

Integrating Spirituality into Counseling

Syllabus Spring, 2010

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Contact Information

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Office Hours: 2:00 to 4:00 Monday by appointment only.

Course Description

Spirituality, religion, the search for meaning, are central to the lives and ways of coping with life challenges of many clients and many counselors. The importance of preparing counselors to incorporate these issues into their work is increasingly clear. This two-credit class will focus on understanding the ways spirituality and religion inform and influence the lives of clients and of counselors, and how these can enrich the purposes and efforts of both in the work of counseling.

Through reading, reflective journaling, presentations, respectful dialogue, and exploration of diverse spiritual orientations, traditions and practices, this class aims to:

- Develop beginning knowledge and appreciation of the richness, diversity, and potential power of religious and spiritual resources in the lives of counselors and clients;
- Examine effects of these frameworks of meaning on quality of life, life strategies, and approaches to coping with life's challenges;
- Examine counselor strategies for assessment and intervention that seek understanding of, and draw on client's spiritual and religious resources.
- Increase the capacity of all participants to inquire into the frames of meaning that shape their own understandings and to expand our capacity to understand the similarities, differences, and rich diversity of the experiences and views of others.

The activities of this class will emphasize dialogue, reflection, exploration and will include experiential learning.

Goals and Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will:

- Be familiar with ethical guidelines applying to issues of spirituality and religion.

- Have an increased understanding of the diversity of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices in American society and in the world.
- Be able to describe, explain, and apply conceptual frameworks for understanding spirituality and religion, core beliefs in major religions, and for differing orientations to differences, otherness, and diversity of these.
- Demonstrate an increased understanding of their own (as a future counselor) religious and spiritual experience, beliefs, and practices as well as the ability to articulate these.
- Demonstrate understanding and skill in engaging in a receptive, accepting, and exploratory dialogue with persons whose experiences, beliefs, and practices are different from their own.
- Develop understanding and acceptance of a variety of religious/spiritual expressions in client communication.
- Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to explain and apply relevant models of religious and spiritual development over the lifespan.
- Describe and understand how spiritual and religious experience are interwoven with relationships, families, faith communities in all traditions, communities and societies.
- Understand the role of spiritual/religious struggle in mental health and relationships.
- Understand how religious/spiritual experience can be interwoven with mental health issues, challenges, and disorders.
- Demonstrate knowledge of a variety of spiritual practices relevant to their own and client well-being.
- Practice and demonstrate knowledge of a range of spiritual /religious assessment tools and interventions.
- Demonstrate the ability to develop treatment goals that fit with a client's beliefs, values and practices.
- Recognize the influence of religiously based beliefs and practices in social and political movements.

Primary Source Text

Plante, Thomas G. (2009). Spiritual Practices in Psychotherapy: Thirteen Tools for Enhancing Psychological Health. Washington, DC. American Psychological Association.

Reserve readings will be available online from the Watzek Library and from the Moodle site for this course.

Regarding Respectful Dialogue

The experiences and views of each member of the class regarding spiritual and religious matters are uniquely their own and reflect many important life experiences. These views and experiences are normally central to each person's sense of meaning, personal values, and personal identity. In order to create a class environment that fosters

learning and growth, it is critically necessary that each person feel confident that her or his views and experience will be respected. This means specifically that when a class member speaks or writes about her/his experiences and beliefs that other members of the class respond with their best efforts to listen carefully and appreciatively, to inquire thoughtfully, and to first seek to understand and accept the experiences of their classmate.

While this does not mean that any of us can fully understand each other's experiences or views, and does not require that we agree with another person's views, it does mean that we offer intentional, affirming interest and an invitation to further exploration of that person's orientation and experiences. When we give and receive this level of acceptance and affirmation, we are enabled to reflect, question, challenge, and enrich our frames of understanding. Deliberately practicing these approaches promotes choice, change, and growth. Learning how to engage in this kind of dialogue and exploration is central to the purposes of this class.

Statements and declarations of absolute, dogmatic truth are contrary to these essential conditions for learning. While it is entirely appropriate for members of the class to state that they feel strongly about a particular point of view or issue and explain their bases for their approach, it is critically necessary that in doing so we acknowledge that other members of the class may have different views that are equally important to them. Strongly stated declarations and opinions that imply a threat, or a stance of superiority or condemnation, or that suppress questioning and uncertainty, are inimical to a vital and nurturing learning environment.

We will practice accepting and invitational listening, and thoughtful, respectful expression of our own experiences and views. We are committed to this as ethical practice with our clients. Extending the same efforts to each other will strengthen our capacity for acceptance, perceptive understanding, and compassionate work with our clients.

Requirements for credit:

Note: Due dates and more specific guidance regarding the content and emphasis of each written assignment will be provided in the class sessions and the schedule.

1. Attendance and active participation.
2. Interaction, oral and written, demonstrating understanding and engagement with the information and ideas from readings and presentations.
3. Documented practice of a spiritual practice during the weeks of the class.

4. Brief reaction and reflection notes, as requested in class sessions.
5. Reflective and integrative essays.
 - a. My Spiritual Autobiography
 - b. Exploring Spiritual and Religious Experiences Different From Mine:
 - c. My Approaches to Client Spiritual Issues
 - d. What I Have Learned from Spiritual Practices and How I Envision My Future Learning and Growth.

Attendance and Absences

Active participation in discussions and dialogue in small groups and the entire class are central to the purposes and the processes for learning regarding spirituality and religion. Absences from class are acceptable only for extenuating reasons such as illness, unavoidable emergencies, or matters of family or medical necessity. If you anticipate any such occurrences, discuss them in advance with an instructor so that arrangements can be made to maintain your active engagement with learning activities of the class. If you find it necessary to be absent for unpredicted and unavoidable reasons, please notify your triad partners and the course instructor as soon as possible. Arrangements to replace the missing participation with your triad partners and with the activities of class may involve supplementary work, usually in the form of written dialogue or other responsive communication and interaction.

Brief Bibliography
Spirituality and Counseling
Spring 2010

- Abels, S. L. (Ed.). *Spirituality in Social Work Practice*. Denver, Colorado: Love.
- Aten, J. D., & Leach, M. M. (Eds.). (2009). *Spirituality and the therapeutic process: a comprehensive resource from intake to termination*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Burke, M. T., & Miranti, J. G. (Eds.). (1995). *Counseling: The Spiritual Dimension*. Washington, D.C.: American Counseling Association.
- Cashwell, C. S., & Young, J. S. (Eds.). (2005). *Integrating Spirituality and Religion into Counseling: A Guide to Competent Practice*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2004). *The Psychology of Gratitude*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gold, J. M. (2010). *Counseling and Spirituality: Integrating spiritual and clinical orientations*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Hinterkopf, E. (1998). *Integrating Spirituality in Counseling: A Manual for Using the Experiential Focusing Method*. Washington, D.C.: American Counseling Association.
- Kelly, E. W. (1995). *Spirituality and Religion in Counseling and Psychotherapy: Diversity in Theory and Practice*. Washington, D.C.: American Counseling Association.
- Miller, W. R. (Ed.). (1999). *Integrating Spirituality into Treatment: Resources for Practitioners*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Miller, W. R., & Baca, C. d. (2001). *Quantum Change: When Epiphanies and Sudden Insights Transform Ordinary Lives*. New York: Guilford.
- Miller, W. R., & Delaney, H. D. (Eds.). (2005). *Judeo-Christian Perspectives on Psychology: Human Nature, Motivation, and Change*. . Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Morgan, O. (Ed.). (2004). *Counseling and Spirituality: Views from the Profession*. New York: Lakasha Press.
- Nielsen, S. L., Johnson, W. B., & Ellis, A. (2001). *Counseling and Psychotherapy with Religious Persons*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Paloutzian, R. F. (1996). *Invitation to the Psychology of Religion* (2nd ed.). Needham Heights, Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon.
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- Pargament, K. I. (2007). *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy: Understanding and Addressing the Sacred*. New York: Guilford.
- Pargament, K. I., & Mahoney, A. (2002). *Spirituality: Discovering and*

Conserving the Sacred. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 646-659). New York: Oxford University Press.

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Propst, L. R. (1988). *Psychotherapy in a Religious Framework*. New York: Human Sciences Press.

Richards, P. S., & Bergin, A. E. (1997). *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

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Richards, P. S., & Bergin, A. E. (Eds.). (2004). *Casebook for a Spiritual Strategy in Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Shafranske, E. P. (Ed.). (1996). *Religion and the Clinical Practice of Psychology*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Sperry, L. (2001). *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.

Walsh, F. (Ed.). (1999). *Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy*. New York: Guilford.

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Webb, D. (2005). *The Soul of Counseling*. Atascadero, CA: Impact Publishers.

Worthington, J., Everett L., Sandage, S. J., Davis, D. E., Hook, J., Miller, A. J., Hall, M. E. L., et al. (2009). Training Therapists to Address Spiritual Concerns in Clinical Practice and Research. In J. D. Aten & M. M. Leach (Eds.), *Spirituality and the Therapeutic Process: A Comprehensive Resource From Intake To Termination*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments
Short Form
Integrating Spirituality into Counseling
Counseling Psychology 593
Spring, 2010

Jan 11 Week 1	Understanding Spirituality and Religion Experiences, Beliefs, Practices: The Search for Meaning Assignment Due: Complete and turn in Religious Background and Behavior Questionnaire	Readings
Jan 18	No Class: Martin Luther King Day	
Jan 25 Week 2	Development, Change, Growth Assignment Due: Completed SWB inventory; completed BriefCope (both anonymous)	Readings Text: Introduction and Chapters 1 & 2
Feb 1 Week 3	Differences, Diversity, Conflict and Dialogue Assignment Due: Part 1, draft, Spiritual Auto biography Assignment Due: Spiritual Autobiography Draft Part One	Readings Text: Chapter 3
Feb 8 Week 4	Spirituality and Life Challenges: Positive and Negative Strategies	Readings Text: Chapter 4
Feb 15 Week 5	Assignment Due: My Spiritual Autobiography Exploring Other Paths	Readings Text: Chapter 5 and 6

Feb 22 Week 6	Exploring through Observations, Inquiry, and Interviews	Guide for Observation, Inquiry, and Exploration will be provided.
Mar 1 Week 7	Assignment Due: My Exploration Experience Clinical Assessment: Orientation, Strengths, Limitations, and Problems	Readings
Mar 8 Week 8	Spiritual Struggles and Challenges	Readings Text: Chapter 9
Mar 15 Week 9	Clinical Challenges	Readings Text: Chapter 8
Mar 22	Spring Break	