Course title: Trauma Basics
Course #/term: SW540/EDUC540/HS540, Spring/Summer 2023
Time and place: June 12 – July 22 Asynchronous
Mandatory Virtual Workshop: July 15, 9 am – 3 pm
Credit hours: 1
Prerequisites: None
Instructor: Yatesha D. Robinson, Ph.D., LMSW, MA
Dr. Robinson/Dr. Yanni
Social Work Field Faculty and Lecturer IV

Pronouns: She-her
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You may expect a response within 48 business hours

Office hours: By appointment

1. Course Statement

Course Description
This course 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). SW 541 and SW 542 are also included as electives in the WCF pathway. Completion of all 3 courses fulfills the requirement of a trauma certificate. This first 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. Exploration of factors known to promote resilience and well-being will be emphasized and examined throughout the course. The course will examine principles of interprofessional education, which focuses on helping students in the professions of social work, nursing, and education work collaboratively in generalist and specialty practice roles.
Course Objectives
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Articulate knowledge of content in a number of core areas, including:
  - Definition(s) of trauma
  - Epidemiology of trauma and populations at high(er) risk for adverse and traumatic experiences
  - Types of trauma
  - Causes of trauma
  - Signs and symptoms of trauma in children and families
  - Long-term, developmental impacts of trauma (neurobiological, psychological, social, physical)
  - Resilience and methods of positive coping
  - Protective and mitigating factors to enhance social support, learning, health and well-being across the lifespan

- Apply the guiding principles of trauma-informed programs and practices used in schools and other systems that serve vulnerable children, youth, and families, with a focus on perceiving and assessing trauma.
- Describe how interprofessional and team-based approaches are optimal to effectively engage in trauma-informed practice.
- Draw upon the roles and functions of their own and other professionals from different fields of practice in team-based approaches to address trauma.
- Identify key strategies for interprofessional collaborations that include goals for successful communication, coordination, and distribution of roles, functions, and tasks.

Design
This course uses a series of online pre-learning readings, group discussions, and writing reflections to prepare students for an all-day workshop that includes 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.

Intensive Focus on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity and Social Justice (PODS)
This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing 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.

2. Class Requirements

Course format, text, and class materials
This is a workshop-based interprofessional 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 Interprofessional Mini-Certificate on Trauma-Informed Practice. Courses in the certificate are:

- Trauma Basics (SW/EDUC/HS 540)
- Trauma-Informed Practice (SW/EDUC/HS 541)
- Creating and Sustaining Trauma-Informed Systems (SW/EDUC/HS 542)

Trauma Basics serves as a prerequisite for the other two courses in the certificate and must be completed prior to enrolling in SW/EDUC/HS 541 or 542.

This course uses readings, written work (journal entries), and required online group meetings to prepare each student for an all-day workshop using Zoom on **Saturday, July 15 from 9am - 3pm**. The workshop will include short didactic presentations, small group discussions, and exercises that deepen knowledge about trauma and inter-professionals roles. There is also a post-workshop reflection component of the course in which students are asked to write about their experiences of the workshop and future contributions to their respective fields of practice. Readings and other course materials can be found on the course’s Canvas site.

Grading
Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory
To earn a Satisfactory grade for this course, participants must a) prepare for, attend, and participate in all small group discussions in their entirety, b) submit assignments that satisfactorily address the assignment requirements, and c) **attend the entire workshop** on July 12. You will not be able to pass the course without attending your small group meetings and the mandatory July 15 workshop. Please notify the instructor ASAP if you have concerns about meeting any of these expectations.

Pre-Learning (Online)
A pre-learning component of the course will cover foundational material in childhood adversities and trauma. This component provides an opportunity to explore and discuss selected readings on topics that will be covered in more detail at the in-person workshop.
Pre-learning assignments consist of **written journal entries** and a **final summative statement**, which should be uploaded to Canvas as a **single Word document prior to the in-person workshop** (see instructions below).

**Learning Process**

In Week 1 (June 12), you will work independently to gain an understanding of trauma and its impacts on children. You will receive your small group assignment (3-5 students) and work with your fellow group members to set up a virtual meeting time. Group meetings begin Week 2.

Starting in Week 2 (June 19), small group meetings begin. Participation in online group meetings is a **requirement to pass this course**. To ensure full participation, you will be asked to attest to having participated in all online group sessions when uploading your pre-learning work.

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

**Assignments**

a. **Journal Entries Weeks 1-3 (40 points)**. Written responses in the pre-learning and post-workshop reflections should be written as “journal entries,” listed by date and session title. Details are provided below. These entries should be completed during the week they are assigned.
   i. Journal entries 1-3 are due on Canvas Monday, July 3 by midnight.
   ii. Please upload Journal Entries 1-3 as a single word document.

b. **Journal Entries Weeks 4-5 with Summative Statement (50 points)** are due By Wednesday, July 12, at midnight.
   i. This will include your statement of participation (See details below).
   ii. Please upload Journal Entries 4-5 with Summative Statement as a single word document.

c. A one-page single-spaced final workshop reflection (20 points) due July 22 at midnight.

**Satisfactory** = 77 – 110 points + group participation + workshop attendance and participation
**Unsatisfactory** = 76 points or less, OR missing any course requirements
Weekly Course Schedule and Assignments

Week 1, June 12: Defining Trauma

In Week 1, please work independently on the following:

1. Visit the website for the National Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) found here: https://www.nctsn.org/.
2. Then go to the section on “About Child Trauma” (https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/about-child-trauma) and read the page in its entirety.
3. After reviewing these materials online, write a double-spaced 1-paragraph response to each of the following questions. This will be journal entry 1.
   3.1. What are two things you learned about the impact of trauma on young people?
   3.2. How might childhood trauma might show up in work you do as a social worker, nurse, or school professional?
   3.3. What role do you, or might you eventually, play in helping to prevent or lessen trauma reactions in children?
4. After receiving your group assignment, work with your other group members to set up a remote group meeting time for Week 2. Use Zoom, Google Hangouts, or another platform to join with your group online. These small groups meetings are required. Please contact the instructor if you are having trouble connecting with your group.

Week 2, June 19: Group Introductions and Context Setting

1. On your own read, SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach, July 2014 pp 1-10. SAMHSA Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach.
2. After receiving your group assignment, use Zoom, Google Hangouts, or another platform to arrange a meeting and join with your group online. Introduce yourself to your group and discuss the questions below.
3. As a reminder, all members are expected to participate in all online meetings. If someone in your group does not participate, or if you have difficulty connecting with others in your group online, please notify me (yatesha@umich.edu) ASAP so that I can help resolve the problem.
3.1. Introduce yourself (Name, pronouns, other important parts of your identities you would like to share, program, and course of study, and one non-school/non-profession related interest).

3.2. What would you like to learn in this course and how does the content relate to your goals for higher education and your career?

3.3. What led to your choosing the profession you have?

3.4. What do you hope to achieve through your work?

3.5. How familiar are you with ideas related to childhood adversities and trauma?

3.6. Have you worked on inter-professional teams? If so, how did these teams function and what was their purpose. What do you recall about the experience?

3.7. Related to the SAMS A article, please discuss the 3 E’s of Trauma, and the 4 R’s of Trauma Informed Response.

4. Following this first meeting, write a journal entry of approximately one single-spaced paragraph that summarizes what you learned about others in your group, particularly about their thinking, hopes, and ideas related to childhood adversities and trauma. This will be journal entry 2.

Week 3, June 26: Adverse Childhood Experiences and Toxic Stress

1. Read the article by Merrick et al. (2019) on Adverse Childhood Experiences.

2. Also read “Persistent Fear and Anxiety Can Affect Children’s Learning and Environment” (NSCDC 2010).

3. Reconnect with your group online to discuss the following:
   3.1. Do a quick check-in re: how the week went for everyone by taking a moment for each person to share, about EITHER a rose (i.e. something positive), OR a thorn (i.e. something tricky/challenging/disappointing) OR a rosebud (i.e. something to which you are looking forward).
   3.2. Re: the Merrick et al. article, what was the role of the stacking of adverse childhood experiences and some of their findings related to possible protective and prevention strategies related ACES?
   3.3. Re: the assigned NSCDC 2010 article, how stress impacts the brains and bodies of children. Talk specifically about how chronic stress influences children’s learning and behavior.
4. Summarize your discussion of these two questions in a 2-3 double-spaced paragraph journal entry response. This will be journal entry 3.

5. Please upload Journal Entries 1 – 3 into Canvas by July 3 before midnight (40 points).

Week 4, July 3: Trauma and Racism

1. In Week 4, read the article titled “Racism and Invisibility” by Franklin et al. (2006).

2. Reconnect with your group online to discuss the following:
   2.1. Do a quick check-in re: how the week went for everyone by taking a moment for each person to share, EITHER a rose (i.e. something positive), OR a thorn (i.e. something tricky/disappointing/challenging) OR a rosebud (i.e. something to which you are looking forward).

   2.2. How does this article relate to other themes of the course?

   2.3. Consider the excerpted paragraph below. Discuss in your group how the trauma of racism and other forms of oppression can be acknowledged without pathologizing those who are harmed. How might these concepts influence your thinking about trauma work in schools, health care, and other settings?

   "Carter, Forsyth, Mazzula, and Williams (2004) have presented an important caution, however, against a blaming-the-victim approach to racism and PTSD. They clarify that the use of the term “disorder” locates the problem in the individual person of color. These researchers argue that “it is more accurate to assess the effects of racism (e.g., harassment and discrimination) as psychological and emotional injury than as mental disorder since the effects of racism come from the sociocultural environment, not from an abnormality that resides within the individual” (p. 12). They caution clinicians that diagnosing persons of color who have encountered race-related trauma with PTSD may lead to individual treatment strategies that may ignore the systemic, environmental, and institutional factors of racism."

3. Summarize your discussion of these two questions in a 2-3 double-spaced paragraph journal entry response. This will be journal entry 4.

OPTIONAL: For those looking for additional resources on this topic, you might also read:

This article by Alvarez (2020) provides an excellent review and discussion of research on the intersection of race, trauma, and education.


**Week 5 (July 10): Trauma and Resilience**

1. After reading the article by Lynch et al. (2007) titled “The Story of My Strength" and watching Dr. El-Khani's Ted Talk from" Bombs to Bread", re-connect online with your group another time to discuss your reactions to the narratives presented in the materials.
   a. Do a quick check-in re: how the week went for everyone by taking a moment for each person to share, about EITHER a rose (i.e something positive), OR a thorn (something tricky/disappointing/challenging) or a rosebud (something to which you are looking forward).
   b. Refer to the questions that follow to guide your conversation:
      i. What stands out from these narratives about the ways in which individuals cope and rebound from highly stressful and traumatic experiences?
      ii. Is resilience a given in all cases?
      iii. What contributes to an individual’s becoming resilient in the face of adversity?
      iv. How do these ideas relate to practice in schools and other systems that serve children and families?
      v. What other issues come to mind as you reflect on these narratives?

2. Following your online discussion, write a single-spaced half page summary of any individual take-aways you have from the reading/Ted Talk and discussion with your group. This will be journal entry 5.

**Article and Ted Talk:**

- [Dr. El-Khani "From Bombs to Bread" TED TALK From Bombs to Bread Dr. El-Khani TED Talk](#)

**Summative Statement including Statement of Participation (Due Wednesday, July 12 by midnight (50 points), with Journal Entries 4-5, all as one word document).** In addition to journal entries, please complete a 1-page (single-spaced) summative statement at the end of the pre-learning section of the course. In the statement, explain how content applies to the roles and functions of professional social workers, nurses and educators who work in schools and other systems (1-2 paragraphs); where professional roles intersect (1 paragraph), and how interprofessional teams can serve the needs of vulnerable children and their families (1
paragraph). It is understood that not everyone will have prior knowledge of interprofessional 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 practitioners from different professions can work successfully to address trauma in and across relevant systems. Add your Statement of Participation at the end.

**Required Weekend Workshop: Saturday, July 15 from 9 am – 3 pm**

The workshop for this course will be held VIRTUALLY ON ZOOM. The session will begin at 9 am and end by 3 pm on Saturday, July 15. This session is mandatory to successfully complete the course. Please join the session a few minutes before 9:00 am to get settled and address any connectivity issues. There will be a 1/2-hour lunch break during the workshop from approximately 12 - 12:30 pm.

**Note: It is critical that all pre-learning work be completed before the in-person workshop. To attend the workshop on Saturday, July 15th, you must upload your journal entries and summative statement (as a single Word document) by no later than midnight on July 12. If this document is not uploaded before the workshop, you will be informed that the pre-learning component of the course is incomplete and you will not be permitted to continue with the course.**

**Post-Workshop Debriefing (Online) Week of July 17**

Following the workshop, reconnect online with your group one last time to debrief the experience and share your responses to these questions.

1. What are your overall reactions to the day?
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?

After your online debriefing session, write a 1-page final journal entry/reflection that responds to the following:

1. 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 attuned and responsive to what we know about stress and trauma.
2. Please upload your final journal entry as a single Word document by no later than 5:00 pm on Saturday, July 22 (20 points).

After receiving your journal entry, I will review your work and assign you a grade either Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory for the course.
3. Attendance and Class Participation

As stated throughout this syllabus, attendance at all group sessions and the final workshop is required for a satisfactory grade. Participants must a) prepare for, attend, and participate in all small group discussions in their entirety and b) attend the full workshop on July 15. You will not be able to pass the course without meeting these requirements. It is expected that each group member participates actively during group meetings; please work to schedule meetings when each group member is available. To ensure full participation for your group work, you will be asked to attest to having participated in all online group sessions when uploading your pre-learning work.

Please notify Dr. Robinson ASAP if you have concerns about meeting any of these expectations.

Class Recording and Course Materials

Audio and video recording of in-class lectures and discussions is prohibited without the advance written permission of the instructor. Students with an approved accommodation from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities permitting the recording of class meetings must present documentation to the instructor in advance of any recording being done. The instructor reserves the right to disallow recording for a portion of any class time where privacy is a special concern. If the instructor chooses to record a class, they will decide which classes, if any, are recorded, what portion of each class is recorded, and whether a recording is made available on the course management website.

COVID-19 Statement

For the safety of all students, faculty, and staff on campus, it is important for each of us to be mindful of safety measures that have been put in place for our protection. Your participation in this course is conditional upon your adherence to all safety measures mandated by the state of Michigan and the University, including properly wearing a face covering in class and compliance with the University COVID-19 Vaccination Policy. Other applicable and additional safety measures may be described in the Campus Maize & Blueprint. Your ability to participate in this course may be impacted by failure to comply with campus safety measures. Individuals seeking to request an accommodation related to the face covering requirement under the Americans with Disabilities Act should contact the Office for Institutional Equity and those seeking an exemption related to the vaccination requirement should submit an exemption request through WolverineAccess. I also encourage you to review the Statement of Student Rights and
Responsibilities and the COVID-related Addendum to the Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Health-Related Class Absences

Please evaluate your own health status regularly and refrain from attending class and coming to campus if you are ill. You are encouraged to seek appropriate medical attention for treatment. School of Social Work students who miss class due to illness of any kind will be given opportunities to access course materials online or provided with alternative learning opportunities. Please notify me by email about your absence as soon as practical, so that I can make accommodations. Please note that documentation (a doctor’s note) for medical excuses is not required.

Additional School and University policies, information and resources are available here: https://ssw.umich.edu/standard-policies-information-resources. They include:

- Safety and emergency preparedness
- Mental health and well-being
- Teaching evaluations
- Proper use of names and pronouns
- Accommodations for students with disabilities
- Religious/spiritual observances
- Military deployment
- Writing skills and expectations
- Academic integrity and plagiarism