



Fall 2018 - Mini Course

SW 796-001: Social Work with Military Service Members, Veterans and their Families

Instructor: Joe Cafferty, MSW, LISW-S Email: cafferjh@umich.edu Ph: (419) 215-7815

Schedule: Fridays September 7th – October 5th, 5:00 – 8:00pm

Location: SSWB B780

Course Description:

This course was designed to increase the knowledge base and competency level of social workers who plan to work with (or are interested in) military service members, veterans and their families. This will be accomplished by introducing students to basic military background and structure, the common problem-areas experienced by this community, and the diverse sub-groups that exist within this unique population.

The content covered in this course will include subject areas such as military culture, trauma, life after service (transition), problems/issues faced by family members and the study of specific populations within the service such as women, other minorities, and the LGBT population. In addition to improving the cultural competency in the areas listed above, students will also be exposed to the diverse and unique challenges faced by the veterans of different war eras (WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War and current conflicts). Time will also be spent discussing the kinds of clinical skills that are important for social workers to possess when working with this population. The skills that will be addressed include completing culturally-competent behavioral health diagnostic assessments, motivational interviewing, clinical interventions and working with treatment resistant clients.

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate improved cultural competency in the areas of the military, veteran and family populations. Students will also be able to identify specific evidence based interventions for engaging this population in a community-based or clinical setting. The practice area of this course will be identified as Interpersonal Practice and Mental Health.

Course Objectives:

1. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate improved cultural competency in the areas of the military, veteran and family populations (Competency 1: Professional Identity, Competency 2: Critical Thinking, Competency 4: Diversity, Competency 6: Research).
2. Students will be able to assess the unique challenges that exist for military service members, veterans and their family members in the context of identifying available resources, deployment cycles, trauma and readjustment (Competency 7: Human Behavior & the Social Environment, Competency 8: Social Policy, Competency 9: Organizational Context, Competency 10b: Assessment, Competency 10c: Intervention).
3. Students will also be able to identify specific evidence based interventions for engaging the veteran population in a clinical or community-based setting (Competency 6: Research, Competency 9: Organizational Context, Competency 10c: Intervention).
4. Students will be able to identify the specific cultural competencies that are needed when working with the military, veteran and family population (Competency 4: Diversity, Competency 7: Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Competency 9: Context, Competency 10(a-d)).

Requirement for Academic Credit:

Assignment:

Students will be required to read *Redeployment* by Phil Klay. After reading the book, students will be required to write a two-part response paper. The following questions should be addressed:

- On p. 238 the character talks about the “idea of Iraq.” What was your “idea of Iraq” before reading this book, and has it changed or confirmed your views?
- *Redeployment* has been identified as an emotionally challenging and moving book due to Klay’s use of language and method of storytelling. What parts did you find most difficult? What was your favorite story?
- After reading the book, do you feel it will help you in your work with Military Service Members and Veterans? Why or why not?

The second part of your response should highlight the central themes of the book, and how these tie in with the material covered in class. The paper will be at least 2 pages in length, and will demonstrate mastery of the material. Papers with all three questions answered and a Masters-level response will be receiving a passing mark.

DUE: December 1, 2018 by 12:00 PM

*The assignment will be described in greater detail during the course meetings.

Required Reading:

Klay, Phil (2014). *Redeployment*. NY: Penguin Books.

*Feel free to skip the chapter, titled “OIF” due to its over-use of military acronyms/jargon which may make it difficult to understand.

Or...

Fallon, Siobhan (2012). *You know when the men are gone*. G.P. Putnam’s Sons.

**The *Redeployment* text can be difficult to read due to its use of language and insensitive material at times. Because of this, you have the option to read the Fallon text and answer the updated questions listed in Canvas.

Attendance and Participation:

Due to the amount of material covered in a brief period of time, attendance is required at all 5 sessions. I understand things may come up within the first few weeks of the semester – so the following attendance policy will be adopted:

Students may miss 1 non-emergency class during this 5-week mini course and still pass. Students will not be given a passing grade if they miss more than 1 class. If you experience an emergency, and are unable to class – please call, text or email me to keep me informed.

Please try to be in class on time as well. I’m familiar with “Michigan Time” so an agreed upon start time for each class will be announced during the first week. If you are more than 30 minutes late (without prior notification) to 2 or more classes, you will not be given a passing grade.