

# **Integrating Spirituality into Counseling**

## **Syllabus Spring 2009**

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### **Contact Information**

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### **Course Description**

The Psychology of Religion and Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy are growing in importance in mental health practice. Whether spoken or unspoken, spirituality and religion are important parts of the mosaic that forms the worldviews and values of clients and counselors. The importance of preparing counselors to address these issues with clients is increasingly clear. Useful theory, understandings of diversity, and rich resources for practical applications are now available from a growing body of evidence from research and practice.

This two-credit class will focus on understanding the ways spirituality and religion impact the lives of clients and of counselors, and how this in turn affects the counseling experience for both client and counselor. Through presentations, engaged dialogue, and learning about diverse spiritual practices, this class aims to:

- Facilitate awareness of the diversity of religious and spiritual orientation in the lives of counselors and clients;
- Facilitate awareness of potential affects of this orientation on the therapeutic alliance
- Explore clinical implications of incorporating spirituality and religion into counseling practice

The class will emphasize dialogue, reflection, exploration and 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 understanding of the diversity of religious and spiritual beliefs and practices within our own cultural context.
- 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 human lifespan.
- Understand the role of spiritual/religious struggle in mental health.
- Understand how to differentiate religious/spiritual experience from mental disorder.
- Demonstrate ability to engage in and clearly communicate principles of a variety of spiritual practices relevant to their own and client well-being.
- Recognize, describe and discuss broad social patterns and belief systems that shape approaches to personal and socio-political change.
- 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.

### **Primary Source Text**

Paloutzian, R. F. and C. L. Park, Eds. (2005). Handbook of the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality. New York, Guilford.

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 writes about her/his experiences and beliefs that other members of the class respond with their best efforts to inquire, understand, and accept the experiences of their classmate.

While this does not mean that by responding you fully understand or that you agree with another person's views, it does mean that you first offer affirming interest and an invitation to further exploration of that person's orientation and experiences. When we receive this level of acceptance and affirmation, we are enabled to reflect, question, and challenge our own current understandings. This opens the possibility of incorporating new ideas and new experiences that lead to change and growth. Seeking this kind of dialogue and unfolding exploration is central to the purposes of this class.

It is essential that our dialogues consistently convey this receptive approach to understanding. 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, it is critically necessary that in doing so they imply and acknowledge that other members of the class may not share those feelings or those views. 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 written journal entries, 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.

**Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments**  
**Integrating Spirituality into Counseling**  
**Counseling Psychology 590**  
**Spring, 2009**

Week 1	<p><b>Understanding Spirituality and Religion</b></p> <p><b>Orientation to Religion and Spirituality in Counseling and Psychotherapy</b></p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices:</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due: Complete and turn in Religious Background and Behavior Questionnaire</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p> <p>Hill et al (2000) Conceptualizing Religion and Spirituality: Points of Commonality, Points of Departure. In the Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, 30:1, pp 51-77.</p> <p>Pargament (2007) Chap 9 Orientation to Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy</p> <p>Miller (2005) What is Human Nature? Reflections from a Judeo-Christian Perspective. Chap 1, in Miller and Delaney.</p>
Week 2	<p><b>Differences, Diversity, Conflict and Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices:</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p> <p>Borg (2003) Chapters 1, 2, 11. The Heart of Christianity.</p> <p>“Atheism” from USA Today</p> <p><b>Readings from,</b></p> <p><b>Smith (1991) The World’s Religions</b></p> <p>Chapters 6, Islam Chapter 7, Judaism,</p> <p>Optional: Smith (1991) Chap 9. The Primal Religions</p>
Week 3	<p><b>Development, Change, Growth and Harm</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Paloutzian &amp; Park</b></p>

	<p><b>Triads Dialogue:</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices:</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due:</b> <b>Spiritual Autobiography</b></p>	<p>Chap 8: Levenson et al. Religious Development from Adolescence to Middle Adulthood</p> <p><b>Readings on Reserve</b></p> <p>Kass and Lennox: (2005) Emerging Models of Spiritual Development. Chap 10; Miller and Delaney.</p> <p><b>Optional from Paloutzian and Park</b></p> <p>Chap 7: Boyatzis. Religious and Spiritual Development in Childhood</p> <p>Chap 9: McFadden; Points of Connection: Gerontology and the Psychology of Religion</p> <p><b>Optional from Reserves</b></p>
<p>Week 4</p>	<p><b>Experiencing Spirituality and Religion</b></p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue:</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices:</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Paloutzian and Park</b></p> <p>Chap 13: Emmons. Emotion and Religion</p> <p>Chap 16: Park, C. Religion and Meaning</p> <p>Chap 19: Hood. Mystical, Spiritual, and Religious Experiences</p> <p>Chap 23: Geyer and Baumeister. Religion, Morality, and Self-Control: Values, Virtues, and Vices</p> <p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p>

		Brown and Miller (2005). Transformational Change. Chap 9, in Miller and Delaney.
Week 5	<p><b>Conversion &amp; Transformation;</b></p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices:</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due: My Spiritual Experiences</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Paloutzian and Park</b></p> <p>Chap 18. Paloutzian. Religious Conversion and Spiritual Transformation: A Meaning System Analysis.</p> <p>Chap 19. Hood. Mystical, Spiritual, and Religious Experiences</p> <p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p> <p>Tonigan et al. (1999) Spirituality and the 12-Step Programs: A Guide for Clinicians. Chap 6, in Miller (1999) Integrating Spirituality into Treatment.</p> <p>Miller and C'deBaca. 2001. Quantum Change. Selections TBA</p>
Week 6	<p><b>Exploring through Observations, Inquiry, and Interviews</b></p> <p><b>Class will not meet this week to provide more time to carry out visits, interviews, and writing about these.</b></p>	<p><b>Guide for Observation, Inquiry, and Exploration: Documentation and Reflection. A Guide will be provided.</b></p>
Week 7	<p><b>Clinical Assessment: Orientation, Strengths, Limitations, and Problems</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p> <p>Pargament (2007) Chaps 10-11. Implicit and Explicit Assessment</p>

	<p><b>Triads Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due: Essay on Observation, Inquiry, Exploration from the past week due. Due (A Guide will be provided.)</b></p>	<p>Pargament et al (1999) Article on Positive and Negative Patterns of Religious Coping</p> <p>McCulloch and Larson. (1999) Chap 5, Prayer. In Miller, (1999) Integrating Spirituality into Treatment.</p> <p>McConnell, K. M., et al. (2006) Examining the Links Between Spiritual Struggles and Symptoms of Psychopathology in a National Sample. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 62 (12), 1469-1484.</p>
Week 8	<p><b>Spiritual Struggles and Challenges</b></p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue:</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Paloutzian and Park</b></p> <p>Chap 10. Mahoney and Tarakeshwar. Religion's Role in Marriage and Parenting in Daily Life and during Family Crises</p> <p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p> <p>Pargament et al. (2005) Spiritual Struggle: A Phenomenon of Interest to Psychology and Religion. Chapter 13 in Miller and Delaney.</p> <p>Tedeschi, R. G., et al. (2006) Time of Change? The Spiritual Challenges of Bereavement and Loss, in Omega, 53 (1-2) 105-116.</p> <p>Zinnbauer &amp; Pargament. (2000) Working with the Sacred: Four Approaches to Religious and Spiritual Issues in Counseling. Journal of Counseling and Development, (78), pp. 162-171.</p>

<p>Week 9</p>	<p><b>Clinical Challenges</b></p> <p>Dogmatism and Literalism  Moralism  Hypocrisy  Fundamentalism,  Authoritarianism and  Extremism</p> <p>Abuse  Trauma and PTSD</p> <p>Forgiveness: Personal</p> <p>Social/Political</p> <p>Contemporary  Controversies in the  Consulting Room:  “Gay Rights” or “The  Homosexual Agenda?”  Abortion  Women’s Roles  Evolution  Religion in Politics  “Secular Humanism” vs.  “Christian Conservatives”</p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue:</b>  <b>Spiritual Practices:</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Paloutzian and Park</b></p> <p>Chap 21: Altemeyer and Hunsberger. Fundamentalism and Authoritarianism.</p> <p>Chap 22: McCulloch et al. Religion and Forgiveness</p> <p>Chap 29: Silberman. Religious Violence, Terrorism, and Peace: A Meaning System Analysis.</p>
<p>Week 10</p>	<p><b>Meaning and Change: Transformation for Persons and for Societies.</b></p> <p><b>Triads Dialogue:</b></p> <p><b>Spiritual Practices</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due: My approaches to client spiritual issues: Guidelines and Treatment Planning</b></p> <p><b>Assignment Due one week</b></p>	<p><b>Readings from Paloutzian and Park</b></p> <p>Chap 15: Donahue and Nielsen. Religion, Attitudes, and Social Behavior. (<i>Selections to be announced.</i>)</p> <p><b>Readings from Reserves</b></p> <p>Borg (2006) Chapter 9; “Resistance;” from, <u>Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary.</u></p>

	<p><b>after the last class session:</b></p> <p><b>What I Have Learned from Spiritual Practices and How I Envision My Future Learning and Growth.</b></p>	
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**Readings, References, and Bibliography**  
**(to be distributed)**