

# Course Syllabus

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**Trauma Basics**  
**SW 540, HS 540, EDUC 540**  
**Spring/Summer 2019**

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## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This is a workshop-based inter-professional education course offered by UM School of Social Work in partnership with the School of Nursing and School of Education. It is the first course in a 3-course sequence in Trauma-Informed Practice (TIP).

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course will provide basic, foundational knowledge about the cognitive, social-emotional, behavioral, and health-related outcomes of trauma in children. A key focus of the course will be on enhancing awareness of trauma in children; assessing and responding to the needs of children who encounter trauma; and changing systems to become more responsive to vulnerable children and their families. The course will emphasize principles of inter-professional education, which focuses on helping students in the professions of social work, nursing, and education work collaboratively in generalist and specialty practice roles.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

This course uses a series of pre-learning readings, group discussions, and writing reflections to prepare students for an all-day workshop on Saturday, July 20, 2019 (Room 1000, 426 North Ingalls Building) that will include short didactic presentations, small group discussions, and exercises that deepen knowledge about trauma and inter-professionals roles. Students will contribute their own knowledge and domain expertise throughout the course.

## **Pre-Learning (Online)**

Starting the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the course, students will be assigned to small groups of 3-5 students from Social Work, Education, and Nursing. It is expected that groups will connect online beginning the second week of the course to discuss readings and assignments, as described below. Pre-learning readings and assignments will provide background knowledge for the Saturday workshop on July 20<sup>th</sup> (8:30-4pm) All materials referenced in this section can be found in weekly modules. Each pre-learning written assignment should be completed during the week it is assigned. Written work consists journal entries in a document that can be uploaded in Canvas at least two days prior to the workshop. Each student must also prepare a 1-page summative statement at the end of the pre-learning component of the course that connects content from assigned readings and small group discussions to inter-professional work in trauma-informed systems.

In the summative statement, please explain how content applies to the roles and functions of professional social workers, educators, or nurses who work in schools and other systems (1-2 paragraphs); where professional roles intersect (1 paragraph), and how inter-professional teams can serve the needs of vulnerable children and their families (1 paragraph). It is understood that not all students will have prior knowledge of inter-professional work and that the depth of content provided in these statements will vary as a result. The goal of this assignment is primarily to stimulate thinking about how teams can work successfully to address trauma in (and across) relevant systems.

While the pre-learning component of the course is based on small group discussions, questions from individual students about the readings can also be posted to Canvas for instructor comment. Questions will be answered at the end of each pre-learning week of the course.

### **Week 1: (Week of June 17)**

**Use Canvas to access and read/view the following materials.**

#### **Watch Dr. Nadine Harris-Burke TED Talk**

[https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;\\_ylt=AwrC3CObsgdddSMAFgEPxQt.;\\_ylu=X3oDMTByMjB0aG5zBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDBHNIYwNzYw--?p=tet+talk+nadine+burke+harris+how+childhood+trauma&fr=yhs-pty-pty\\_email&hspart=pty&hsimp=yhs-pty\\_email#id=2&vid=34290a665fd315accb7a0a6d889878e9&action=view](https://video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search;_ylt=AwrC3CObsgdddSMAFgEPxQt.;_ylu=X3oDMTByMjB0aG5zBGNvbG8DYmYxBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDBHNIYwNzYw--?p=tet+talk+nadine+burke+harris+how+childhood+trauma&fr=yhs-pty-pty_email&hspart=pty&hsimp=yhs-pty_email#id=2&vid=34290a665fd315accb7a0a6d889878e9&action=view)

**Read “What is Complex Trauma: A Guide for Youth and Those that Care About Them”** : <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/what-complex-trauma-resource-guide-youth-and-those-who-care-about-them>

**After accessing the** materials, respond in your journal to the questions below. Responses to each question should be approximately one paragraph in length, appropriately titled with the question you are addressing.

- 1) Reflect on two things you learned about the impact of trauma on young people.
- 2) Reflect upon how childhood trauma might show up in your practice.

- 3) Imagine what role your profession might have in helping youth and families cope with trauma.

## **Week 2: (Week of June 24): Group Introductions and Context Setting**

### **Part 1: Group Introductions**

Use Google Hangouts or another platform to join with your group by video conference. Introduce yourself to the group and discuss the following questions. All members are expected to participate.

- What would you like to learn in this course and how does the content relate to your educational and/or professional career goals?
- What made you decide to go into the field you have chosen? What do you hope to achieve through your work?
- How familiar are you with research on adversity and trauma in children, and with programs designed to mitigate the effects of trauma in vulnerable groups?
- Do you have experience with inter-professional or team-based models of practice? If so, how did these function and what was their purpose. What do you recall about the experience?

Following this first meeting, write an electronic journal entry of approximately one paragraph that summarizes what excites you about the course and how content relates to your professional interests.

### **Part 2: Setting the Context: Social Determinants of Health**

Also within the second week, use Canvas to access and read the following article. After reading the article, respond in your journal to the questions below. Responses to each question should be approximately one paragraph in length, appropriately titled with the question you are addressing.

Singh, G. K., Daus, G. P., Allender, M., Ramey, C. T., Martin, E. K., Perry, C., De Los Reyes, A. A., & Vedamuthu, I. P. (2017). Social determinants of health in the United States: Addressing major health inequality trends for the nation, 1935-2016. *International Journal of MCH and AIDS*, 6, 139-164.

- How does research on the social determinants of health relate to questions one might ask about childhood adversities and developmental outcomes for children and youth?
- Why do racial and gender disparities in health persist despite overall improvements in life expectancy?
- How do socioeconomic disadvantages relate to health disparities and how does each compare to what has been documented about geographic differences in mortality?

## **Week 3 (Week of July 1): Trauma and Resilience**

After reading the article below by Agaibi and Wilson (2005) and watching the TED talk by Dr. El Khani “What it is like to parent in a war zone reconnect with your group (using Google Hangouts or another platform) to discuss the relevance of this information to child development, child trauma, promoting resilience, and child and family support. Following your discussion, provide a half page synopsis of the conversation in your journal. In your synopsis, summarize how these learnings apply to inter-professional work with children and families.

Agaibi, C and Wilson, J. (2005) “Trauma, PTSD, and Resilience: A Review of the Literature”. *Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*, Vol. 6, No3, July 2005 195-216.

What is like to parent in a war zone, Dr. El Khani (TED TALK)

[https://www.ted.com/talks/aala\\_el\\_khani\\_what\\_it\\_s\\_like\\_to\\_be\\_a\\_parent\\_in\\_a\\_war\\_zone/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/aala_el_khani_what_it_s_like_to_be_a_parent_in_a_war_zone/transcript)

### **Week 3 (Week of July 8): Adverse Childhood Experiences**

The following section describes research by Felitti et al. (1998) on the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study. After reading the article and reviewing the summary (Felitti et al., 1998 and overview document), post three discussion questions for an online discussion with your group. The questions you post should relate very specifically to the topic of ACEs and/or findings from the Felitti et al. study. Please include your questions as a journal entry and then write a 1-paragraph summary of the contributions of this work to inter-professional practice.

Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., Koss, M. P., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction to many of the leading causes of death in adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 14, 245-258.

### **Week 4 (Week of July 15): Toxic Stress**

The following article and video explain how toxic stress adversely affects children’s health and development. Read the article (NSCDC 2010\_persistent fear and anxiety) and then watch the video (How Brains are Built). Afterwards, use Google Hangouts or another platform to discuss in your small groups how stress impacts the brain and particularly how chronic stress leads to changes brain structure that cause impairment in children. Explain the consequences of these changes for children’s learning and behavior in schools and other systems? Include your explanation as a half page summary in your journal.

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2010). *Persistent Fear and Anxiety Can Affect Young Children’s Learning and Development: Working Paper No. 9*.

[Video: How Brains are Built: The Core Story of Brain Development \(Links to an external](#)



[site.\)Links to an external site.](#)

## **Workshop (In-Person)**

It is critical that all pre-learning work be completed before the Saturday workshop. To attend the workshop on July 20<sup>th</sup> journal entries and summative statements must be uploaded to Canvas as a single Word document by Thursday, January 18<sup>st</sup> at 5pm. Your document should be titled with your last name and first initial (e.g., Jones M). If this document is not uploaded two days prior to the workshop, you will be informed that the pre-learning component of the course is incomplete and you will not be allowed to continue.

The workshop will consist of short didactic presentations, group discussion, and exercises. The following content areas will be covered during the morning and afternoon sessions: (1) Resilience and Adaptation to Stress; (2) Principles of Trauma-Informed Practices and Programs; and (3) Inter-Professional Collaboration Principles Applied to Trauma Work.

## **Post-Workshop Debriefing (Online)**

Following the workshop, reconnect online with your group another time using Google Hangouts or another platform. Discuss your reactions to the workshop using the following for debriefing and then enter your individual responses as a final journal entry:

1. What are your reactions to the day? How did you feel during the workshop? What thoughts did you have about the experience later?
2. What were the most useful parts of the workshop and why?
3. What did you find challenging, puzzling, or difficult?
4. What will you carry forward from the experience for your future training and field practice?

## **Post-Workshop Journal Entry and Written Reflection**

Following your online debriefing, upload to Canvas by 5pm on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup> one consolidated Word document (titled with your last name and first initial) that includes your final journal entry and a 1-page essay that responds to the following:

*Imagine yourself in the future speaking to members of your own profession about working with youth in schools or other systems. Outline for them 2-3 steps that professionals within your discipline can take to become more responsive to research on topics covered by the course.*