This course will explore the influence of religion and spirituality on mental health. Topics covered will include research on spirituality and religion and their interface, as well as the demographic correlates (e.g., age, gender, race) of religious participation. With regards to mental health, the course will examine several issues including: 1) religion and its relation to psychological well being, depression, suicide, and anxiety disorders such as OCD, 2) religious coping strategies, 3) the use of clergy for mental health problems, 4) church based social support networks and 5) religion and substance abuse. The use of religion and religious frameworks in interpersonal practice will also be examined.

1. Course Design:

The course format will include lectures, discussion, individual assignments.

2. Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes:

- Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed throughout this course. The course will cover religion and mental health among several racial and ethnic groups including non-hispanic whites, African Americans, Black Caribbeans, Native Americans and Mexican Americans. It also covers several religious denominations including Jews, Muslims and Hindus. Content related to cultural differences in religious beliefs and how that may impact counseling and mental health will be highlighted.

- Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed in content on cultural competency and understanding differences in religious beliefs among different religious denominations.

- Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through content on the efficacy of religious and spiritually-based treatment and treatment programs in religious settings (churches).

- Behavioral and Social Science Research will be presented throughout the course and will include findings from Social Work, Psychology, Sociology, Religious Studies, Gerontology and Psychiatry.
3. **Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**
This course will address ethical and value issues related to religious and spiritual based counseling. In particular, an emphasis will be placed on when it is appropriate or inappropriate to pray with clients or use other spiritual and religious based practices. The NASW Code of Ethics on Cultural Competence and Social Diversity as well as other literature will be used to inform practice in this area.

4. **Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS):**
This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on diversity. In particular, the course investigates ethnic and cultural diversity with regards to racial and ethnic groups (African Americans, Black Caribbeans, Mexican Americans and Native Americans), as well as religious denominations (Jews, Muslims).

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

September 4  
Overview of Course and Religion and Mental Health, 
Demographic Correlates of Religious Participation/Spirituality 
Religious Participation of Asian Americans

September 11  
Religion and Spirituality

Readings:


Optional:
September 18  Religious Coping and Use of Religion in Counseling 1

Readings:


Optional:


September 25  Use of Religion in Counseling 2

Readings:


Optional:


October 2 Use of Religion in Counseling 3

Readings:


Puchalski C., (1999). Spiritual Assessment Tool: FICA. (1 discussion point)


**Optional:**


**October 9 Use of Clergy for Mental Health Problems**

**Readings:**


Optional:


**October 16**  
Fall Study Break

**October 23**  
Congregational Support

**Readings:**


**October 29**  
Midterm Due at 5:00

**October 31**  
Religious Diversity and Use of Religion in Counseling

**Readings for Midterm (No Discussion Points):**


Optional: Readings:


November 6  Religion and Depression/Mental Illness

Readings:


Optional:


November 13  Religion and Suicide

Readings:


Optional Reading:

November 20  Religion and Anxiety

Readings:


Optional Readings:


November 27  Adolescents Religiosity, Risky Behaviors and Substance Abuse

Readings:

Pick 1


Optional:


December 4  Poster Session  McGregor Commons

December 7  Submit final paper (by 5 p.m.)
Course Administrative Tasks

Attendance
You are expected to attend and to be prepared to take part in each class session. Attendance is important for you to keep up with course work. Missing 2 unexcused classes will reduce your final grade (e.g., an A will be reduced to an B) and each additional absence will reduce your final grade an additional half grade. As adult learners, I expect you to make appropriate decisions about attending class. Please notify me as soon as possible if you must miss a class. It is your responsibility to get materials, handouts, or class notes from one of your classmates if you are unable to be in class. Please be aware of the disruptive nature of coming to class late; enter the classroom as quietly as possible and wait until break to catch up with what is going on. If you anticipate that you will be absent for religious observances, please let me know ahead of time so that we can plan accordingly.

Laptops and Electronic Devices: This class is involves both lecture and discussion. As such, laptops, and tablets can only be used for taking notes. They cannot be used for e-mail, social media or other use during class time. Cell phones are not permitted in the classroom. Use of these devices can be a distraction to both the user and their fellow classmates. Students are asked to refrain from their use in order to promote a more engaged classroom environment.

Phones and Pagers: In consideration of your classmates, and due to their disruptive nature, I request that all telephones and pagers are turned off while you are in class. This is your time and I want you to be able to protect it. If you are required to carry a phone/pager, please set it to vibrate only.

Accommodations for Students With Disabilities: If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know early in the term. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is usually taught may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate academic accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000; http://ssd.umich.edu) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. If there are any circumstances and/or adaptations that are required for instruction or the classroom situation, please consult me.

Religious Holidays and Academic Conflicts: From the Provost’s Office: Although the University of Michigan, as an institution, does not observe religious holidays, it has long been the University’s policy that every reasonable effort should be made to help students avoid negative academic consequences when their religious obligations conflict with academic requirements. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance shall be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent. Such notice must be given by the drop/add deadline of the given term. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments shall be offered an opportunity to make up the work, without penalty, unless it can be
demonstrated that a make-up opportunity would interfere unreasonably with the delivery of the course. Should disagreement arise over any aspect of this policy, the parties involved should contact the Department Chair, the Dean of the School, or the Ombudsperson. Final appeals will be resolved by the provost.

Please notify me if religious observances conflict with class or due dates for assignments so we can make appropriate arrangements.