

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Social Work with Military Personnel and Families

Course Number:	SW395K	Instructor's name:	Jennifer Silva, LCSW
Unique Number:	64560	Office Number:	3.104a
Semester:	Fall 2013	Cell Phone:	512-627-7109 (text preferred or calls for emergencies)
		E-mail:	jenniferaustinlcsw@gmail.com
Meeting Time/Place:	Thursdays 5:30-8:30 Room 1.212	Office Hours:	Thursdays 4:30-5:30

Course Description

The course is designed as an elective for graduate students in the School of Social Work who wish to increase knowledge and skills for practice with military personnel, Veterans and their families. Students will learn about the role of social work within the military and in the Department of Veterans Affairs in meeting the needs of active duty service members, National Guard and Reserve members, Veterans and their families. Students will develop a working understanding of the history of military social work, aspects of the military culture that they will need to know in order to be able to develop a strong therapeutic alliance, social and mental health needs and issues facing this ethnically and culturally diverse population, military social work policies and services and needed advocacy efforts in that regard, evidence-based and other mental health interventions with emerging empirical support for this population, and other ethnic and cultural diversity issues in military social work (including the needs of women, gays and lesbians, and immigrants serving in the military). The course will emphasize the needs of service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, including stressors connected to multiple deployments and to the unique nature of those wars, when danger is ever present and the enemy often is not identifiable. However, the similar and different needs of veterans from previous conflicts also will be addressed. The framework of the course is based on social work values and the ethical decision-making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics.

Course Objectives:

At the end of this course students will:

1. Describe the historical foundations of social work within the military and Veteran environment, as well as the complexities of ethics and values faced by social workers that work in this environment.
2. Describe the military culture, including core values, code of conduct, language, life style, and rituals.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of social issues in military and Veteran families. Examples of issues include substance abuse, domestic violence, poverty, depression, divorce, child maltreatment, and sexual orientation. Students will also understand unique challenges that are faced by military and Veteran families, including forced relocations and deployments.
4. Discuss mental health needs commonly faced by military personnel. Examples include PTSD, (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder) TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury), suicidal ideation, grief and loss, substance abuse, and other mental health needs.
5. Describe military social work policies and services as they relate to child welfare, family services, adult services, mental health, substance abuse and health care.
6. Summarize the prevalent research on the current health, mental health and social service needs of active duty service members, Veterans, and their families.
7. Demonstrate sensitivity to the particular needs of women, single parents, dual military families, gays and lesbians, and immigrants serving in the military and the challenges facing social workers in addressing the needs of these populations.
8. Discuss issues in ethnic and cultural diversity that are particularly relevant in the military and that impact the cultural competence of social workers serving military personnel and their families.
9. Describe current evidence-based and emerging mental health interventions for military personnel and their families, their empirical support, and issues in how they are being implemented.
10. Identify the resources that are available to military personnel and veterans, and how to locate community resources for future clients
11. Describe what is being done to advocate for the needs of active duty service members, National Guard and Reserve members, Veterans and their families and generate ideas as to what social workers can further do to strengthen these advocacy efforts.
12. Describe the unique stressors that military personnel and their families currently experience in connection to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Teaching Methods

Instruction methods will include collaborative and active learning via informal lectures (questions and comments are encouraged), assigned readings, videos, guest speakers who practice military social work, class discussions, and class exercises. Additionally, the professor will spend time throughout the class periods engaging students in targeted discussions on topics related to the material presented and read.

Required Textbooks:

Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Coll, J. E.. (2013). *Handbook of Military Social Work*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Hoge, Charles. W, MD. (2010) *Once a Warrior, Always a Warrior: Navigating the Transitions from Combat to Home Including Combat Stress, PTSD and TBI*

Additional readings, listed in the syllabus, will be available on Blackboard or will be provided to the students by the professor.

Grading

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| 12 points | A maximum of 1 point for every class session attended (1/2 point if you arrive more than 15 minutes late or leave more than 15 minutes early). |
| 60 points | Response papers will be required to be turned in at the beginning of each class session with the exception of the first class. These papers are to be between 1/2 to a full page in length, typed and double-spaced, and should discuss your response to the material read, speaker's presentation, or class discussion. Response papers will be graded worth up to 5 points each. If you are absent from a class, the highest score you can get on a response paper for the missed class is a 3. Your lowest response paper grade will be dropped. The response paper for the last class is due on the last day of class. |
| 28 points | Research paper (approximately 8-10 pages in length): If you are in the clinical concentration, your paper should describe the most valuable things you learned in this class – and did not previously know -- about providing clinical services to military personnel, Veterans and their families. If you are in the CAL concentration, your paper should describe the most important things you learned in this class – and did not previously know – about CAL level practice in military social work. If you are in the clinical concentration but are leaning to switching to CAL you are permitted to take the CAL approach to the paper. Likewise, if you are in the CAL concentration and leaning toward switching to clinical, you may take the clinical approach. Paper is due on the last day of class. Please note that when text, articles, or other factual material are cited, these need to be referenced using APA (6 th ed) citation style, both in the paper and with a reference page at the end. |

Extra Credit You may earn 10 points of extra credit by submitting a certificate showing that you completed one of the following online trainings:

PTSD 101 at: <http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/ptsd101/ptsd-101.asp>

(You may choose from any of the modules offered.)

Cognitive Processing Therapy for Veterans at: <https://cpt.musc.edu/index>

<http://www.deploymentpsych.org/content/online-courses> (any of the listed courses)

Accumulated Points and Grading Scale

100 - 94 = A

93 - 90 = A-

89 - 87 = B+

86 - 84 = B

83 - 80 = B-

79 - 77 = C+

76 - 74 = C

73 - 70 = C-

69 - 67 = D+

66 - 64 = D

63 - 60 = D-

59 and below = F

Class Policies

Students are expected to attend all classes and to be prepared to participate orally and in a thoughtful manner that demonstrates that the assigned readings have been read carefully **prior to class**. Additional supplemental readings may also be provided. Failure to regularly attend the class and demonstrate through exercises and discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade. Students should be respectful of the instructor and of guest speakers and tablet and laptop use should be limited to utilization for the purpose of the class only. Cell phones are not allowed to be out and should only be used in the event of an emergency and then outside of the classroom only. Please let the instructor know in advance of the class if you are anticipating a call during class that you might need to attend to.

Students are responsible for any material missed due to absences. Student feedback is welcome. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback during office hours, by e-mail, and by appointment if they desire.

Except in the case of extreme emergencies, and then only with the permission of the professor, **late assignments will not be accepted**. If accepted, late assignments will be assessed point penalties at the rate of four (4) points each day late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance (at least 30 days).

University Policies:

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS HONOR CODE. The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLASS. The professor expects students to act as professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometime we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION. Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (i.e. blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels

and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including **any** information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in **any** way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

POLICY ON SCHOLASTIC DISHONESTY. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/>).

DOCUMENTED DISABILITY STATEMENT. Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471- 6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before an exam. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

USE OF E-MAIL FOR OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO STUDENTS. Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their email for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently—daily, but at minimum twice a week—to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time- sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

SAFETY. As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

BEHAVIOR CONCERNS ADVICE LINE (BCAL). If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program

(EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call [512-232-5050](tel:512-232-5050) or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY. Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor’s instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Course and Instructor Evaluation

Students will have the opportunity to express their perceptions of the quality of the course and instruction at the end of the semester by participating in the University’s Course Instructor Survey.

Course Schedule

Date	Topics	Readings	Guest Speaker(s)
8/29	Introduction “Inspirations from a Veteran VA Social Worker”	Rubin (2013). “Introduction: Understanding and Intervening with Military Personnel and Their Families: An Overview.” In: Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Cole, E. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i> . Rubin & Harvie (2013). “A Brief History of Social Work with the Military and Veterans.” Chapter 1 in: Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Cole, E. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i> . Rubin & Weiss (2013). Secondary Trauma in Military Social Work. Chapter 5 in: Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Cole, E. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i> .	Tracie Dick, LCSW VA Social Worker at the Cedar Park Outpatient Clinic -areas of expertise are mental health and primary care

9/26	Mindfulness Based Interventions with Veterans	TBD	Guest Speaker
10/3	Treatment of Combat PTSD in the VA (Part 1)	<p>Yarvis, J. S. (2013). Posttraumatic Stress Disorder in Veterans. Chapter 6 in: Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Cole, E. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p> <p>Capehart, B. & Jeffreys, M. (2013). Psychopharmacology for PTSD and Co-occurring Disorders. Chapter 9 in: Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Cole, E. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p> <p>Sharpless, B. A., & Barber, J. P. (2011). A clinician's guide to PTSD treatments for returning veterans. <i>Professional Psychology: Research and Practice</i>, 42(1), 8-15. doi:10.1037/a0022351</p>	Sharon Wills, PhD Team Lead in the Post-Traumatic Clinical Disorder Team at the Austin VA Outpatient Clinic
10/10	Treatment of Combat PTSD in the VA (Part 2)	Stehberg, J. Albright, D., & Weiss, E. L. (2013). The Neurobiology of PTSD and Cognitive Processing therapy (CPT). Chapter 7 in: Rubin, A., Weiss, E. L., & Cole, E. (Eds.). <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>	Ginger Redden, LCSW Social Worker in the Post-Traumatic Clinical Disorder Team at the Austin VA Outpatient Clinic,

10/17	<p>Military Families</p>	<p>The following chapters from the course textbook:</p> <p>Required:</p> <p>Chapters 19, 22, 24, 25, 26</p> <p>Supplemental:</p> <p>Chapters 18, 21, 23</p> <p>Jensen-Hart, S. J., Christensen, J., Dutka, L., & Leishman, J. C. (2012). Child Parent Relationship Training (CPRT): Enhancing the Parent-child Relationships for Military Families. <i>Advances in Social Work</i>, 13(1), 51-66.</p> <p>Hazle, M., Wilcox, S. L., & Hassan, A M. (2012). Helping Veterans and Their Fight On! <i>Advances in Social Work</i>, 13(1), 229-242.</p>	
10/24	<p>What social workers need to know about Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and implications for social work practice</p> <p>SW in Primary Care Settings</p>	<p>Boyd, C. & Asmussen, S. (2013). Traumatic Brain Injury in the Military. Ch. 10 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p> <p>Struchen, M. A., et al. (21013). TBI and social work practice. Ch. 11 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p>	<p>Tracie Dick, LCSW VA Social Worker at the Cedar Park Outpatient Clinic -areas of expertise are mental health and primary care</p>

10/31	<p>Navigating Systems of Care in the VA</p> <p>History and Practice of Social Work in the VA</p>	<p>Roberts, J. (2013) "Navigating Systems of Care." Ch. 16 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p> <p>Huebner, A. J., Mancini, J. A., Bowen, G. L., & Orthner, D. K. (2009). Shadowed by war: Building community capacity to support military families. <i>Family Relations</i>, 58(2), 216-228.</p> <p>Amdur, D., Batres, A., Belisle, J., Brown, J. H., Cornis-Pop, M., Mathewson-Chapman, M., & ... Washam, T. (2011). VA Integrated Post-Combat Care: A systemic approach to caring for returning combat veterans. <i>Social Work in Health Care</i>, 50(7), 564-575.</p>	Guest Speaker
11/7	<p>Substance use disorders among service members and veterans: Assessment, prevention and treatment</p>	<p>Rubin, A. & Barnes, W. G. (2013). Assessing, Preventing and Treating Substance Use disorders in Active Duty Military Settings. Ch. 12 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p> <p>Burda-Chmielewski, R. & Nowlin, A. (2013). Preventing and intervening with Substance Use Disorders in Veterans. Ch. 13 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>. Supplemental:</p> <p>Najavits, L. M. (2009). <i>Seeking Safety: An Implementation Guide</i>. In D. W. Springer & A. Rubin (Eds.) <i>Substance Abuse Treatment for Youth and Adults</i>. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.</p>	Guest Speaker
11/14	<p>The Issue of Homelessness Among the Veteran Population</p>	<p>Costello, J. et al. (2013). Homelessness Among Veterans. Ch. 15 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i>.</p>	Guest Speaker

11/21	Women's Issues in the Veteran Population Military Sexual Trauma	Weiss, E. L. & DeBraber, T. (2013). Women in the Military. Ch. 3 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i> . Bell, M. E., & Reardon, A. (2011). Experiences of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault in the Military Among OEF/OIF Veterans: Implications for Health Care Providers. <i>Social Work in Health Care</i> , 50(1), 34-50.	Guest Speaker
11/28	No Class	Holiday	
12/5	Suicide in the Veteran Population: Risk factors; Prevention; and Identification	Cato, C. (2013). Suicide in the Military. Ch. 14 in Rubin, A. et al. (Eds.) <i>Handbook of Military Social Work</i> .	No guest speaker