

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

Course Number: SW 395K

Unique Number: 61180

Semester: Spring 2025

Meeting Time: Mon, 5:30-8:30

& Place: MEZ 1.216

Instructor: Arlene Montgomery, PhD, LCSW

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Office:

Office Phone: 512-480-8086

Office Hours: by appointment

Mindfulness and Social Work Practice

I. STANDARDIZED COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will cover selected findings from recent neurobiological research as it elaborates understanding of the neural mechanisms which promote and maintain mental health as well as address and repair mental distress, including certain symptoms of various mental illnesses. The interrelationship among secure attachment, mindfulness meditation, and effective therapy will be explored. Techniques and strategies for learning and improving mindfulness as therapeutic technique will be examined for diverse populations as well as issues such as: social work education; supervision; mental illnesses; substance use; end-of-life and palliative care. Although some of the scientific research is usually found outside the usual discourse of the social and psychological sciences, a body of scientific work useful to social service providers will be reviewed, particularly the social basis for self-regulation. 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. A bio-psycho-social and cultural emphasis will be applied to the various problem areas and disorders covered.

II. STANDARDIZED COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Understand how recent scientific findings guide and inform clinical interventions based upon mindfulness techniques;
2. Critically compare and analyze therapeutic and social service implications of recent scientific findings related to the impact of the mindfulness experiences on/in the human brain;
3. Critically evaluate mindfulness theories including Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, MBCT (Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy) and others;
4. Evaluate, select, and design a social service intervention involving mindfulness which takes into account both the appropriate psychological theory on self/affect regulation and the scientific research which supports the use of that particular theory;
5. Adapt social service intervention methods to activities/programs which are designed to sensitively differentiate the needs of the client system as influenced by age, gender, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnic/cultural background, socioeconomic status, physical challenge, and other individual differences.

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course is designed to include a variety of teaching methodologies to achieve the expectation of student mastery of the skills involved in the examination of social work practice as it is supported by selected scientific findings. Readings, discussion, lecture, experiential exercise, videos, audio CDs, case examples, and presentations are designed to enhance the learning experience.

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

Siegel, D.J. (2010). *The mindful therapist: A clinician's guide to mindsight and neural integration*. New York: NY: Norton.

Teasdale, J., Williams, M., & Segal, Z. (2014). *The mindful way workbook*. New York: NY: Guilford.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Student generated handouts:

Texts

For the presentation, each student will be required to prepare a written summary of the major points of a portion of chapters from the texts and provide copies (via email is fine) for fellow classmates and the instructor (hard copy required). Each emailed summary is due to fellow students the Sunday before the week the assignment is due and a hard copy to the instructor the day the assignment is due.

In addition to summarizing the text/articles, each student should choose 3 points they consider most important, emphasize them in some way in the summaries, and be prepared to particularly highlight those points in the class discussion.

Presentation to class

Choose two points from your text material (Siegel) and illustrate it to the class via exercise(s) from Teasdale, et al. workbook. Create a 5-question quizlette for the class regarding the text material (class will work cooperatively on quizlette questions following presentation of material); Choose a film clip to illustrate one of the concepts.

Additionally, each text summary should address in writing, the following as it is related to the material summarized:

(a.) speculate on how information in section of text summarized affects or is affected by **one** of the following characteristics: age, class, culture, ethnicity, country of origin, language(s), educational attainment, religious background, sexual orientation, physical or mental challenge, economic oppression, social oppression

(b.) make a neurobiological connection of 2 concepts from the Siegel chapter to the Teasdale, et al exercise(s). **NOTE:** (a.) & (b.) are critical thinking comments and **not part of the presentation**, just part of the summary the class will receive from presenter. If there are 2 presenters, each will provide the critical thinking exercise individually

Article summaries

Each student will summarize major points from an article on the syllabus and provide copies of their notes to fellow classmates and the instructor the Sunday before the week the assignment is due. The notes should include 1 speculation regarding relevant scientific findings that (i.) supports and (ii.) calls into question the scientific basis of selected principles of the treatment theory in the article summarized. The scientific findings can be from any of the material in the textbooks or in class-mates summaries (cite this). When the article is discussed in class, the student is expected to actively support the discussion.

Presentation to class: Choose one point from your article material & text material and find film example(s) to illustrate it to the class.

Text summaries

Each student will send note to instructor via email(marksak@utexas.edu) the night before class that has 5 bullet points from the assigned text(Siegel) for the week and **for only 2** of the summaries during the semester, choose an exercise from Teasdale, et al., that would support or compliment the assigned Siegel material for the week.

Paper: the paper is done in 2 parts; first ½ due date TBA (questions 1-3) & last ½ due last class day of university term (questions 4,5).

Choose a treatment theory from any assigned material or the reference list on this syllabus and:

1. Choose a case example from Montgomery (2013) for whom a treatment theory of your choice may be particularly suitable and briefly explain why that may be so (summarize the case material);(Montgomery text on reserve in the Learning Resource Library)
2. Briefly summarize three treatment theory interventions from above theory as they may be related to any neurobiological concepts from Siegel text.
3. Describe ways in which mindfulness could be incorporated into the above three strategies, etc., with an exercise the client(s) you have selected (#1 above) might find helpful;

NOTE: Support your clinical discussion in #2 & #3 above with the following; the text(s) materials and articles that you presented to the class, 2 references from reference list on syllabus and any other material assigned for the semester (2 references).

4. Using one of mindfulness techniques from question #3, speculate on a particular population (e.g., adolescents) or clinical issue (certain clinical diagnoses or experiences, such as assault, homophobia, etc.) on which the technique would have a positive effect and discuss briefly why this may be the case and speculate on a particular population or clinical issue for which the technique would not be positive, and, in fact, may be detrimental and briefly discuss why this may be the case. Cite support for your clinical thinking.

5. For one of the populations and/or issues from #4 above, choose 4 neurobiological facts or concepts that support the use of the mindfulness techniques and 2 neurobiological facts or concepts that do not support their use.

VI. GRADES

Grading Scale

[No A+] 94.0 and Above A 90.0 to 93.999 A-	87.0 to 89.999 B+ 84.0 to 86.999 B 80.0 to 83.999 B-	77.0 to 79.999 C+ 74.0 to 76.999 C* 70.0 to 73.999 C- <i>*minimum to pass course</i>	67.0 to 69.999 D+ 64.0 to 66.999 D 60.0 to 63.999 D- Below 60.0 F
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VII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Attendance and Academic Behavior. At the University of Texas at Austin, regular attendance at all class meetings is expected. Instructors are responsible for implementing an attendance policy and must notify students of any special attendance requirements. See more information at <https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/>. Furthermore, students are expected to abide by the Standards for Social Work Education (available at <https://socialwork.utexas.edu/student-resources/bsw/policies-and-procedures/>). The student shows potential for responsible and accountable behavior by being punctual and dependable, prioritizing responsibilities, attending class regularly, observing deadlines, completing assignments on time, and

keeping appointments or making appropriate arrangements.

Religious Holy Days. A student who misses classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day should inform the instructor as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made to complete an assignment within a reasonable period after the absence. A reasonable accommodation does not include substantial modification to academic standards, or adjustments of requirements essential to any program of instruction. Students and instructors who have questions or concerns about academic accommodations for religious observance or religious beliefs may contact the Center for Access and Restorative Engagement at <https://community.utexas.edu/care/>. The University does not maintain a list of religious holy days.

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.

Policy on Academic Integrity. Students who violate University rules on academic 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 academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

Use of Course Materials. The materials used in this course, including, but not limited to exams, quizzes, and homework assignments, are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized duplication of the course materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of course materials without the specific, express approval of the professor may be a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This sharing includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of distributing those materials to other current or future students.

University Electronic Mail Student Notification. Electronic mail (email), like postal mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send email communications to all students, and the University will expect that email communications will be received and read in a timely manner. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <https://it.utexas.edu/policies/university-electronic-mail-student-notification-policy>.

Steve Hicks School of Social Work Policies

Professional Conduct and Civility in the Classroom. 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. A course brings together a group of diverse individuals with various backgrounds. Students are influenced and shaped by such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, sex, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, national origins, and sexual orientations, among others. We expect to learn from each other in an atmosphere of positive engagement and mutual respect. This atmosphere includes working intentionally to recognize and dismantle racism, sexism, heterosexism, and ableism in the classroom. Social Work also deals with complex and controversial issues. These issues may be challenging and uncomfortable, and it would be impossible to offer a substantive classroom experience that did not include potentially difficult conversations relating to

challenging issues. In this environment, we will be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. Nevertheless, the professor requires that students engage one another with civility, respect, and professionalism.

Classroom Confidentiality. Information shared in class about agencies, clients, and personal matters is considered confidential per the NASW Code of Ethics on educational supervision and is protected by regulations of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as well. As such, sharing this information with individuals outside of the educational context is not permitted. Violations of confidentiality could result in actions taken according to the policies and procedure for review of academic performance located in sections 3.0, 3.1, and 3.2 of the Standards for Social Work Education.

Unanticipated Distress. Students may experience unexpected and/or distressing reactions to course readings, videos, conversations, and assignments. If so, students are encouraged to inform the professor. The professor can be responsive and supportive regarding students' participation in course assignments and activities, but students are responsible for communicating clearly what kind of support is desired. If counseling is needed, students may contact a service provider of their choosing, including the UT Counseling and Mental Health Center at 512-471-3515 or online at <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/>.

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 (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g. blogs) 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.

Resources, Prevention of Discrimination, and Safety

Disability Accommodation Statement. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability and Access (D&A). You may refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <https://disability.utexas.edu/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and how they apply in my class.

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL). If students have concerns about their behavioral health, or if they are concerned about the behavioral health of someone else, students may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns. This service is provided through a partnership between 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 or visit <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line>.

Covid-19 Related Information. The University's policies and practices related to the pandemic may be accessed at: <https://protect.utexas.edu/>

Title IX Reporting. In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the University of Texas at Austin is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is free from discriminatory conduct on the basis of sex <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>. Faculty, field instructors, staff, and/or teaching assistants in their supervisory roles are mandated reporters of incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual violence, stalking, dating violence, or any other forms of sexual misconduct. Students who report such incidents will be informed of University resources. Incidents will be reported to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Further information, including student resources related to Title IX, may also be found at <https://titleix.utexas.edu/>.

Title IX Accommodations for Those Pregnant, Nursing and Parenting. Pregnant, nursing and parenting students, faculty, and staff are eligible for accommodations through the Title IX Office that support equal access to education and work and prevent discrimination. Students may reach out to the Title IX Office for help with accommodations to make up missed classes, complete missed coursework, keep them safe in the classroom, apply for leaves of absence, receive priority registration and other related support. Faculty and staff, including undergraduate students who work on campus and graduate student employees, may reach out for assistance with job or schedule restructuring and obtaining modified or additional work equipment. Visit the [Title IX pregnancy and parenting resource page](#) for more information or contact the [Title IX Support and Resources team](#) connect with a Case Manager.

Campus Carry Policy. The University's policy on campus carry may be found here: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu>.

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.

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 in the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering 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.

VIII. CLASS POLICIES

Reading assignment completion

Class participation
 Class attendance
 Successful completion of assignments

Paper = 40%

Text summary and presentation = 35%

Article summary and presentation = 20%

Participation and attendance, includes text summaries = 5%

Due dates:TBA

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

	Topic	Assignment Due	Readings
01-13	Introduction (xi) from Siegel and introduction to class		Presenter summarizes articles; class reading articles optional; presenter chooses Teasdale exercise; see bibliography for full citation of articles
01-20	Chapter 1 Presence Siegel; Chapter 2, Attunement, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel, 2010, unless otherwise noted</i>	Teasdale, et al; <u>Bonifas & Napoli</u> ,mindfulness and SW students <u>Siegel, 2007</u> , Ch. 8, internal attunement & mirror neurons <u>Hanson</u> . <i>Buddha's brain</i> ; Ch. 9, ...compassion & assertion
01-27	Chapter 3 Resonance, Siegel Chapter 4 Trust, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale, et al; <u>Raab</u> , ...mindfulness and social work education <u>Siegel, 2017</u> , Ch.6....neuroplasticity and cultural systems....
02-03	Chapter 5 Truth, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale, et al; <u>Lynn</u> ,mindfulness and SW education <u>Siegel(2017)</u> , Ch. 4, Is the Mind's Subjective Reality Real?
02-10	Chapter 6 Tripod, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale, et al; <u>Birnbaum & Birnbaum</u> ,.....mindful social work... <u>Brown</u> , et al., Ch. 18,....mindfulness for under- and over -controlled disorders
02-17			Teasdale, et al;

	Chapter 7 Triception, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Shier & Graham,SW education and mindfulness.... <u>Pollack</u>, et al., Ch. 10 ...deepening symptom relief...
02-23	Chapter 10 Trauma, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale, et al; Germer,et al.,Chapter11, Mindfulness, Insight, & Trauma
03-03	Chapter 9 Traits, Siegel;	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale, et al; <u>Hanson</u>, Ch.4;, Taking in the Good; <u>Mesinga...including Yoga</u>
03-10	Chapter 14 Tranquility, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale et al; <u>McCoryd & Kerson</u>, ...health care and reflective practices;
	Spring Break		
03-24	Chapter 11 Transition, Siegel		Teasdale, et al; <u>McCormick</u>, ...end-of-life decisions & ethics <u>Germer</u>, Ch. 10...working with children
03-31	Chapter 8 Tracking Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	Teasdale, et al; <u>Foulk</u>, et al., ...with older adults
04-07	Chapter 13 Transformation, Siegel		<u>Brown</u>, et al., Ch.21...mindfulness and addiction

04-14	Chapter 15 Transpiration, Siegel		Teasdale, et al. <u>Pollack, et al.,Ch.8, making mindfulness accessible</u>
04-21	Chapter 12 Training, Siegel	<i>All read Siegel</i>	<u>Carroll,2009; Carroll, 2010; both articles on supervision</u>
04-28	MAKE-UP PRESENTATIONS		

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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