

Lewis & Clark  
Graduate School of  
Education and Counseling



**MCFT563: 03 Treatment Issues in MCFT: Spirituality  
Spring 2023**

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Meeting times and dates:

Place: York Graduate Center, Room 115

Instructor: Jessica Thomas, PhD

Office hours: Email Instructor

Contact Information: [Jessicathomas@Lclark.edu](mailto:Jessicathomas@Lclark.edu)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course integrates spirituality and religion into the practice of family therapy. Special attention is paid to spiritual/religious/non-religious self-of-the-therapist awareness; developing competence and spiritual/religious fluency; and integrating spirituality and religion into the practice of family therapy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Participants will

1. Explore self of the therapist relative to spirituality and/or religion
2. Become more familiar with assessing spirituality/religion with clients
3. Better understand spiritual and religious diversity
4. Practice introducing spirituality and/or religion in therapy sessions
5. Deepen connection between spirituality and/or religion, resilience, change, strengths, and solutions
6. Be better prepared to integrate spirituality/religion into family therapy

ASSIGNMENTS

**1) Class Preparation – Pre-readings**

Participants are expected to complete the assigned readings and to synthesize and apply them in class. Classroom discussions are an opportunity to bring up questions about the assigned readings, deepen one's understanding of the issues under study, and integrate course material with one's own personal and professional experience. (20 points)

**2) Class breakout discussions**

Participants will integrate pre-reading and personal reflections in a number of in- class breakout groups. (40 points).

**3) Reflective Journal (40 points).**

Throughout the course students will create a journal that focuses on their personal responses to the following:

1. Specific themes in the readings, lectures and group discussions that are especially meaningful or inspiring to you and reflections on how they might be applied to your practice.
2. Reflections on your own thoughts, beliefs, and experiences on spirituality and their relevance to your practice and the self-of-the-therapist.

**Journal should include assigned readings in the reflections, but should focus on those aspects of particular interest to you. Integration across readings (rather than just taking them one at a time) is encouraged. Reflections can include creative expression, however please reference the creative expression in writing and describe its relevance. Texts to be referenced in APA, typed (double-spaced) and be no more than 2- pages in length.**

#### GRADING

A = 93-100

B = 83-87

C = 73-77

A- = 90-92

B- = 80-82

C- = 70-72

B+ = 88-89

C+ = 78-79

***NOTE: Late assignments will be graded down 5 points per day.***

#### **Department Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is expected and required. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) For this weekend course, missing one day constitutes failing the class. In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

#### **Disability Services Statement**

If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### **February 4**

Introductory mindfulness exercise

Brief overview

What is Spirituality

Religion, spirituality and resilience

Exploring the Intersections of Religion and Spirituality with Race-Ethnicity and Gender in Counseling

Religion, spirituality and self-of-the-therapist

Treating religious trauma

Toxic Theology speaker—Dr. Terri Danial's

Religious and spiritual rituals in communities

Using rituals in therapy

Closing

### **February 5<sup>th</sup>**

Opening mindfulness ritual

Therapists being open to not knowing

Psycho spiritual development models

Integrating spirituality and religion into therapy

Discussion, interventions and practice

Closing

### **Suggested books and articles for future reading. Please also find in Moodle.**

Bowland, S., Foster, K., & Vosler, A. (2013) Culturally competent and spiritually sensitive therapy with lesbian and gay Christians. *Social Work*, 58 (4), p321-332.

Gehart, D. & Paré, D. (2008). Suffering and the relationship with the problem in postmodern therapies: A Buddhist re-visioning. *Journal of Family Psychotherapy*, 19(4), 299-319.

Springer, P., Abbott, D. & Reisbig, A. (2009). Therapy with Muslim couples and families: Basic guidelines for effective practice. *Family Journal*, 17(3), 229-235. DOI: 10.1177/1066480709337798.

Ren, Z. (2012). Spirituality and community in times of crisis: Encountering spirituality in indigenous trauma therapy. *Pastoral Psychology*, 61(5/6), 975-991. DOI:10.1007/s11089-

012-0440-5

Weatherhead, S. & Daiches, A. (2015). Key issues to consider in therapy with Muslim families. *Journal of Religion & Health*. Dec2015, Vol. 54 Issue 6, p2398-2411. 14p. 2 Charts. DOI: 10.1007/s10943-015-0023-8.

Spirituality and Family Therapy (Journal of Family Psychotherapy)  
by Martin John Erickson and Thomas Carlson

Spiritual Resources in Family Therapy  
by Froma Walsh