I. COURSE PURPOSE

This course is designed to provide social work students with information on experiences of trauma and
the current social work interventions on micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Course content covers the
range of theoretical, policy and practice issues involving a wide range of traumatic experiences such as
war, sexual violence, child abuse and neglect, intimate partner violence, and elder abuse. The course is
taught using Trauma Theory, Empowerment Theory, Feminist Theory, Social Constructionism, and the
Strengths Perspective. A survey of trauma across the lifespan will be integrated to allow students to
gain a greater understanding of the cumulative and overlapping effects of traumatic experiences.
Students will use a value-critical approach for analyzing policies and programs designed to address the
phenomena that contribute to trauma. Finally, the course will address vicarious trauma (VT), or the
effects on the work on the social worker, as well as methods for addressing VT in social work practice.
The course takes a social justice approach with an emphasis on addressing the human rights to dignity
and safety; the protection of those who are vulnerable and oppressed; and the use of practice
interventions that create change within individuals, communities, and the larger society.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. Students will acquire knowledge of the theories most commonly used to understand
   experiences of trauma, and demonstrate an ability to think critically about their usefulness in
   addressing a wide range of traumatic experiences.

2. Students will understand the legal, ethical, and social issues, which impact on clinical
   practice and policy responses to trauma.
3. Students will recognize psychological, physical, social, and cognitive changes that occur in victims of trauma as they conduct psychosocial assessments of individuals, families, groups, and communities effected by trauma.

4. Students will acquire knowledge of appropriate evidence-based techniques for intervening on micro, mezzo, and macro levels with survivors of trauma, and methods for evaluating interventions.

5. Students will develop an understanding of the leadership roles social workers can fill in responding to trauma.

6. Students will gain skills in critical thinking about, and analysis of, various policy and clinical practice alternatives, considering the arguments for and against each alternative, and possible unintended consequences.

7. Students will gain an appreciation for the impact of practice and policy decisions on complex problems involving violence, war, abuse, and neglect.

8. Students will gain a greater awareness of the influence of personal and professional values on practice and policy choices in social work practice with trauma.

9. Students will explore a variety of human rights, diversity, and social justice issues relating to refugee status, experiences with immigration to the United States, and human trafficking, as they connect to experiences of trauma.

10. Students will understand the impact trauma work may have on the social worker and will be equipped with strategies for responding to vicarious trauma.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts


B. Recommended Texts


Herman, J. L. (1997). *Trauma and recovery: The aftermath of violence--from domestic abuse to political terror*. New York: Basic Books. [Designated as Herman]


Richardson, J. (2001). *Guidebook on vicarious trauma*. Ontario, Canada: Centre for Research on Violence Against Women. [Designated as Richardson]


C. **Other Required Readings**

There are other required readings listed for each week that come from scholarly journals. These articles are posted on Blackboard and can be accessed by going to [http://bb8.cua.edu](http://bb8.cua.edu). Students must login using their CUA username and password (same one used for Cardinal Mail). Individuals not enrolled in this course may not have access to the Blackboard page or readings.

D. **Course Assignments**

1. **Attendance and Class Participation**

   Students are expected to arrive on time for class, having completed the assigned readings and actively participate in all class exercises and discussions. The class participation grade is determined by assessing the student’s preparedness for class, and their appropriate participation without being disruptive or monopolizing class time.

2. **Discussion Board Postings**

   Students are expected to post one question from the readings to the Blackboard Discussion Board no later than 12:00 noon the day of class. These will be used to guide discussion. Questions should reflect critical thinking.

3. **Concept Paper – Due Class 6**

   Students are required to submit a one-page proposal for their paper and a preliminary reference list with a minimum of ten scholarly references.

4. **Scholarly Paper – Due Class 14**

   See Attachment A for detailed description.
E. Grading Policy
The assignments described above will be the basis for the final grade. Class participation will be graded on the basis of demonstration of knowledge and understanding of course content, accuracy, and contribution to class learning. Grades will be based on the extent to which students achieved course objectives as demonstrated by the quality of course assignments and class participation. The following weighting of course assignments will apply:

- In-Class Participation: 15%
- Discussion Board Postings: 15%
- Concept Paper: 10%
- Scholarly Paper: 60%

F. Course and Instructor Evaluation
NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at [http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations](http://evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations) using your CUA username and password. Additional, informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations
Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proof read by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Academic Honesty
Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks.

C. Accommodations
Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.
CLASS SCHEDULE

Class 1  The History of Trauma 1/12/12
This class will address the history of understanding trauma in the social work profession.

**Required Reading:**
DSM-IV-TR, Criteria for PTSD diagnosis, pp. 424-427
Ringel & Brandell, Chapter 1

**Recommended Reading:**
Briere & Scott, Chapters 1, 2, & 3
Dass-Brailsford, Chapters 1 & 2
Friedman, Keane, & Resick, Chapters 1, 2, & 3
Wilson & Keane, All

Class 2  Theoretical Approaches to Understanding Trauma and Assessing Programs and Policies Designed to Address the Phenomena 1/19/12
This class will explore the influences of feminist theory, empowerment theory, social constructionism, trauma theory and the strengths perspective on the understanding of, treatment of, and policy formulation about the causes of trauma. In addition, students will review the value-critical approach to policy analysis and explore the connections among theory, policy, programs and clinical intervention with trauma survivors.

**Required Reading:**
Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2
Ringel & Brandel, Chapters 2, 3, 4 & 5.

**Recommended Reading:**
Friedman, Keane, & Resick, Chapters 4 & 5
Mirowsky & Ross, All

Class 3  Trauma Treatment 1/26/12
This class will explore central issues in trauma treatment, as well as current models of practice in the fields of clinical social work, psychology, and psychiatry. Cultural competence and countertransference will be addressed as they relate to a variety of dimensions of treatment.
**Required Reading:**
Dass-Brailsford, Chapters 3 & 6
Friedman, Keane, & Resick, Chapter 21
Ringel & Brandell, Chapters 6 & 10

**Recommended Reading:**
Briere, Part III
Briere & Scott, Chapters 4, 5 & 6
Brown, Part II
Dalenberg, Chapters 3 & 9
Scott & Stradling, Chapters 6, 7, 8 & 9

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### Class 4
2/2/12

**Addressing the Effects of Vicarious Trauma on the Social Worker: Individual and Organizational Solutions**
This class will address the effects of working with trauma on the individual social worker organizations. Strategies for change on personal, professional and organizational levels will be presented and discussed.

**Required Reading:**
Dass-Brailsford, Chapter 14
Ringel & Brandel, Chapter 11

**Recommended Reading:**
Pearlman, Saakvitne, & Buchele, All
Richardson, All

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### Class 5
2/9/12

**Who is Causing the Trauma? – Guest Speaker Dr. Melissa Grady**
This class will address policies, programs, and interventions related to perpetration of violence, with a focus on interpersonal violence. The role of the social worker in creating public policy to address the issues, as well as the role in rehabilitation through clinical interventions will be addressed. The Community Protect Model will be presented and ethical issues will be discussed.

**Required Reading:**


Class 6  
2/16/12  

**The Traumatic Impact of War and Terrorism on Military and Non-Military Communities**

This class will address the experience of terrorist attacks and war on individuals serving in the military, as well as on the families of those in service. It will address the experience of war or terrorism on communities and those in the line of fire. Finally, the impact on other professionals such as journalists and first responders will be explored.

**Required Reading:**


Dass-Brailsford, Chapter 12


Ringel & Brandel, Chapter 7

**Recommended Reading:**

Friedman, Keane & Resick, Chapter 25

Class 7
2/23/12

The Traumatic Impact of Immigration, Trafficking, and Refugee Experiences
This class will explore the macro issues of human trafficking, immigration and refugees, as well as the experiences of trauma on a micro level. The role of the social worker in addressing social justice issues and individual oppression will be addressed.

Required Reading:
Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2
Dass-Brailsford, Chapter 11

Recommended Readings

Class 8
3/1/12

The Traumatic Impact of Natural Disasters: The Role of the Social Worker in Disaster Relief and Emergency Response – Guest Speaker Dr. Fred Ahearn
This class will explore the human impact of natural disasters and traumatic reactions to hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, and other natural disasters. The role of the social worker in disaster relief planning for governmental and non-profit organizations will be explored, as well as the current clinical interventions.

Note: Concept Paper Due

Required Reading:
Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2
Dass-Brailsford, Chapter 13
Kulkarni, S., Bell, H., Beausoleil, J., Lein, L., Angel, R. J., & Mason, J. H.
When the floods of compassion are not enough: A nation’s and a city’s response to the evacuees of Hurricane Katrina. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 78*(4), 399-423.


**Recommended Readings:**

Cohen & Ahearn, All


**Class 9 3/15/12**

**The Traumatic Impact of Intimate Partner Violence**

This class will address the power and control dynamics present in intimate partner violence and the traumatic effects of abuse in these relationships. The role of the social worker in creating public policy to address the issues, and social worker’s interface with the criminal justice system will be addressed.

**Required Reading:**

Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2

Cho, H. & Wilke, D.J. (2005). How has the Violence Against Women’s Act
affected the response of the criminal justice system to domestic violence? 
*Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 32*(6), 125-139.


Class 10

3/22/12

**The Traumatic Impact of Sexual Violence**

This class will address the dynamics present in the experience of sexual violence. The role of the social worker in creating public policy to address the issues, and social worker’s interface with the criminal justice system will be addressed.

**Required Reading:**


**Recommended Readings:**

Bass & Davis, All
Herman, All
Maltz, All
Matsakis, All


Class 11

3/29/12

**The Traumatic Impact of Elder Abuse and Neglect**

This class will address the dynamics of elder abuse and neglect and the role of power and dependency in the relationship between caregiver and older adult. The role of the social worker in creating public policy to address the issues, and social worker’s interface with the criminal justice system will be addressed.
**Required Reading:**
Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2
Friedman, Keane, & Resick, Chapter 14

**Class 12 4/12/12**

**The Traumatic Impact of Child Abuse and Neglect**
This class will address the dynamics of child abuse and neglect and the role of power and dependency in the relationship between caregiver and child. The role of the social worker in creating public policy to address the issues, and social worker’s role in child welfare will be addressed.

**Required Reading:**
Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2
Dass-Brailsford, Chapter 9

**Recommended Readings:**
Briere, Chapters 1, 2, & 3
Friedman, Keane, & Resick, Chapter 18
Class 13
4/19/12

The Traumatic Impact of Stalking, Emotional Abuse, and Bullying

This class will address the issues of stalking and bullying and the use of technology. The connection between what was once viewed as harmless “Peeping Tom” or “mean girl” behavior and physical and/or sexual violence will be explored. The role of the social worker in clinical interventions, legal responses, program development, and policies to address these issues will be explored.

Required Reading:
Chambers & Wedel, Ch. 2
Ringel & Brandel, Chapter 8

Recommended Readings:
Wiseman, All

Class 14
4/26/11

Course Wrap-Up and Summary

Students will explore the themes presented in the course and share the findings of their scholarly papers.

Scholarly Papers Due
Attachment A
Final Scholarly Paper
Guidelines

Students will choose a dimension of trauma and address (1) a clinical social work intervention; (2) a community response; (3) a private or public program; OR (4) a federal, state, or local governmental policy designed to address the issue. The paper will include a literature review using scholarly references and provide a critical analysis of the current response, and concrete recommendations for improvements or changes. The paper must be written in APA style and follow the MSW Program’s expectations for a scholarly paper. Write the final paper using the following headings to structure your writing, and include reference pages. Due Class 14.

1. Introduction: A brief statement about the focus and purpose of the paper. The introduction should give your reader an understanding of the dimension of trauma you will focus on, and the level of social work intervention you will address. (1/2 page, 5 pts).

2. Literature Review: Review the research and writings on your dimension of trauma from the scholarly literature. Address the history of social work’s role with this issues and the understanding of the social and interpersonal factors that contribute to it. Summarize the current, state of the art interventions/policies/community programs. Address any applicable explanatory theory and models of practice (6-7 pages, 40 pts).

3. Critique: Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the state of the art practice with this dimension of trauma. Address gaps in services, inadequacies of programs, problematic policies, etc. (2 pages, 10 pts)

4. Future Directions for Social Work: Propose ways to strengthen what already exists and/or new methods of alleviating the problem and/or its sequela. Be concrete about what you, as a future social work leader, would do to improve upon the current state of the art on this dimension of trauma (2-3 pages, 20 pts)

5. Conclusion: Summarize the findings of your paper. What are your final thoughts on the dimension of trauma and current social work practice? How might your critique strengthen the role of social workers in this area? (1/2 page, 5 pts).

6. Use the correct APA format, grammar, and writing style. (20 points)