

# Social Work: Trauma Informed Practice 4G03/6G03

* September 8th – December 9, 2020, Thursdays, 2:30-5:20 P.M.
* Instructor: Mirna Carranza
* Office: KTH-309B
* Office hours: by appointment
* Email: [carranz@mcmaster.ca](mailto:carranz@mcmaster.ca)
* Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. #23789

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# Course Overview

## Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to gain some basic understanding about social work and trauma informed practice. Trauma presents itself in most areas of practice. Thus, social workers are required to work with people who have endured difficult experiences leading to behaviours related to trauma and/or ‘Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The course considers the historical, psychological/socio/political impact of trauma. Recognizing that there are various definitions and subjective experiences, this course highlights some of the values, biases and tensions surrounding trauma informed social work practice.

The course focuses on trauma theory, analysis and skill development. The content assumes that you have a basic understanding of practice from a social justice perspective (i.e., 4Z03, 4J03 & 3T03) and that your analysis and practice interventions will be based upon it. The course will cover various intersections of trauma that will enable social workers understand and work from a client centered approach. Students are encouraged to critically examine the politics of trauma practices.

## Course Objectives:

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Identify how social & cultural contexts impact our understanding of trauma
2. Expand concepts learned on 3E03 (i.e., CBT, narrative) to social work with trauma
3. Demonstrate basic understanding of trauma and its overall impact on the clients’ wellbeing
4. Demonstrate basic assessment and intervention skills that reflect social work’s commitment to social justice & trauma.
5. Investigate how one’s own experiences and social location influence how one understands trauma.

The basic assumptions of this course concur with the broader curriculum context set by the **School of Social Work's Statement of Philosophy**:

*As social workers, we operate in a society characterized by power imbalances that affect us all. These power imbalances are based on age, class, ethnicity, gender identity, geographic location, health, ability, race, sexual identity and income. We see personal troubles as inextricably linked to oppressive structures. We believe that social workers must be actively involved in the understanding and transformation of injustices in social institutions and in the struggles of people to maximize control over their own lives.*

## Course Format

The course will provide a variety of learning experiences including lectures, small and large group discussions, role-plays, experiential exercises, guest speakers and/or films. Classroom discussion is expected and students are encouraged to bring examples from their practice to illustrate or enrich the material.

## Required Texts:

1. Herman, J. (1997/2015) *Trauma & Recovery.* The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror. New York: Basic Books— available in McMaster Bookstore.

## Additional Suggested Readings

* Herman, J. (1997/2015). *Trauma & Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror.* New York: Basic Books. Ch. 6, Ch. 8, Ch. 9, Ch. 10, Ch. 11
* Fassin, D., Rechtman, R., & Gomme, R. (2009) *The Empire of Trauma: An Inquiry into the Conditions of Victimhood. N*ew Jersey: Princeton University.
* Leon, S.C., Ragsdale, B., Miller, S.A., Spacarelli, S. (2008). Trauma resilience among youth in substitute care demonstrating sexual behavior problems. *Child Abuse & Neglect,* 32:67-81
* Jones, E. & Wessely, S. (2006). Psychological trauma: A historical perspective. *Psychiatry,* 5(7): 217-220.
* Saul, J. & Bava, S. (2008). Implementing collective approaches to massive trauma/loss in Western contexts: Implications for recovery, peacebuilding and development. *International Conflict Research Institute & International Development Research Centre*
* Sotero, M. (2006). A conceptual model of historical trauma: Implications for public health practice research. *Journal of Health Disparities Research* *Practice*, 1(1): 93-108.

# Course Requirements/Assignments

## Requirements Overview and Deadlines

1. Assignment 1

Worth: 30%

Due date: October 1, 2020

1. Option # 1 – *Critical* review 4-5 media posts, blogs, newspaper, TV news, etc.
2. Option # 2 – *Critical* analysis of a movie
3. Assignment 2 – *Critical* Literature Review

Worth: 40%

Due date: November 12, 2020

1. Assignment 3 – A *critical* reflection

Worth: 30%

Due date: December 3, 2020

Note: Writing clearly, respectfully and succinctly is a necessary skill in social work. However, it is important to recognize oral traditions—expression of knowledge through stories.

## Details Requirement- Assignment 1 – 30%

Option #1

Students are required to *critical* review 4-5 media posts, blogs, newspaper, TV news, etc. about a particular topic (i.e., Covid 19. “I can’t breathe” movement, violence against women, date rape, etc.). Describe and provide an analysis about the manner in which these present and discuss events leading to possible traumatic experiences. Questions are:

* What are the theoretical framework being used?
  + Explain, i.e., embedded assumptions related to trauma itself, embedded assumptions related to those who are enduring it or have endured it
* Provide a *critical* analysis of your findings
  + Explain, i.e., dominant discourse
* Discuss implications for policy and practice

The papers should incorporate course readings, lectures and discussions. It should be 8 Pgs. (undergraduate students) 12 Pgs. (graduate students), not including references.

Option #2

Students are required to watch one of the following movies Hotel Rwanda, Mystic River, The Afflicted, Sleeping with the enemy. Provide a *critical* analysis of the movie. Questions are:

* How do the event(s) presented in the movie possibly lead to a traumatic experience?
* Develop an intervention plan (i.e., individual, couple, family, and/or community)
* What behaviours do you associate with PTSD? What are the implications for practice i.e., programing, policy for this particular population?

The papers should incorporate course readings, lectures and discussions. It should be 8 Pgs. (undergraduate students) 12 Pgs. (graduate students), not including references.

Due date: October 1, 2020

Worth: 30%

Details Requirement- Assignment # 2

Students are required to complete a *critical* literature review on the intersection of trauma & the intersections of one of the following: Motor Vehicle Accidents, natural disasters, child abuse, IPV, children witnessing violence, torture survivors, survivors of sexual assault, survivors of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation, bullying, immigration, sudden death/loss, burn out. Any other interest must be approved by the instructor. The paper should be 12-15 Pgs. (undergraduate students) and 20-23 Pgs. (graduate students), not including references.

* + Have a clear thesis statement
  + Highlight the tensions within the literature
  + Critique of the review
  + Gaps in the literature
  + Research questions (1-2) derived from the literature

Due date: November 12, 2020

Worth: 40%

## Details Requirement- Assignment # 3

A *critical* reflection about the student’s take away in relation to: readings, new learnings, and insights about yourself. 8 Pgs. (undergraduate students) 12 Pgs. (graduate students). Possible questions:

* How do I make sense of the class lecture/discussions and SW practice in the field?
* What is (are) the most important take away from this course?
* What are some of the challenges/successes that you forth see as you engage in Trauma Informed Practice?
* How will you prevent burn out?

Due date: December 3, 2020

Worth: 30%

# Assignment Submission and Grading

## Form and Style

Written Assignment Expectations:

* Written assignments must be typed and double-spaced and submitted with a front page containing the title, student’s name, student number, and the date. Number all pages (except title page). Assignments should be stapled together. Paper format must be in accordance with the current edition of the American Psychological Association 6th edition Publication Manual with particular attention paid to font size (Times-Roman 12), spacing (double spaced) and margins (minimum of 1 inch at the top, bottom, left and right of each page). Papers not meeting these requirements will not be accepted for grading. In completing assignments students are expected to make use of and cite (following APA) appropriate professional and social science literature and other bodies of knowledge. When submitting, students should keep a spare copy of assignments. When completing assignments please do not exceed the maximum space allowed (by going over the page limit, reducing font size or line spacing). Papers will only be graded on the content that falls within the assignment space parameters.
* All written work will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, and organization as well as content and analysis.
* The assignment must be submitted in class at the beginning of class on the due date unless authorized by the instructor. Late papers will be penalized 5% per day.
* In exceptional circumstances an extension will be granted if discussed and agreed upon prior to the due date. If the extension is granted because of illness, a Doctor’s note should be submitted with the assignment. Note: It is the responsibility of the students to engage in such of negotiations in due time.

## Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last five digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

## Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

# Student Responsibilities

* Students are directed to the School’s Social Media Policy.
* Students are expected to contribute to the creation of a respectful and constructive learning environment. Please read the material in preparation for class, attend on time and remain for the duration of the class. A formal break will be provided in the middle of each class.
* In the past, students & faculty have found that non-course related use of laptop computers and hand-held devices during class to be distracting and at times, disruptive. Consequently, students are expected to only use such devices for taking notes and other activities directly related to the lecture or class activity taking place. Please try to remember to turn off your cell phone before class starts.
* Please check with the instructor before using any audio or video recording devices in the classroom.

## Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes. If you anticipate difficulty with this, please speak with the instructor. Missing a substantial number of classes often results in essential course requirements not being met (these must be met to pass the course). If you are close to missing 20% of classes, contact the instructor to discuss.

## Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

* Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
* Improper collaboration in group work.
* Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations

Academic dishonesty also entails a student having someone sign in for them on a weekly course attendance sheet when they are absent from class and/or a student signing someone in who is known to be absent.

## Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the *Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities* (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s *Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities* policy.

## Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

## Accessibility Statement

The School of Social Work recognizes that people learn and express their knowledge in different ways. We are committed to reducing barriers to accessibility in the classroom, and working towards classrooms that welcome diverse learners. If you have accessibility concerns or want to talk about your learning needs, please be in touch with the course instructor.

## Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, they may not reply.

### Extensions and Incomplete Courses

Extensions

All instructors understand that life situations sometimes make it very difficult to hand in an assignment on the date it is due. If you need more time to complete an assignment, talk with your instructor – in advance of the assignment deadline! Once you and your instructor have agreed on a new due date, it is your responsibility to submit your assignment on time. If you find yourself unable to meet deadlines in more than one course, please reach out to Tammy Maikawa, Administrator ([millet@mcmaster.ca](mailto:millet@mcmaster.ca) ) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair ([prestosl@mcmaster.ca](mailto:prestosl@mcmaster.ca) ). We are here to support you to think about options (such as reducing your course load) that can take the stress off and contribute to your success in the program overall.

Incomplete courses

If you are not able to complete all of your assignments by the end of term, you have the option of contacting the instructor to request an Incomplete (INC) on the course. If the instructor agrees, (taking into account the amount of outstanding coursework and the time it will likely take to complete), the instructor will enter the grade you have so far in the course (the default grade) and the course will appear in Mosaic as INC (incomplete).

The School’s requirements for completing courses depend on a) the nature of the course (whether it is a foundation course\*, or a social and political context course) and b) when you are hoping to start placement. For example, a student who has an incomplete in a foundation course cannot start placement. Please see the [Policy on Extensions and Incompletes in the BSW Program](https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/resources/general-school-policies/policy-on-extensions-and-incompletes-october-2017.pdf) for more details.

At approximately 52-60 days after the end of term, the Mosaic system will automatically change an INC to the default grade. Depending on the default grade, this might affect your standing or progress in the program.

*As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your progress in the program, please connect with Tammy Maikawa, Administrator (*[*millet@mcmaster.ca*](mailto:millet@mcmaster.ca) *) or Sandra Preston, Undergraduate Chair (*[*prestosl@mcmaster.ca*](mailto:prestosl@mcmaster.ca)*).*

# Course Weekly Topics and Readings

## Week 1: September 10, 2020

Topic: Introduction; Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) Definition; Self-care

* + Warning about readings & lectures
  + Social Context of Trauma
  + Discussion of supports
  + Discussion of assignments

Readings:

* Coaston, S. S. (2017). Self-care through self-compassion: A balm for burnout. *The Professional Counselor,* 7(3): 285-297.

## Week 2: September 17, 2020

Topic: History of Trauma & Definition

Readings:

* Herman, J. Ch. 1. *A forgotten history* (pp. 7-32)
* Herman, J. Ch. 2. *Terror* (pp. 33-50)

## Week 3: September 24, 2020

Topic: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Readings:

* Herman, J. Ch. 3. *Disconnection* (pp. 51-73)
* Herman, J. Ch. 4. *Captivity* (pp. 74-95)
* Herman, J. Ch. 5. Child Abuse (pp. 96-114)

## Week 4: October 1, 2020 – Assignment 1 (Option 1 or 2) due today

Topic: Trauma & The Family

Readings:

* Boyd Webb, N. (2004) Mass trauma and violence: Helping families and children cope. Ch. 1. New York: The Guilford Press.
* Figley, C. R. & Kiser, L. J. (2012). *Helping traumatized families 2nd ed.* Ch. 3. New York: Roudtledge.
* Sheinberg, M. & True, F. (2008). Treating family relational trauma: A recursive process using a decision dialogue. *Family Process*, 47(2): 173-195.

## Week 5: October 8, 2020

Topic: Intersection of Trauma & Intimate Partner’s Violence.

Readings:

* Anyikwa, V.A. (2016). Trauma-informed approach to survivors of intimate partner violence, *J Evid Inf Soc Work*, 13(5):484-491.
* Burstow, B. (2003). Toward a radical understanding of trauma and trauma work. *Violence Against Women*, 9(11):1293-1317
* Wathen, N. (2012). Health impacts of violent victimization on women and their children. Research & Statistics Division. Department of Justice Canada.

## Week 6: October 15, 2020

Topic: Topics: Children Witnessing Violence. Guest Speaker: Tatiana Ortíz

Readings:

* British Columbia Ministry of Justice. (2013). *Safety planning with children and youth: a toolkit for working with children and youth exposed to domestic violence*.
* London Family Court Clinic. (2017). Helping children exposed to violence at home: an essentials guide.
* Holt, S., Buckley, H., & Whelan, S. (2008). The impact of exposure to domestic violence on children and young people: A review of the literature. Child Abuse & Neglect (32): 797-810.

## October 19—23 Reading Week

## Week 7: October 29, 2020

Topic: Topic: Intersection of trauma & Indigenous communities: Collective & Historical trauma. Guest Speaker: Allan Loft

Readings:

* Brave Hart, M. Y. H. (2011). Historical trauma among Indigenous Peoples on the Americas: Concepts, and clinical implications. *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs,* 43(4): 282-290.
* Menzies, P. (2007). Understanding Aboriginal intergeneration trauma from a social work perspective. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies XXVII*, 2: 367-392.
* Moffatt, K., Carranza, M. E., Lee, B., McGrath, S., & George, U. (2014). Collective trauma as a personal/social concern for persons within marginalized communities. *The International Journal of Community Diversity, 12*(4), 61-80*.*

## Week 8: November 5, 2020

Topic: Race-based trauma. Guest Speaker: Glenda Vanderleeuw

Readings:

* Carter, R. T. & Sant-Barket, S. (2015). Assessment of the impact of racial discrimination and racism: How to use the race-based traumatic stress symptoms scale in practice. *Traumatology*, 21(1): 32-39
* Bryant-Davis, T. (2007). Healing requires recognition: The case for race-based traumatic stress. *The Counselling Psychologist*, 35(1): 135-143.
* Turner, E. A. & Richardson, J. (June 2016). Racial trauma is real: The impact of police shootings on African American. *Psychology Benefits Society*. I gradPSYCH Blog

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Week 9: November 12, 2020 – *Critical* Literature Review due today

Topics: Intersection of trauma & immigration. Guest Speaker: Liz Grigg

Readings:

* + Children on the Run- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

<http://www.unhcr.org/about-us/background/56fc266f4/children-on-the-run-full-report.html>

* + Beiser, M., & Hou, F. (2016). Mental health effects of premigration trauma and postmigration discrimination on refugee youth in Canada. *The Journal of nervous and mental disease*, *204*(6), 464-470.
  + Bryan, C., & Denov, M. (2011). Separated refugee children in Canada: The construction of risk identity. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies*, 9(3), 242-266.

## Week 10: November 19, 2020

Topic: Trauma: Healing Relationship & Interventions.

Readings:

* Herman, J. Ch. 7. *A healing relationship* (pp. 133- 154); Ch. 8. *Safety* (pp. 156-174); Ch. 9. *Remembrance & mourning* (pp. 175-195)
* Whitworth, J. D. (2016). The role of psychoeducation in trauma recovery: Recommendations for content and delivery. *Journal of Evidence Informed Social Work,* 13(5): 442-451.
* Lantz, J. & Raiz, L. (2003). Play and art in existential trauma therapy with children and their parents. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 25(2): 165-177.

## Week 11: November 26, 2020

Topic: Young Mothers, Trauma & Art Based Interventions. Guest speaker: Erin Kuri

Readings:

* Moxley, D.P. & Feen, H. (2016). Arts-inspired design in the development of helping interventions in social work: Implications for the integration of research and practice. *British Journal of Social Work*, 46: 1690-1707
* Pifalo, T. (2009). Mapping the maze: An art therapy intervention following disclosure of sexual abuse. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 26(1): 12-18.

## Week 12: December 3, 2020

Topic: Trauma & Burnout for Social Workers & Wrap Up

Readings:

* Gibson, D. (2018). A visual conversation with trauma: Visual journaling in art therapy to combat vicarious trauma. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association,* 35(2): 99-103.
* Wilson, F. (2016). Identifying, preventing, and addressing job burnout and vicarious burnout for social work professionals, *Journal of Evidence Informed Social Work,* 13(5): 479-483