

**Department of Social Work
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY NORTHRIDGE
COURSE OUTLINE
SWRK 630: Family Crisis/Trauma in Urban Settings**

INSTRUCTOR: Katie Mortimer, LCSW

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Office hours: Tuesday, Thursday 12:00 – 1:00 or by appointment

Semester: Spring 2010

Facility: ED1125

INSTRUCTOR:

COURSE PREREQUISITES: Successful completion of first three semesters of MSW requirements.

CREDITS: Three Hours

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT:

In compliance with California State University, Northridge policy and equal access legislation, I am available to discuss appropriate accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Requests for academic accommodations should be made during the add/drop period, unless there are unusual circumstances, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with the Disability Resources Office in the Academic Achievement Center for disability verification and determination of reasonable academic accommodations. The Center on Disabilities is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110 and the phone number is 818/677-2684.

HONOR CODE:

By accepting admission to California State University, Northridge (CSUN), Department of Social Work, I have read and agree to abide by the NASW Code of Ethics; as well as the CSUN College Dismissal Policy. Violations of academic integrity will not be tolerated. Refer to your Student Handbook for details *as well as* "Guidelines for Successful Completion of Assignments" section (just prior to the bibliography section) at the end of this syllabus.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This 3 credit concentration course explores the effects of trauma and stress on urban families, individuals, and communities and examines a variety of approaches to working with clients who experience severe adversity in their lives.

In this course, we will identify potentially traumatizing experiences. We will study various models for understanding responses to trauma, including Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. We will explore ways to assess and address trauma and chronic stress

in direct practice situations (individual, family, and group work) and with different age groups and varying demographic urban populations. We will also address the issue of vicarious traumatization as it relates to clinical work in this area as well as relevant community and policy practice.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Gain an awareness and understanding of treatment issues and models of grief and trauma for urban families. Selection of these interventions will be based on theories that enrich biological, social, cultural, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of individuals and families. (C1)
2. Develop skills in assessing trauma symptoms, grief reactions, and underlying psychological factors that are impacting urban individuals and families;
3. Demonstrate ethically-anchored, strengths-based practice with regard to all individuals and families; but additionally with regard to oppressed and vulnerable populations such as racial and ethnic minorities, women, sexual orientation, and socio-economically disadvantaged populations. (C2)
4. Evaluate and implement organizational planning, organizational policies, and services for community crisis response that support the resilience of urban individuals, families, and communities. (C5)

Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course students should be able to demonstrate:

1. An ability to critically assess trauma and grief symptoms with a biological, social, cultural, psychological and spiritual model when working with urban individuals and families; (CaSWEC Competency 7.1)
2. An ability to identify and implement various ethically-anchored, strengths-based treatment models for crisis, grief and trauma within social work practice for urban individuals, families, and communities. (CaSWEC Competency 5.2)
3. An ability to articulate and discuss issues regarding the societal impacts on traumatized individuals and resulting symptomatology on populations at-risk, particularly those who are distinguished by their racial/ethnic, cultural, gender, gender identity, religious, age, political, sexual orientation, and/or other characteristics that place the population at risk for oppression and discrimination; (CaSWEC Competency 5.1, 5.3)
4. An understanding of ethical issues and dilemmas inherent in crisis response, and trauma/grief treatment.

5. Demonstrates the ability to recognize and assess potential for violence, suicide, and other potentially harmful behaviors. (CalSWEC Competency 7.2)

6. Demonstrates understanding of the dynamics of trauma resulting from family conflict, divorce and family violence. (CalSWEC Competency 7.5)

Measurement of Student Outcomes:

Students are expected to attend class regularly, to be prepared to discuss all assigned readings, to complete all assignments as outlined in the syllabus, and to participate actively in classroom discussions and activities. Students are expected to develop an understanding of the connections between theories, research findings, practice methods, and policy implications related to the areas of trauma and chronic stress.

Papers are to be completed using standard APA format for the organization of the material, language use, and all citations. The quality of the writing, including depth, coherence, and development of points and arguments, will affect the grade. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the Writing Center and to re-read and proofread all papers thoroughly prior to submitting them. Students who may need special consideration to complete assignments should discuss this with the instructor ahead of time. Also, again, be certain to carefully review and incorporate the "Guidelines for Successful Completion of Assignments" section (just prior to the bibliography section) at the end of this syllabus.

GRADING:

Class participation, preparedness and attendance	20%
Current Event Assignment	10%
Presentation	30%
Research, Treatment and Reflection Paper	40%

Weekly timely attendance is mandatory. "Excused absences" will be provided only to students that have contacted the instructor prior to the start of the class missed. In the event of serious illness, a physician's statement is required. Unexcused absences will negatively impact the participation grade, as will excessive excused absences (2 or more).

Participation in class is integral to your development as a social worker. Professionalism and courteous conduct contributes to class while discourteous conduct detracts from it. Courteous conduct includes positive and content driven participation (providing and accepting feedback, integrating reading), turning off cell phones and other technological devices before class, not eating during class, and showing respect for others' perspectives and contributions. Discourteous conduct includes a lack of reading completion, unwillingness to participate in class discussion or activities, side-talking, excessive unrelated self disclosure, and argumentative behavior, which will result in loss of points in this area.

The material covered in this course may trigger feelings of discomfort or distress. Students are encouraged to engage in self care practices during the course, which may include deep breathing or excusing self from class to regain composure. Students are expected to maintain appropriate and professional behavior despite these feelings, which includes rejoining the class as quickly as possible and participating accordingly. Part of your responsibility as a social worker is to learn to manage these feelings while remaining present in class or with clients.

STUDENT EVALUATION OF COURSE OBJECTIVES:

On the last class session, each student will be asked to evaluate "how they met or did not meet" one or two of the course objectives. Course objectives will be randomly assigned to students and you will be asked to respond in a short statement. All answers will be anonymous for your protection.

This evaluation is an internal evaluation, which will evaluate how well we are teaching our assigned objectives. Thank you in advance.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM:

Any student who plagiarizes any part of a paper or assignment or engages in any form of academic dishonesty will receive an "F" for the class. Other actions may also be taken by the College to suspend or expel a student who engages in academic dishonesty.

Plagiarism: All papers and written assignments must be fully and properly referenced, with credit given to the authors whose ideas you have used. If you are using direct quotes from a specific author (or authors), you must set the quote in quotation marks or use an indented quotation form. For all direct quotes, you must include the page number(s) in your text or references. Any time that you use more than four or five consecutive words taken from another author, you must clearly indicate that this is a direct quotation. Please consult the APA manual (5th edition) to determine the proper referencing format. Should you have any question regarding compliance, please schedule an appointment with the professor prior to submitting your written assignment.

Academic dishonesty includes using any other person's work and representing it as your own.

Use of technology in class:

Adaptive technology such as tape recorders, electronic note takers, and laptop computers may be used in the classroom if coordinated and/or approved through Center on Disabilities. The Center on Disabilities is located in Bayramian Hall, room 110. Phone: 818-677-2684.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Herman, J. (1997). *Trauma and recovery*. New York: Basic Books.

Meisinger, S. E. (2009). *Stories of pain, trauma and survival: A social worker's experiences and insights from the field*. Washington DC: NASW Press

Readings are to be completed prior to the class session in which they are listed.

Other required readings are listed in the syllabus and will be available on reserve in the library. Additional required reading materials may be passed out in the class during the semester or may be added to the material available on reserve in the library. Students will be notified of additional reading assignments in class with sufficient time allowed for material to be read.

The professor reserves the right to make ongoing adjustments/changes to any part of this syllabus and/or class throughout the semester.

COURSE OUTLINE

The instructor retains the right to change course content, reading, activities or assignments depending on the needs of the students or class.

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1
1-21 | Introduction
Why Trauma Work?
Overview of course syllabus, expectations, and assignments.
Definitions of central concepts: trauma and chronic stress with an emphasis on urban individuals, families, and communities.
History and evolution of the concept of trauma (e.g., combat shock) and terror
<u>Readings:</u>
Herman, chapter 1 & 2
Meisinger, chapter 4 |
| Week 2
1-28 | Identification of Traumatic Experiences
DSM-IV-TR Classification
Trauma Symptoms and Comorbidity
History of PTSD as a diagnosis. What are the criteria/symptoms?
Discussion of disconnection, dissociation and dissociative features. Symptoms and differential diagnosis. Issues of vulnerability to retraumatization. Simple vs. complex trauma.
<u>Readings:</u>
Herman, chapters 3 & 6 |

- Week 3**
2-4
Illustration of symptomatology
-Movie: Fearless
Group discussion (with other sections)
- Week 4**
2-11
Neurobiological Effects of Trauma on the Brain
Bruce Perry video
Trauma and the brain, effect of trauma on perception and internal experience, trauma and self perception, development of the brain in violent communities.
Readings:
Ziegler, D. (2002). Traumatic Experience and the Brain: A Handbook for Understanding and Treating Those Traumatized as Children. Phoenix, Arizona: Acacia Publishing, Inc. (ISBN 0-9671187-5-1)
Chapters 3, 4, & 5 (Electronic Reserve)
- Week 5**
2-18
Risk, Resilience and Prevention:
Why some people are traumatized by events and others are not: models of risk and resilience with emphasis on urban settings. Prevention strategies for traumatic disorders. Developing a healing relationship. Stage 1: establishing *Safety*.
Readings:
Herman, chapters 7 & 8
Meisinger, chapter 2

Assignments:
-Current Event Assignment
Group 1
- Week 6**
2-25
Treatment Models for PTSD.
Overview of individual and group work models, including; guided imagery, flooding techniques, psycho-educational interventions, narrative therapy, and cognitive methods. Issues of containment and confrontation, as well as helping traumatized people regain a sense of control. Stages 2 and 3: *Remembrance and Mourning and Reconnection*
Readings:
Herman, chapters 9 & 10
Meisinger, chapter 3

Assignments:

-Current Event Assignment
Group 2

Week 7

3-4

Trauma and the Elderly

Guest Speaker: Jan Lyons

Treatment Models (group)

Relocation trauma, trauma secondary to loss of function,
older adult's response to general trauma,
crimes targeting older adults

Readings:

Herman, chapters 11

Week 8

3-11

Combat Trauma

Guest Speaker: Hugh Crooks

Difference between WWI, WWII, Viet Nam, Gulf War and
Iraq/Afghanistan war. The impact of war on female and male
vets. Cumulative effects of war, PTSD and loyalty to fellow
soldiers.

Readings:

Herman, chapters 4

Tempest, Rone. (4/22/07) Guard troops get help battling stress. Los
Angeles Times.

Armstrong, K., Best, S. and Domenici, P. (2007). New, effective
assistant military personnel and families. NASW California News,
33(7).

Week 9

3-18

Sexual Abuse and Sexual Assault (Rape)

Video: Twist of Faith

Affect on children, affects on adults, and abuse within trusted
institutions

Readings:

Campbell, R., Michigan State University. (2008) The Psychological
Impact of Rape Victims' Experiences With the Legal, Medical, and
Mental Health Systems. *American Psychologist*, 702-717.

Faravelli, C., Giugni, A., Salvatori, S., & Ricca, V., Psychopathology After
Rape. *Am J Psychiatry* 2004; 161: 1483-1485.

Assignments:

-Assignment #4 **Research, Treatment and Reflection paper due**

Week 10
3-25

Chronic Trauma Conditions - Domestic Violence & Child Abuse

Conditions associated with family violence, poverty, culture, illness, environmental unpredictability, life demands, and oppression. Particular attention to childhood trauma, and family violence. Discussion of recovery, "triggers", and utilizing strengths. The question of recovered memories as a clinical and legal issue. The concept of perpetual traumatization and difficulties in recovery. Children and trauma.

Readings:

Herman, chapters 5

Ziegler, chapters 9 &10

Assignments:

-Current Event Assignment

Group 3

Week 11
4-1

Loss of partner, parent or child

Suicide

Guest Speaker: Richard Mogil

Impact of death of a parent or child on a family system.

Bereavement and resources (including therapy, groups, and other supportive services).

Readings:

Meisinger, chapter 1

SPRING BREAK – April 5 to April 9, 2010

Week 12
4-15

Trauma Across the Urban Family and Individual Lifespan: Impact of Homicide, Victims of Crime, Community Violence, Terrorism

Risk factors, protective factors, life stage factors, and coping resources. Grief reactions to traumatic events beyond uncomplicated bereavement. Impact of 9/11, Oklahoma City, etc. How terrorist act affect immediate communities and the larger society. The role of the media in disseminating traumatic images.

Readings:

Herman, *Afterword* pgs. 237-247.

Assignments:

-Current Event Assignment

Group 4

Week 13 4-22	Vicarious Traumatization, Compassion Fatigue & Self Care Issues faced by mental health, medical and rescue workers in relation to caring for and aiding those who are traumatized. Importance of self care to reduce burn out and traumatization of the helping professional. Helping professionals: social workers, law enforcement, firefighters and other medical and rescue workers and their response to various types of trauma. Earthquakes, floods, fires, hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, landslides and how they leave a mark on their victims. <u>Readings:</u> Meisinger, chapters 5-7
Week 14 4-29	Presentations
Week 15 5-6	Presentations Course Overview

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1) Current Event Assignment – Trauma Current Events

Each student will sign up in small groups (2-3) for a date during the semester where they will do a brief oral presentation (individual or group) that involves trauma. The outline in Appendix A is a guideline for preparation of the article. Current events should reflect traumatic issues that are present in urban communities and the presentation should identify how these traumas were handled and also include further suggestions for working with community resources to address specific trauma situations. Please be prepared to discuss impact of your event as it relates to provision of social work services. (CalSWEC Competency 5.1, 7.4, 8.9) See Appendix A

2) Research, Treatment and Reflection Paper

This assignment is comprised of three sections. A brief description for each section is listed below. Please see Appendix B for a full description and further explanation for the assignment.

Part 1– Understanding trauma

This section requires students to do library research on one form of trauma that people experience and discuss the consequences of this type of traumatization.

Part 2 -Trauma Treatment

This section requires students to identify evidence based practice treatment models utilized for survivors of this form of trauma.

Part 3 - Avoiding Vicarious Traumatization and Burnout

This section asks students to identify elements of the trauma that make it difficult to tolerate to bear witness to.

3) Best Practice Group Presentation

Students will create a group presentation based on the trauma issue identified in their research paper. The presentation will address best practice models for intervention with the above identified trauma population. Please see Appendix C for a full description and further explanation for the assignment.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Appendix A

Trauma Current Event Group Assignment

1. Find a current article related to trauma reported in a major publication within the past 30 days (i.e. Los Angeles Times, Daily News, Time Magazine, etc.)
 - a. Websites of these publications are acceptable sources
2. Summarize and share important parts of the article in an oral presentation to class
3. Describe the incident (date, time, location)
 - a. **How is it a trauma?**
4. Identify the parties involved - (Gender, ages, relationships)
 - i. Victim(s)
 - ii. Family
 - iii. Responders
 - iv. Community
 - b. Initial intervention (if identified)
 - c. Resources used in interventions
 - d. **How is this relevant for the field of Social Work?**
5. Presentations should be 15 minutes maximum
6. Provide Handouts
 - Copy of article
7. Each group member should participate equally
8. Group members should be prepared to answer questions and/or receive feedback from peers or instructor

Appendix B

Research, Treatment and Reflection Paper

Part 1– Understanding trauma

This paper requires students to do library research on one form of trauma that people experience. Forms of trauma include, but are not limited to: assault, accidental injury, exposure to war, rape, life-threatening illness, domestic violence, child sexual or physical abuse, kidnapping, torture, and threats to one's life or physical well-being. Please remember to emphasize urban individuals, families, and communities in your research.

Discuss the consequences of the type of traumatization you have chosen as the focus of your paper. What tends to happen to people who experience this form of trauma? You are looking to describe the consequences of this type of trauma for the urban individual, family, community, or culture. Here are some questions to consider:

- What are the demographics for this population and/or how pervasive is the problem?
- Identify if this is a simple or complex trauma and why
 - Are there particular groups who are more vulnerable?
 - What factors of the trauma are most influential in the severity of symptoms?
 - What is the particular range of reactions to this trauma?
- What communities and systems could be impacted and/or involved?

Include at least 6 references from the professional literature; 4 of these must be from current professional journals in social work, psychology, psychiatry, or other closely related fields. Internet sources may be used in addition to these 6 sources. Use APA format to cite all references. This section should be 4-5 pages in length. (CalSWEC Competency 5.1, 7.1, 7.2, 7.5)

Part 2 -Trauma Treatment

- Identify two of the most effective, evidenced based practice treatment models utilized for survivors of this form of trauma
 - Why are these approaches the most effective?
 - What modalities are used?
- Discuss the phases of recovery for survivors as they apply to treatment.
- What are potential barriers to accessing treatment for your population group?

Include at least 8 references from the professional literature; 6 of these must be from current professional journals in social work, psychology, psychiatry, or other closely related fields. Internet sources may be used in addition to these 8 sources. Use APA format to cite all references. This section should be 4-5 pages in length. (CalSWEC Competency 5.2, 6.1, 7.5,)

Part 3 - Avoiding Vicarious Traumatization and Burnout

- Identify elements of the trauma that make it difficult to tolerate to bear witness to
 - What effects could trauma work have on you and on your life?
- What resources (internal and external) are available to you that can help you prevent traumatization and burnout?
- Identify obstacles might you encounter in using these resources and proactive and reactive plans for addressing them.

This section will be approximately 2 pages in length, with a total of 10 to 12 pages for the entire assignment

Appendix C

Best Practice Group Presentation

Students will create a group presentation based on the trauma issue identified in the research paper. The presentation will address best practice models for intervention with the above identified trauma population. Topics to be covered in the presentation include:

1. A brief summary of the trauma issue (including demographic info).
2. Identification and review of a best-practice model identified for this trauma
3. An illustration of one intervention that is identified within the best practice model

This presentation should be 15-20 minutes in length, and should include a fact sheet handout for each class member. Every group member is expected to present a portion of the material. Points will be determined by creativity, accuracy of information, original content outside of class lecture material and success in engaging the class in the presentation.

ADDENDUM A

Spring 2010

Child Welfare Competencies: The following competencies will be addressed in this course and utilized for evaluation of CalSWEC and IUC students only.

3.5 Student demonstrates an understanding of basic child development and how developmental level affects a child's perception of events, coping strategies, and physical and psychological responses to stress and trauma.

6.3 Student demonstrates the ability to recognize, assess, and devise case plans and referrals to address potential for violence, suicide, and complex psychological difficulties.

6.4 Student demonstrates understanding of the dynamics and effects of trauma resulting from family conflict, divorce, and family or community violence.

6.5 Student demonstrates understanding of the dynamics of human sexuality and gender identity.