considered as the equivalent of being absent from class and will impact attendance and class participation grades with associated automatic deductions.
PROPER USE OF NAMES AND PRONOUNS
All students will be referred to by the names and pronouns they use (e.g. she, he, they, ze). If you have a name that differs from the one that appears on the roster, please inform the instructor before the second class period so that they can use your correct name and pronouns. Designate your personal pronouns on the class roster via Wolverine Access: Student Business > Campus Personal Information > Gender Identity. There are (2) inclusive restrooms in the SSW building: room 1784 (1st floor, near Registrar’s Office) and B833T (Lower Level). A list of inclusive restrooms on campus can be found at: https://spectrumcenter.umich.edu/article/gender-inclusive-restrooms.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability, please notify me during the first week of class and provide the appropriate accommodation recommendation documents so every effort can be made to meet your needs in a timely and effective way. Students with disabilities may contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 734-763-3000 or in Room G664 Haven Hall to coordinate accommodations. To the extent permitted by law, information will be treated as private and confidential.

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING
The University of Michigan is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed and/or in need of support, there are services are available. For assistance, contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 734-764-8312 or https://caps.umich.edu; University Health Services at 734-764-8320 or https:www.uhs.edu/mentalhealthsvsc. For alcohol and drug concerns and/or assistance regarding sexual assault contact https://www.uhs.umich.edu/aodresources#sexualassault. For a listing of other mental health resources available on and off campus, see http://www.umich.edu/~mhealth/students.htm or http://www.umcpd.org/

SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS
In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any cell phone or campus phone. All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-SSWB(7793) for up-to-date School closure information.

Be Prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least (2) emergency exits nearest the classroom.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services and/or email ssw-ADAcompliance@umich.edu.
DEPENDENT CARE RESOURCES
For students with child or parenting/elder care responsibilities, feel free to consult the Students with Children website (http://www.studentswithchildren.umich.edu). This site is dedicated to the needs of students at UM who juggle parenting/elder care, study and work. Resources include childcare, financial assistance, social support, housing, and health care information. The website was created by the former Committee on Student Parent Issues (COSPI). For additional information on work/life support please also visit the Work/Life Resource Center site: http://hr.umich.edu/worklife/ and the UM Child Care gateway https://hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness/family/childrens-centers

RELIGIOUS OBSERVATIONS AND MILITARY SERVICE
Students who will be absent during the semester due to religious observance and/or military services should notify me during the first week of class. Competency make-up assignments policy previously discussed apply to these absences.

DISTRIBUTION OF PAPERS TO STUDENTS
The federal informational privacy act prohibits anyone other than the student access to that student’s papers. Papers should be returned by the instructor directly to or mailed to the student. During the semester, papers will be returned directly to students. Papers submitted at the end of the term may be returned by mail to the student, if the student supplies a self-addressed, self-stamped envelope to the instructor no later than the last day of class for return by U.S. Mail. Uncollected papers will be destroyed at the end of the semester/grading period through confidential methods provided by the SSW.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
Assignments are designed to use a variety of evaluation methods including written papers, classroom activities and discussions and in-class quizzes to allow opportunities to address strengths and preferences of diverse individual students. The goal of the course assignments is to promote integration and meaning of the material and competency in services provided to clients. You are empowered to self-direct your learning and assignments with some opportunities to choose areas of interest.

Students are responsible for reading the syllabus and assignment instructions/ grading rubrics and due dates.

Paper copies of written assignments are to be submitted at the beginning of the class on the date due with all pages stapled together including relevant additional materials as assigned.
If you are unable to submit written assignments, please make other arrangements to get a paper copy of your paper to class or to my SSW office by the assignment due date and time. Emailed assignments will not be accepted.

**Assignment Descriptions and Rubrics**
Written assignment descriptions and grading rubrics have been provided to clearly explain assignment expectations and point values. Please review these prior to completing and submitting your assignments to help you meet assignment criteria. You are encouraged to initiate asking questions regarding assignments and grading prior to submission.

**WRITING SKILLS**
Strong writing and communication skills are essential to effective social work practice. As professionals we will be continually assessed and judged on our ability to express ideas clearly and professionally on behalf of our clients, our organizations, our profession and ourselves. Graduate level writing skills will be expected in this course including appropriate grammar, in-text citations, references, organization of thought, clarity of expression and creativity in your writing. The SSW Career Center offers writing assistance services and study tips for MSW students including proofreading, spelling edits and addressing basic argument flow issues. To make an appointment, contact ssw-cso@umich.edu or call 734-763-6259. Writing labs are available through the Sweetland Writing Clinic in Angel Hall: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/

**APA format** is the definitive source for standardized writing in the behavioral and social sciences and is required for assignments requiring referencing. Please refer to the APA Style manual (6th edition) at MLibrary APA Citation Guide http://guides.lib.umich.edu/c.php?g=282964&p=1885441

Key components of APA format to be used in written papers include:
- Title page with running head
- Double spaced 12 font with 1 inch margins
- Number pages except for title page in upper right corner
- Indent 5 spaces for first line of every paragraph
- Sources must be cited in the text of the paper (i.e. Jones & Smith (2015) state…..)
- Reference page with all sources at the conclusion of the paper
- All direct quotes must be referenced with source and page number

**LATE COMPLETION OF ASSIGNMENTS**
Meeting deadlines, planning ahead and timeliness in completing tasks are all important parts of our professional lives. Fairness goals guide consistent application of expectations for all students. Therefore, late assignments will not be accepted without deduction unless the circumstances are both rare and compelling.

**REQUIRED READING: Read and Come Prepared to Discuss**

Readings are considered a foundation of the course and you will be expected to know the content of the readings and to incorporate this knowledge into your assignments.
It is expected that assigned readings posted for each week will be completed prior to each class to enhance discussion and interaction. Grades of A will require completion of assigned readings.

**Course Readings**
The amount of required text reading has been designed to provide you with a basic foundation while giving you freedom to individualize supplemental readings. The amount of assigned text reading will varying from week to week and are designed to be in line with graduate level workload expectations. You are expected and encouraged to do literature searches and additional reading to meet some assignments and to pursue areas of interest. You must use and synthesize scholarly literature to support your presentation of material. Do not heavily rely on direct quotations from your sources; instead summarize them in your own words.

Additional relevant handouts will also be distributed in class for reading. Additional reference materials specific to class topics will be discussed throughout the term.

**COURSE TEXTS and ARTICLES**
There is no required textbook for this course. Readings will be from a wide range of articles posted in Canvas.

**Self-Selected Readings**
You will self-select diverse peer-reviewed articles in your areas of interest and incorporate evidence-based research and practice into class discussion and assignments.

Additional literature searches and readings may be needed to complete some assignments.

**SOME RELEVANT SPIRITUALITY FOCUED JOURNALS**
*International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*
*International Social Work*
*Jewish Social Work Forum*
*Journal for Buddhism and Psychology*
*Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work*
*Journal of Family Psychotherapy*
*Journal of Jewish Communal Service*
*Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*
*Journal of Muslim Mental Health*
*The Journal of Pastoral Care*
*Journal of Psychology and Christianity*
*Journal of Psychology and Judaism*
*Journal of Psychology and Theology*
*Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*
*Journal of Religion and Spirituality*
*Journal of Religion and Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*
*Journal of Religious Gerontology*
*Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*
*Marriage and Family: A Christian Journal*
*Muslim World Affairs*
*Social Work and Christianity*
I have provided you with additional resources posted on Canvas which may be useful for assignment completion and further exploration of areas of interest including:

- Recommended spirituality focused texts and readings on world religions
- Relevant Website Resources

**GRADING**

*Academic standards matter to our clients and the responsibilities with which we are entrusted in our work with and on behalf of them.*

Grades are the outcome of student efforts and demonstration of competency. *They are “earned” not “given.”* While this course has been designed to provide information and learning experiences, what you ultimately gain will largely depend on your use-of-self, your engagement in the class and your commitment to take responsibility for your individual learning.

**All assignments will be graded with these criteria:**

- Address **specific assignment criteria** defined in instructions and rubric
- **Professional and academically sound writing skills** (clarity of thought, organization and flow, APA referencing as appropriate)
- Ability to **think critically and integrate concepts/content across the term**
- Demonstration of **clinical competency, ability to engage and be insightful**
- Demonstrate **professional use-of-self and social work values and ethics** (PODS, strengths-based perspective)
- **Integration and demonstration of completion and understanding assigned readings** and additional literature when appropriate
- **On time completion of assignments** by assigned due date
Time constraints are validated as a normal and ongoing part of life. Each individual student will experience time challenges related to both personal choices made regarding prioritization of competing demands as well as uncontrollable events. **We acknowledge and accept that not every assignment may be completed at the mastery level depending on one’s individual situation, goals and/or choices. Earning “A” grades is not always possible AND meaningful learning can still occur.**

Graduate school standards anticipate that for every credit hour spent in the classroom, students will spend 2-3 hours outside of the class room to complete readings and assignments at a level of mastery.

Final Grades will be based on individual personal performance and demonstration of course competencies and expectations including the quality of the work, demonstration of reading and ability to apply concepts, professional use-of-self and class participation as defined in course documents using a 100 point system. The **total accumulation of points earned** reflect competencies demonstrated.

Final letter grades are defined by the School of Social Work as follows:

- **A grades** Earned for **exceptional individual performance and superior mastery** of the material. The use of A+ (100), A (95-99), and A-(90-94) should distinguish the degree of superiority.
- **B grades** Earned for students who demonstrate **mastery of the material**. B+ (87-89) indicates performance just above the mastery level but not in an exceptional manner. B (84-86) indicates mastery and B- (80-83) indicate just below the mastery level.
- **C grades** Mastery of the material is **limited**. C- is the lowest grade which carries credit. C+ (77-79), C (74-76) and C- (70-73).
- **D grades** Indicate deficiency and carry no credit. (Below 70)
- **E grades** Indicate failure and carry no credit.
- **I grades** Incomplete grades can be given in **rare situations** in which significant unforeseen, extraordinary and compelling reasons prevent completion of work AND there is a **definite plan and date for completion pre-approved by the instructor**.
  - If more than one-third of the required course assignments are incomplete by the last day of class and/or more than 3 absences from class have occurred, an incomplete grade will not be given & credit for the course is NOT possible.
  - In fairness to all students, incomplete grades will not be given based on requests for time extensions to complete assignments without a compelling reason and sufficient justification provided beyond common life experiences of having limited time or multiple class deadlines.
  - Students are responsible for initiating advanced contact with the instructor to request an incomplete grade and to establish a specific plan for completion. If no contact has been initiated by the student with the instructor regarding incomplete work and/or no specific plan has been established to complete work by the last day of class, a grade will be given based on the completed work submitted thus far. This may potentially result in a grade which carries no credit.
ASSIGNMENTS

Spiritual competence can be defined as an active, ongoing process characterized by three interrelated dimensions (Hodge, 2006).

- Developing awareness of your own value-informed, spiritual worldview and its associated assumptions, limitations, and biases.
- Developing empathic understanding of clients’ spiritual worldview that is devoid of negative judgment.
- Increasing ability to design and implement intervention strategies that are appropriate, relevant, and sensitive to the client’s spiritual worldview.

Your learning in this course will stem from several modalities: Course readings and lectures; class and small group exercises which draw from field-based experiences, case examples, self-reflection, and interactions with classmates; and assignments which seek to focus you on select themes concerning the role of spirituality in direct social work practice with client systems. All assignments must be turned in at the designated due date unless an explicit prior agreement is arranged with the instructor. Assignments submitted late without prior arrangements may be marked down 10% of their total point value per week they are late.

The course assignments, and your course grades upon which they will be based include:

1) Spiritual Self-Assessment  
   Due Jan. 19  25 points
2) Interview Assessment  
   Due Feb. 2  10 points
3) Spirituality Integration Article of Choice  
   Due Feb. 16  10 points
4) Clinical Case Application Paper  
   Due March 23  25 points
5) Final Reflection Journal  
   Due April 13  20 points
6) In-Class Participation/Use of Self  
   Ongoing  10 Points

Total Possible Points for the Course  100 points

1. Spirituality Self-Assessment: Exploring the Origins of One’s Spiritual/Religious Identity. Spiritual and religious values, beliefs and experiences often shape the contexts of social work practice, at both a professional level and a personal level. This self-reflective assignment ask you to consider your own personal religious/spiritual/values background and to discuss elements, experiences and influences that have helped you define your spiritual/religious self. What defines your own spirituality and/or religious experience? Where does this come from? In what ways are your spirituality and/or religious experience relevant to and an influence for your developing role as a social work professional? There is no specific page limit for this assignment as you will choose the space you need to reflect. Please see Spiritual Self-Assessment Instructions and Grading Rubric in Canvas for specific assignment criteria.

2. Interview and Assessment Assignment: Talking with Others about Their Spirituality and 2 page Reflection Paper
Ultimately you need to be able to talk with your clients about their spirituality, and one of the goals for this class is to provide you with some tools to develop these skills. This interview and assignments ask you to interview and conduct a spiritual history/assessment of another person. Please see Spiritual Assessment Interview Instructions and Grading Rubric in Canvas for specific assignment criteria.
3. Spirituality Integration Article of Choice and 2 page reflection paper
This is an opportunity to select a peer reviewed professional journal article related to spirituality integration in an area/with a population of your interest. Think broadly about diverse populations and the topic you may want to focus on for this assignment. Please see Spiritual Integration Article of Choice Instructions and Grading Rubric in Canvas for specific assignment criteria.

4. Clinical Case Application Paper
This 5-7 assignment gives you the opportunity to apply and integrate your cumulative understanding of course concepts along with your personal insights and awareness in a clinical case example. Please see Clinical Case Application and Grading Rubric in Canvas for specific assignment criteria.

5. Final Reflection Paper
This 4 page paper provides a final opportunity for you to reflect on your goals for the course and how your learning has impacted your development as a social worker and your future work. Please see Final Reflection Journal and Rubric on Canvas for more specific assignment criteria.

6. Class Participation, Attendance, Engagement & Professional Use Self
Class attendance, participation and professional use of self are core behaviors that are highly valued in this class and are a part of the learning experience which has relevant application to future professional practice. As social workers and other helping professionals, it is important to be able to speak out to advocate for clients and to learn on their behalf. A silent worker can have limited impact. See Class Participation Grading Rubric in Canvas.

Class participation involves sharing and discussing class concepts and their application to our work. Participation is not simply talking and sharing your opinions. Each week come prepared to discuss what you have read, concepts from the class that apply to your field placement, what is happening in the news that applies to healthcare access, quality of care, policies, laws, etc. The quality of participation is important and effectively comes from reading the assigned texts, analyzing theories and concepts and then noticing how to apply them to working with clients and organizations. Participation should reflect the student’s own knowledge and development and contribute to the knowledge and development of other class members. Expectations are further defined in a separate Profession Use-of-Self document and a Class Participation Self-Evaluation Rubric document on Canvas.

Changes may be made in the syllabus as appropriate at any time at the instructor’s discretion.

Course Schedule, Learning Opportunities

Jan. 5
Introduction to Spirituality and Social Work
#1
Overview of Course
Why Should Social Workers Care About Spirituality?
Historical Background, Rationale & Relevance to Social Work
Ethical Principles for Social Work Practice
Our Fears and Concerns; View of Clients
Optional Readings


Jan. 12

What is Spirituality?

#2

Differentiating Spirituality from Religion

Definitions

Required Readings


Optional Readings


**Jan. 19**

**SPRITUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT DUE**

*Doing Spiritual Assessments*

*Types of Assessments*

*Assessment Tools*

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**Required Reading**

**On-line Reading**

[http://www.gwumc.edu/gwish/ficacourse/out/main.html](http://www.gwumc.edu/gwish/ficacourse/out/main.html)

Go to this website.

1. **About Tab**: Begin with listening to 4 practitioners talking about the value of asking about spirituality by providing their own case examples.

2. **Click on Introduction TAB**. Please read this series of slides which discusses what spirituality is, the value of taking a spiritual history and then introduces the FICA Spiritual Assessment tool.

3. **Click on Spiritual History Video**: Please watch the video which demonstrates the use of the FICA assessment tool.

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**Optional Reading**


**Jan. 26**  
**Spiritual Assessments (Continued)**  
**#4**  
More Tools  
Case Example and Application

**Required Reading**  


**Optional Reading**  


**Feb. 2**  
**SPRITUAL INTERVIEW AND REFLECTION PAPER DUE**  
**#5**  
Spirituality Development over the Life Span  
Fowler’s Stages  
Aging and End of Life
**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


**Feb. 9 #6 Spirituality and Health Trauma**

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


Feb. 16
#7
**ARTICLE OF CHOICE REFLECTION PAPER DUE**

**Integrating Spirituality into Social Work Practice**

**Required Reading**

PICK AN ARTICLE OF YOUR CHOICE regarding an area/population you would like to explore further regarding today’s topic of integration of spirituality into practice (you will need to find/download your own copy). Below is just a list to give ideas of the variety you could choose from. You do not have to use one of these articles. Please feel free to find an article that really interests you and be prepared to share your take-away learning from the article with the class along with your 2 page reflection paper. (Assignment Instructions on Canvas)

**Optional Reading**


Feb. 23 Spiritual Identity: Dealing with Differences
#8 Practicing Compassion

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


**March 2**

**SPRING BREAK----ENJOY!**

**March 9**

**#9**

**Spiritual Interventions**

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


March 16  Spiritual Interventions

#10  Spiritual Modified CBT

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


March 23  CASE APPLICATION PAPER DUE

#11  Spiritual Struggles

Crisis of Beliefs and Meaning Making
Destructive/Toxic Practices

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


March 30  Guilt and Shame; Forgiveness and Grace

#12

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


April 6  Transformative Practices and Meaning Making

#13

Integrative Practices: Rituals, Gratitude, Mindfulness

**Required Reading**


**Optional Reading**


Gray, B, (2014). The use of rituals, primarily related to grief, in a hospital setting: How are they helpful and how can they be most effective? *Critical Horizons, 2*(2), 165-177.


### April 13

#14

**Reflective Journal Due**

**Class Participation and Professional Use of Self Rubric Due**

**Nurturing the Spirit**

**Looking Back-Looking Ahead**

**Closing Ritual**

**Required Reading**


THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRESENCE IN THIS CLASS.