

SW591 SPRING 2008 212 OBrian 6-8:50PM
SPIRITUALITY IN SOCIAL WORK
Bonnie J. Collins EdM, LCSW-R
Phone:(716)648 4455 Fax:(716)648 2760
Email:collinsb@buffalo.edu
Business Address: 154 Main St.Suite A Hamburg NY 14075

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In keeping with the generalist model, as Social Workers we need to be exploring spiritual themes with our clients.

Such exploration can offer them a source of inner strength during times of crisis. It may also help them find a sense of community based on their belief system and give meaning to their lives even when grieving during transitions and losses.

This course will expose the student to basic knowledge about spirituality as a component of mental health as well as teach her/him interventions for integrating spiritual concepts into clinical practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explore spirituality as an integral part of the conceptual frame of a generalist model of Social Work.
2. Explore student's own spirituality through readings, class discussion and experiential exercises.
3. Review historical and philosophical support for including spirituality as a component of Social Work practice.
4. Develop and/or enlarge the students' knowledge base about diverse spiritual beliefs and traditions of the various populations Social Workers serve.
5. Learn clinical assessment and intervention strategies involving spirituality as a significant aspect of treatment planning.

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REQUIRED READINGS

1. Abel, S. (2000). *Spirituality in Social Work Practice*. Colorado: Love Publishing.
2. Hopkins, E.; Woods, Z.; Kelley, R.; Bentley, K.; Murphy, J. (1995). *Working with Groups on Spiritual Themes*. Duluth, Minn: Whole Person Associates.
- 3 Hodge, D. (2004) *Spiritual Assessment Handbook for Helping Professionals*. North American Association. of Christian Social Workers.
4. Lozoff, B. (2001). *It's a Meaningful Life*. Penguin Compass.
5. Required weekly readings on line.

OPTIONAL READING

1. Collins and Laughlin (2005) *The Power of Story*. Diluth Minn. Whole Person Press. (Available from instructor-\$25)
2. Gale, Bolzan & McRae-McMahon (2007) *Spirited Practices*. Crowns Nest, Australia Allen& Unwin. (available from www.allenandunwin.com) Covers topics that lend themselves well to spiritual interventions such as: Disconnection, Illness, Loss, Stigma, Hoplessness, Transitions, and Resistance.
3. Derezotes, D (2006) *Spiritually Oriented Social Work Practice*. NY: Pearson. (available at www.ablongman.com) Discusses various populations where spiritual interventions could be used such as mental health settings, criminal justice settings, with aging adults, with families and groups, with children and youth.

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COURSE GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

There are **three assignments** and a **class participation** grade, which will be totaled for your final grade.

No assignments will be accepted after the date they are due unless **prior arrangements have been made with the instructor**. All papers must be given to the instructor as hard copy at the end of the class on the date they are due. **All papers will only be accepted in person at the class (no email, fax or snail mail or leaving paper in my box at School of Social Work).** **Late papers need to be brought to next class and will suffer grade penalties.**

Please note: If the instructor believes an act of academic dishonesty has been committed (e.g., inappropriate citation or failing to cite), the student will receive sanction in accordance with the policies and procedures described in the Faculty and Professional Staff Handbook. Such sanction will include either a reduction of grade for the particular assignment, a failure for that assignment, or a failure for the course.

HIPAA ALERT:

In line with the new HIPAA regulations concerning protected health information, it is important that you understand that any case information you present from your work will need to be de-identified. What this means is that any information that would allow someone to know who the person was, needs to be changed or eliminated. This includes obvious things like names and birth dates but may also contain other information that is so unique to the person that it will allow for identification, including diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender. If diagnosis, race/ethnicity, or gender is directly related to the case presentation it can be included if you are confident it will not allow for identification.

OFFICE HOURS:

Students are encouraged to call or email the instructor whenever questions arise. Since the instructor is adjunct, face-to-face meetings on campus must be arranged before or after class time.

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CLASS PARTICIPATION: (2 pts of final grade)

As adult learners and members of the professional social work community, we learn best by engaging interactively with our colleagues around issues of mutual concern and interest.

Therefore, to enhance the teaching-learning environment, **attendance at class and participation in classroom activities is encouraged and will count toward student's final grade.**

The student is expected to **notify the instructor** if s/he cannot come to class and more than one missed class may require an extra assignment.

Students with **disabilities** who require special accommodations should inform the instructor of specific requirements immediately and also submit paperwork from the Department of Disabilities by second class.

ASSIGNMENT I:

Two Page paper of the weekly readings and class notes

(4 points x 12 weeks=48 points of final grade)

There are 14 weeks in this semester. Student must submit a two page paper for 12 of those weeks in order to complete the course. There is no paper for the first or last week.

In order to be prepared for class discussions, student is expected to prepare a maximum two-page paper during the week before class that addresses that topic of the week. Student must make reference to **ALL OF THE READINGS OF THE WEEK** as part of the paper. This paper is to be handed in at the end of the class that it was prepared for. Any paper that is handed in late will

lower the grade. Papers can only be handed in at class sessions. Please do not email or fax papers without the permission of the instructor.

All assignments should be word-processed using 1-inch margins, 12-point font and 1½ line spacing (rather than current APA style of double line spacing) with student's name and week number as well as the topic of the week on each page. Since written communication is an important social work skill, assignments should be clearly written and professionally presented. Therefore, papers with excessive typos, spelling errors or grammatical errors will lose points on the grade.

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If you want to cite outside references (this is not mandatory for this assignment) please cite according to the style manual of the APA, 5th Edition. **References from the syllabus need only be cited by author and date of publication. (ex: Author's Name, 1998).** Students are expected to hand in only their own original work, except where references are clearly cited.

Also, during class, student is expected to **hand-write legibly on the back of weekly paper a minimum of five things s/he learned from class discussion that day.**

Papers will be graded as follows:

- 2 point for ability to comprehend and evaluate the readings and answer the question of the week
- 1 point for clear concise well-written paper with no grammatical mistakes and handed in on time.
- 1 point for clear, readable class notes that reflect learnings from class on back of weekly paper.

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ASSIGNMENT 2:

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE PAPER (25 points of final grade)

Due March 5, 2008

Using the assigned text *It's a Meaningful Life* by Bo Lozoff, choose six practices (3 from Part One: "the Inner Journey of Communion" and 3 from Part Two: "The Outer Path Toward Community") that you would like to explore in your own life. Please number the practices you choose in your paper.

In a paper of 8-12 pages, 1 ½ line spacing and 12 pt font, using APA style, include the following:

- 1) Describe the practice that Lozoff suggests and why you chose it. Comment on what makes this practice spiritual according to Lozoff and whether you agree or not and why.
- 2) Comment on what the research has to say about each of the practices you choose. Research can include reference to class readings and discussions but **must also include at least one outside reference for each practice. (6 outside references.)**
- 3) Describe your own experience with the practice. Please include both positive and negative aspects.
- 4) Explore how this practice could be used (or is inappropriate to use) with the clients you see.

Grade will be based on the following:

Points:

- 5 points for good organization and professional appearance of the paper
- 5 points for in depth description of the practices you chose to explore
- 5 points for research applicable to the practices you chose
- 5 points for description of your own experience with each of the 6 practices
- 5 points for how each of these practices might or might not be used with the clients

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you have experience with.

Assignment 3:

Team Presentation of SPIRITUAL/RELIGIOUS BELIEF SYSTEM

Dates Assigned in second class (25 points of final grade-team graded)

Students in teams of 2- 4 are to select and research a spiritual/religious belief system of a population we might serve as social workers. The team is to present the findings to the class within a **one hour time limit**. The presentation is to include a ritual from the belief system that is presented to the class (or have the class join in).

Be respectful of the belief system from which the ritual comes. The students may need to get permission from an authority in that belief system in order to perform the ritual in a classroom setting.

The presentation should include:

1. A **one-page original handout** created by the team to be given to class members. This handout should contain the most important information students need to know when working with this belief system.
2. An **oral presentation**, which includes description of the belief system as well as the team's own experience.
3. Evidence in the presentation of cited **research** on the belief system. Please include a reference page.
4. An **outline of the presentation** with team members' responsibilities identified. (to be given to the instructor only.)
5. A **brief quiz** on the material presented to be given to the class members at the end of the presentation. Be creative with the format!

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Grade will be based on the following:

Points:

- 1 point for good organization
- 1 point for keeping to one-hour time limit
- 1 point for evidence of teamwork (please meet in person at least once!)
- 1 point for evidence of individual contribution to the presentation
- 1 point for clearly developed outline of presentation for instructor

- 4 points for content that is useful to practicing social work
- 4 points for a clearly developed handout
- 4 points for evidence of use of research in addition to class texts
- 4 points for evidence of inclusion of various sources of learning in the presentation.
(lecture, experiential exercise, visual aids)
- 4 points for a creative quiz

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COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1: TOWARD A WORKING DEFINITION OF SPIRITUALITY AS IT APPLIES TO SOCIAL WORK- Handouts from instructor

Week 2: IS THERE HISTORICAL EVIDENCE AND A THEORETICAL FOUNDATION FOR INTEGRATING SPIRITUALITY INTO SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE?

1.Bullis, R. (1996). Making Connections between Spirituality and Social Work Practice. *Spirituality in Social Work Practice*. Wash DC: Taylor and Francis. pp.1-9.

2.Canda, E. (1995). Retrieving The Soul of Social Work. *Society for Spirituality and Social Work Newsletter*. Vol2 #2, pp.5-8.

3.Religion and the Brain. (May7, 2001). *NEWSWEEK*. pp.52-58.

Week 3: AS SOCIAL WORKERS, HOW DO WE HONOR DIVERSITY OF OUR CLIENTS'SPIRITUAL BELIEF SYSTEMS?

1. Abels. (2000). *Text*. pp1-4 and Chapter 2.

2. Oppenheimer, M. (Nov 1992). Alma's Bedside Ghost: Or the Importance of Cultural Similarity. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*. Vol 14(4), pp. 496- 501.

3. Boyd-Franklin. (1999). Spirituality and Religion: Implications for Psychotherapy with African-American Clients and Families. In Walsh (Ed.)(1999). *Spiritual Resources in Family therapy*. NY: Guilford Press. pp.90-103.

4. Roman, R. (Oct 2002). Recovery with or without Religion? *Counselor*. pp.34-36.

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Week 4: DO WE GO THROUGH DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES AS WE EXPLORE OUR SPIRITUALITY?

1. Hart, T. (2003). Introduction. *The Secret Spiritual World of Children*. Maui, HI:Inner Ocean Publishing. pp.1-16.

2. Levenson, Aldwen & D/Mello. (2005). Religious Development from Adolescence to Middle Adulthood. In Paloutzian, R & Park, C. (Eds). *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality*. Chapter 8.

3. Nowitz, MSW. (2005). Geriatric Care Management: Spiritual Challenges. In Moody, H. (Ed). *Religion, Spirituality and Aging*. NY: Haworth Social Work Practice Press.pp.185-201.

Week 5: HOW CAN WE WEAVE OUR OWN SPIRITUALITY INTO OUR WORK?

1. Abels. (2000). *TEXT*. Chapter 3.

2. Collins. (Sept/Oct 2001). Expect Miracles. *Psychotherapy Networker*. pp 23-24.

3. Norwood-Evans, E. (Feb 2004). A Soul-Centered Model of Therapy. *Social Work Today*. pp.26-29.

Week 6: HOW DO WE INCLUDE SPIRITUALITY AS PART OF OUR ASSESSMENT PROCESS?

1. Hopkins et al. (1995). *Text*. Pp 29-48.

2. Hodge, D. (2003). *Text*. Chapters 2,3&4.

3. Benningfield. (1997). Addressing Spiritual/Religious Issues in Therapy. *Journal of Family Social Work*. Vol. 2 no 4. pp25-42.

Week 7: IS THERE A PLACE FOR SPIRITUALITY IN FAMILY THERAPY?

1. Becvar. (1998). Soul Healing & the Family. *Spirituality & Social Work*, pp1-11.
2. Hodge,D. (2003). *Text*. Chapter 5 & 6.
3. Griffith, M (1999). Opening Therapy to Conversations with a Personal God. In Walsh (Ed.) *SpiritualResources in Family Therapy*. pp.209-222.

Week 8: ARE THERE CERTAIN CLINICAL ISSUES THAT LEND THEMSELVES WELL TO SPIRITUAL INTERVENTIONS?

1. Young-Sowers, M. (1993). Major Physical and Emotional Loss Leads to Spiritual Insights. In *Spiritual Crisis*. NH: Stillpoint Publishing. pp 19-40.
2. Hopkins et al. (1995). *TEXT*, pp43-44; 74-75; 91-92; 95-96; 109-111; 123-125.
3. Abels. (2000). *TEXT*, Chapter 5.

Week 9: ARE THERE CERTAIN POPULATIONS WHO MIGHT BENEFIT FROM EXPLORING THEIR SPIRITUALITY?

1. Agosta, A. (Dec 2003). Spirituality in GLBT Clients. *Social Work Today*, pp28-29.
2. Palmer, L. (Nov/Dec 2003). Spirituality becomes Resilience and Joins the US Army. *Spirituality and Health*. pp. 52-55.
3. National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse. (April 15, 2002.) Spirituality and Religion Reduce Risk of Substance Abuse. *Social Work Today*. pp5-7.
4. Miller, L. & Kelley, B. (2005) Relationships of Religiosity and Spirituality with Mental

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Health And Psychopathology. In Paloutzian, R. &Park (Eds.) *Handbook of the Psychology of Religion*. pp 460-473.

Week 10: WHAT SPIRITUAL TOOLS CAN WE OFFER OUR CLIENTS TO HELP THEM DEAL WITH THEIR STRESS ON A DAILY BASIS?

1. Dossey, L. (1996). What is Prayer? *Prayer is Good Medicine*. Harper SanFrancisco. pp77-95.

2. Abels. (2000). *TEXT*, Chapter

3. Fincher. (1999). Creating and Interpreting a Mandala. *Creating Mandalas*. Boston, Mass: Shambhala Publications. pp.19-32.

Week 11: DESCRIBE THE SPIRITUAL PRACTICES IN THESE READINGS

1. West. (2000). What is a Labyrinth? *Exploring the Labyrinth*. NY: Broadway Books. pp3-30.

2. Lamberti. (2000). Sacred Dance around the World. *Spirit in Action*, NY: Ballantine Publishing. pp. 33-39.

3. Bluestone, S. (2002). Introduction: Meeting the Dreamer. *World Dream Book*, Rochester, Vermont. Destiny Books. pp1-14.

4. Pond, D. (2002). The Chakras: The Energy of Life. *Chakras for Beginners*. St Paul, Minn: Llewellyn Publications. pp.3-7.

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Week 12: HOW CAN WE LISTEN TO OUR CLIENTS' STORIES AS A PART OF THEIR SPIRITUAL JOURNEYS?

1. Hopkins et al. (1995). *TEXT*. pp.99-122.
2. Abels. (2000). *TEXT*. Chapter 9.
3. Stearns, N. (1999). We Heal by Telling Our Story. *Soulful Living*. Deerfield, Flda: Health Com Inc. pp 155-160.
3. Black, H (1999). Life as a Gift: Spiritual Narratives of Elderly African-American Women Living in Poverty. *Journal of Aging Studies*. Vol 13. #4. pp441-455.

Week 13: HOW CAN WE USE SYMBOLS AND RITUALS AS INTERVENTIONS FOR HEALING?

- 1.Lubin, H. & Johnson, D. (Sept/Oct 1998). Healing Ceremonies. *Family Therapy Networker*. pp. 38-39, 64-67.
2. Hopkins et al. (1995). *TEXT*. pp 123-132.
3. Abels (2000). *TEXT*. Chapter 4.

Week 14: Class Presentations and Evaluations

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