SWK 395
Mindfulness and Social Work Practice

Fall 2017
September 6, 2017 – November 29, 2017

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VW Date: November 3, 2017
Request for Incomplete Date: November 24, 2017

Availability

Appointments can be scheduled at a mutually satisfactory time to both the student and the instructor. If questions or concerns come up between class sessions students are encouraged to use email to connect with me. In case of emergency, please feel free to call me at home prior to 8:00 p.m.

Syllabus Statement:

This course challenges students to incorporate theoretical and practical components of Mindfulness practice and apply these methods of Mindfulness in clinical settings.

Course Description:

Mindfulness is ever increasing in popularity as a personal practice as well as a method that can be incorporated in clinical social work to enhance the lives of our clients and society as a whole. Mindfulness practice and social work merge in perfect harmony to benefit both practitioner and client. Although generally having its roots in Buddhism, the tenets of mindfulness can also be seen in other areas of religious study including Christianity and Judaism. This course will be taught by way of a secular approach with an opportunity for students to incorporate the practice to suit their own religious pursuits. At its essence
Mindfulness is a method or tool that offers a practical way to develop the ability to observe ourselves, our thoughts, actions and behaviors. Students will learn that with increased awareness, by way of Mindfulness methods, we can live lives that are more balanced, stable and peaceful. Mindfulness is said to have developed about 2,600 years ago by Gautama Siddhartha, who we have come to call the Buddha (Buddha means the one who is awake). The Buddha was a teacher, not a god or a person to be worshipped. You do not have to practice Buddhism to practice mindfulness. During the class students will learn the theoretical foundations as well as the practice elements of mindfulness including sitting and walking meditations which bring mindfulness to our everyday life. Mindfulness is therefore not just a practice for the meditation cushion; it can be incorporated into all aspects of our lives. Students can expect a part instructional and part theoretical approach. Students will see that in order to maximize the benefits of mindfulness a commitment to practice is essential.

Credits: 3 credit hours

Prerequisites:
1) Purchase required textbook:

2) Optional: Purchase a meditation cushion or meditation bench and have available for the first class and all subsequent classes. You may want to try to use the cushion or bench as this can assist with the upright posture most beneficial to a mindfulness sitting practice. If you have back problems or a physical condition that may prevent you from sitting cross legged on the cushion, chairs will be available. If physical limitations prevent you from sitting on a cushion, please advise instructor.

Program Outcomes
Social work program outcomes fall under the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Work Program Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identification as a professional social worker and use of self</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Adherence to the Social Work Code of Ethics and Adoption of Social Work Values in Professional Practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Professional practice skills with individuals, families, groups, communities and organizations, applying knowledge of human behaviour and the social environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Identification of structural sources of oppression and inequity, and promotion of human rights and social justice at all client system levels</td>
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<td>5. Employment of critical thinking in professional practice</td>
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<td>6. Engage in research</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Engage in policy analysis and development to advance social and economic well-being and deliver effective social work services</td>
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## Course Outcomes/ Program Outcomes & Assessment Methods

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Objective</th>
<th>Program Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Clarify personal and professional values and recognize the impact on utilizing/ implementing mindfulness based interventions in future practice, including the impact on decision making and professional behaviour.</td>
<td>1a, 1b, 2b, 3a, 3f,</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation, Evening of Silence, Ethnography</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Analyze and apply mindfulness principles and practices as they relate to the therapeutic relationship.</td>
<td>3a, 3d, 5a, 5c</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation</td>
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<td>3. Identify a variety of populations with matched mindfulness intervention(s).</td>
<td>4a, 5a, 5b, 5c 7d</td>
<td>Group Presentation, Class Discussion</td>
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<td>4. Identify current research that informs the use of mindfulness practices in Social Work</td>
<td>5a, 5c, 6a</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation</td>
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<td>5. Discuss the use of mindfulness techniques that may be used in a variety of settings and organizational contexts.</td>
<td>5a, 5b, 5c,</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation</td>
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<td>6. Recognize diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles as they apply to mindfulness based approaches and interventions.</td>
<td>2a, 4a, 4b,4c, 5d</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Discuss the ethical considerations and obligations of the social work profession in implementing mindfulness theory, techniques and practices.</td>
<td>2a, 2b, 4b, 4c, 7c, 7d</td>
<td>Group Presentation, Class Discussions</td>
</tr>
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<td>8. Analyze and synthesize relevant mindfulness literature demonstrating evidence of critical thinking and practice.</td>
<td>5a, 5b, 5c, 5d</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation Evening of Silence, Ethnography</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Present an analysis and practice elements of mindfulness, experientially, written and orally.</td>
<td>5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 6 a, 7b, 7c</td>
<td>Mindfulness Overview Paper, Group Presentation, Ethnography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 1 | September 6 | Reading | Chapter 1  
Mindfulness and Social Work: Paying Attention to Ourselves, Our Clients, and Society, Steven F. Hick |
| Week 2 | September 13 | Reading | Chapter 2  
Living Fully: Mindfulness Practices for Everyday Life, Christine Kessen |
| Week 3 | September 20 | Reading | Chapter 3  
Mindfulness in Social Work Practice: A Theoretical and Spiritual Exploration, Richard Potter |
| Week 4 | September 27 | Reading | Chapter 4  
Mindfulness and Reflexivity: The No-Self as Reflexive Practitioner, Laura G. Béres |
| Week 5 | October 4 | Reading | Chapter 5  
Watching the Train: Mindfulness and Inner Dialogue in Therapist Skills Training, David A. Paré, Brian Richardson, and Margarita Tarragona |
| Week 6 | October 11 | Reading | TBA |
| Week 7 | Oct. 18 | Mindfulness Movie Night  
Reading: TBA |
| Week 8 | Oct. 25 | Ethnography  
Getting Off the Cushion- In the Field Research  
Reading: A Simple Introduction to the Practice of Ethnography and Guide to Ethnographic Field notes Marshall University Digital Scholar (2014), Brian A Hoey, Marshall University  
Download available @  
https://works.bepress.com/brian_hoey/12/ |
| Week 9 | Nov.1 | Evening of Silence: Silent Retreat  
Reading: Chapter 7  
Subjective Well-Being, Mindfulness, and the Social Work Workplace: Insight into Reciprocal Relationships, Susan M. Graham and John R. Graham |
| Week 10 | Nov.8 | Reading: TBA  
YOGA CLASS:  
STUDENTS TO WEAR COMFORTABLE CLOTHES AND BRING Yoga Matt |
| Week 11 | Nov.15 | GROUP PRESENTATIONS  
Reading: Chapter 13  
From Environmental Despair to the Ecological Self: Mindfulness |
Course Requirements

**Participation**

Students are expected to come to class prepared to practice meditation and mindfulness “on the cushion” as well as in the “real world”. This class will likely be like no other you have experienced and some students may experience being out of their comfort zone, therefore the utmost maturity and respect for the process and the learning is essential and a non-negotiable. Students are required to interact in discussion and activities in the classroom. Professional social workers must be able to critically analyze the world in which they live, and be alert to the ever-changing and sometimes unpredictable nature of their environment. Students must also become adept at appreciating and respecting the variety of perspectives that different people and groups can bring to an issue. Class participation is preparation for professional work, and the student will be assessed by the level of their responsible engagement in the learning processes offered in the course.

**Mindfulness: An Overview**

For this assignment, research the topic of Mindfulness. Include an introduction to the topic, a brief history of the concept, the emergence of the practice in the West, the emergence of the topic in the field of social work, your impressions based on the research you have conducted and a summary conclusion. You are required to include academic references throughout. A minimum of 5 is recommended.

**Grading Criteria**

Evaluation will be based on the ability to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of Mindfulness. Written skills are graded based on clarity, comprehensiveness and organization of content. Marks will be deducted for incorrect referencing. Be sure to check the correct format for referencing in APA style.

Mode of Presentation: typewritten, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 “ margins


**Evening of Silence Retreat: Reflections and Review**  
Value 30 points

Slowing down, being quiet, and doing “nothing”; in the west and certainly in North America these notions are both rare and foreign. In fact, being human seems to be synonymous with being productive and being really, really busy, suggesting that we are more human “do-ing’s” that human “be-ings”. For this assignment, students will be asked to attend a one evening silent retreat. This evening will be facilitated and instructions will be provided to guide students in this unique experience. Following the evening, students are to reflect upon the experience and provide personal insights gained if any.

The paper should include an introduction that is written BEFORE you attend the retreat evening. This introduction should include your thoughts on what you anticipate the experience to be. This may include any preconceived notions, ideas, or thoughts. AFTER the retreat evening, students are to write a reflection and review summary on the actual experience which can include but is not limited to what you liked, what you did not like, what you found easy, what you found difficult, frustrating, or successful, or surprising. Students should conclude the paper with a compare and contrast of their preconceived notions before the retreat evening and their actual experience.

**Grading Criteria**

Evaluation will be based on attendance and participation at the retreat, the ability to reflect on the full range of your experience and conclude with a summary of learnings. Written skills are graded based on clarity, comprehensiveness and organization of content.  
Mode of Presentation: typewritten, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 “ margins  
Length: 5-8 pages  
Introduction 1-2 pages (Completed BEFORE the Retreat Day)  
Reflections 2-3  
Compare and Contrast Conclusion 2-3

Due Date: Attend Evening of Silence on **November 1, 2017**. Reflection posted to course drop box by 8:30 a.m. Central Mountain on **November 8, 2017**

**Group In-Pairs Presentation**  
Value 25 Points

In groups of 2 choose one mindfulness practice to teach the class as if you were teaching to a group or clients who are not familiar with mindfulness. The exercise you choose must be approved by instructor. No repeats allowed.
Students will present a total of 25-30 minutes with 10 minutes of introduction of mindfulness and the exercise and 10 minutes of practice and 5 minutes to debrief. In other words, the presentation must include both the theory and practice component.

Presentation will include
1) PowerPoint presentation
2) Experiential exercise
3) Opportunity to debrief

**Grading Criteria**
Evaluation will be based on the ability to demonstrate an understanding Mindfulness as it relates to the chosen experimental exercise. Evaluation will also include the ability to present to a group of novice participants, the clarity of the presentation and the quality of facilitation skills and debrief. Students will also be evaluated on their ability to work as a team and keep within the time frame indicated. An opportunity for you to peer review each other/group members will also be made available and factored into your grade.

**Mode of Presentation:**
PowerPoint and experiential exercise
Length: 25-30 min. total

**Submission Requirements:**
Copy of POWERPOINT, COPY OF EXERCISE/ACTIVITY and REFERENCES TO BE SUBMITTED ON Booth Online
**Due Dates: November 15, 22, 29, 2017** (Submission to Booth Online on day of presentation BEFORE class)

**Ethnography- Getting Off the Cushion**

For this assignment, students will have an opportunity to explore Mindfulness off the cushion and in the “real world.” While Mindfulness is developed through investigation and exploration of our inner world (consciousness), what we come to understand is that our inner world is influenced greatly by our outer circumstances. And as our Mindfulness (awareness of what is happening while it is happening in the present moment) increases we see that certain environments also influence our states of mind. What we also come to know is that this experience is universal amongst human beings. This is the premise from which students will be working from in order to complete the assignment.

For this assignment, you will be going out in the world and conducting a type of research called an ethnography; observing subjects in their natural habitat and reporting what you observe. You will have the opportunity to look in depth at the habitual nature of our day to day experience and interactions and observe how humans interact with their environment and each other. You will have an opportunity to observe the human animal in their natural habitat, with a keen, observatory eye on how certain environments, situations, and circumstances evoke certain emotional states and responses for beings and how a variety
of responses are demonstrated, revealed, expressed and exhibited depending on the person, the place and the time.

Start by reading A Simple Introduction to The Practice of Ethnography and Guide to Ethnographic Field Notes Marshall University Digital Scholar (2014), Brian A Hoey, Marshall University. Download available @ https://works.bepress.com/brian_hoey/12/ After reading this article you will be prepared to conduct “In the Field” research on Mindfulness for this assignment. Preparation for this assignment will begin on October 25th, 2017.

The following are a set of instructions to guide you:

1) Choose a location where humans inhabit. The following are a list of options:
   - A mall
   - A hospital
   - Grocery Store (Aisles & Line up)
   - On a bus
   - Traffic (sitting on a street corner or as a passenger)
   - A Park Setting
   - School Cafeteria
   - Restaurant
   - Or Place of your choosing

Please Note: A “busy” place or “busy” time of the day will assist in gathering field data.

2) Once the setting is chosen, review the Six Questions on page 6 to orient yourself as to how to take field notes. These questions are the kinds of questions that Ethnographers ask themselves. It might be fun to even get a special notebook to write down all 6 questions and jot down your observations. These are the questions that will guide your observations and interactions.

3) Visit the setting you have chosen and observe, interact, and keep field notes as outlined in the 6 questions. Staying in the chosen setting for a minimum of 1 hour is recommended.

4) Once the observation phase is complete, you have your data and it’s time to make sense of it, which means, you will review field notes and answer the Eight Questions from the article, under the heading “What about after I’ve written notes.” on page 7. The task is to review the data from a mindfulness lens, meaning incorporating the entire semester’s learning into your observations of how people are interacting with their environment. For example, how present are most people to what they are doing, while they are doing it. See if you can relate to some (or all) of the behaviors and manifestations of reactions you noticed.
For Submission:
Submit Answers to all of the 14 questions you have used to guide your Ethnography. Each question response should be approx. ½ to ¾ to one page in length. Include an introduction and conclusion.

Grading Criteria:
Evaluation will be based on the ability to articulate answers to questions that integrate understanding of Mindfulness.

Mode of Presentation:
Typewritten, Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 “ margins
Length: 15-17 pages max. Double spaced

Due: November 29, 2017

Course Evaluation and Grading System
Participation 20 Points
Mindfulness Paper 20 Points
Silence Retreat: Reflections and Review 30 Points
Group Presentation 25 Points
Ethnography 30 Points

TOTAL 125 Points / 5 x 4 = 100%

Grading Scale

A+ (4.5) Exceptional performance with evidence of outstanding original thinking, superior organization, exceptional capacity to analyze and synthesize; a superior grasp of the subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of an extensive knowledge base. A final grade of A+ may be awarded only with the approval of the Academic Dean.

A (4.0) Excellent performance with evidence of excellent original thinking, excellent organization, excellent ability to analyze and synthesize; an excellent grasp of the subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of an extensive knowledge base.

B+ (3.5) Very good performance with evidence of original thinking, very good organization, demonstrated ability to analyze and synthesize; a very good grasp of the subject matter; evidence of good critical judgment, a very good understanding of the relevant issues under examination; very good familiarity with the relevant literature.

B (3.0) Good performance with evidence of a good grasp of the subject matter; evidence of critical capacity, good analytical ability, a good understanding of the relevant issues under examination; evidence of good familiarity with the relevant literature.
C+ (2.5) Satisfactory performance with evidence of a satisfactory grasp of the subject matter; evidence of critical capacity, demonstrated analytical ability, an understanding of the relevant issues under examination; evidence of familiarity with the relevant literature.

C (2.0) Adequate performance with evidence of an adequate grasp of the subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity, an ability to develop solutions to simple problems found in the material; evidence of familiarity with some of the relevant literature.

D (1.0) Marginal performance with evidence of marginal familiarity with the subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytical skills have been used.

F (0) Inadequate performance with little evidence of even a superficial understanding of the subject matter; serious weaknesses in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature; failure to satisfy course requirements.

Course Policies

Booth UC Policy Statements

Students are responsible for reviewing and abiding by all Booth UC academic policies in the current Academic Calendar.

Written Assignments

Effective written communication skills are essential to professional social work practice. All written assignments must be typed double-spaced with one inch margins on all sides and font size of 12. All pages must be numbered. The cover page does not count towards the required number of pages for the assignment. All assignments should include a title page i.e. name, title of project, and date submitted. Review your assignments for clarity, style, punctuation, grammar and spelling. Papers must be appropriately referenced using APA style 6th edition. All written assignments are submitted on-line via the course drop box as a Word document. Include your name and the assignment name when submitting your document on-line.

Academic Integrity

It is a serious offense to present a piece of work for course credit as one’s own if the work was done by some other person (plagiarism). Plagiarism or any form of cheating in examinations or term tests (e.g. crib notes) is subject to serious academic penalty that may include loss of part or all of the marks for an assignment/test, failure in the course, dismissal from the College, or other serious consequences.

To plagiarize is to take ideas or words of another person and pass them off as one’s own. In short, it is stealing something intangible rather than an object. Obviously it is not necessary to state the source of well-known or easily verifiable facts, but students are expected to acknowledge the sources of ideas and expressions they use in their written work, whether quoted directly or paraphrased. This applies to diagrams, statistical tables and the like, as well as to written material and materials or information from Internet sources. To provide adequate documentation is not only an indication of academic honesty but also a courtesy which enables the reader to consult these sources with ease. Failure to do so constitutes
plagiarism. It will also be considered plagiarism and/or cheating if a student submits an assignment in whole or in part by someone other than him/herself, or copies the answer or answers of another student in any test, examination, or take-home assignment.

Instructors are required to report all allegations of plagiarism or cheating to the Academic Dean before a grade is assigned. The original assignment is submitted to the Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will chair a joint meeting of student and instructor to hear both the allegations and the student’s response to the allegations. The Academic Dean will then make a determination whether or not plagiarism or cheating has in fact occurred and decide on appropriate disciplinary measures. The student and instructor will be notified of the Academic Dean’s decision in writing. A copy of the decision will be sent to the Registrar and College President.

The student has the right to appeal the decision of the Academic Dean. The Academic Appeals process may be found on pages 19-20 of the academic calendar http://www.boothuc.ca/academics/calendar

Professional Conduct in the Classroom

We consider the Booth classroom environment to be a special place of focused engagement between professors and fellow students. Students are asked to engage in professional behavior in the classroom at all times. Turn off all cell phones and refrain from taking any calls unless you are “on call” and have cleared that with the professor prior to class. Under those circumstances, please sit close to a door, put the phone on vibrate, exit before you answer the phone, and conduct your phone call as quickly and quietly as possible. Re-enter the classroom as soon as possible. Refrain from personal “texting” or “IM-ing” while in class. This behavior is unacceptable in a university classroom and is considered unprofessional, regardless of how it is viewed in the larger culture. It is also destructive to the group learning environment, impeding intimacy with some, excluding others, and distracting the texter. All incidents of texting and other less technical distractions such as sidebar conversations and passing of notes will be immediately addressed in real time by the professor. Computers/laptops should be used appropriately for the purposes of note taking, or other course-related activities. During small group exercises, role plays, videos, presentations by other students or any other classroom activity, computers should be closed and placed away from the student if not needed. The use of the computer to “surf,” check email, or engage in non-course activity is distracting to the student, his or her classmates, and the professor. Surfing or reports of surfing from other students who are being distracted by it, will be immediately addressed by the professor and impact the participation grade. The use of personal computers and other electronic devices in the classroom is a privilege which may be withdrawn at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to adhere to this policy may lead to loss of all participation marks, and/or debarment from the course.

Timely Submission of Assignments
As the BSW program is a professional degree, we as BUC Social Work Faculty pledge to equip students with the tools necessary to succeed in professional practice. In professional practice social workers are required to manage multiple deadlines, meeting expectations of various supervisors and stakeholders, and ensuring the needs of clients are not put into jeopardy. As a student, development of time management skills and the ability to prioritize projects are an important step towards professional social work identity. To this end, ensure you review your syllabi and make a plan for assignment completion for all of your courses.

Assignments are due at the commencement of class on the scheduled due date. Any assignment handed in after class has begun will be considered a day late and penalized as such. In professional practice it sometimes happens that you will need to negotiate an extension of a deadline with your supervisor. Similarly, should you experience extenuating circumstances you are required to notify the instructor before the assignment is due. Again, in preparation for professional work where late or incomplete work will not only affect your performance review, but will jeopardize client well-being, late submissions will be penalized by 5% of the final grade each day, starting on the due date and including weekends (up to the value of the assignment). All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade for the course. Assignments will not be graded (hence a failing grade of 0 assigned) beyond one week after the due date.

Attendance Policy
Class attendance is essential to the success of your professional preparation and understanding of course content. Students are required to attend all class sessions. This course requires that class time is maximized.

Students should treat arriving for class on time or absence from class similar to being employed in the work force. This means students are expected to arrive for class on time and be present for the entire class. If you expect to be absent from class, late or must leave early for any reason, please inform your professor ahead of time. A student who is late for class or leaves early for any portion of a class shall be considered absent.

Excused absences do not lower your overall grade in this class. Excused absences are those that are both valid and verifiable, i.e. illness, bereavement, etc. I will ask for verification and I expect that you will be responsible for getting any notes/materials that you missed. Three Hours of un-excused absences are permitted. Your instructor reserves the right to lower your final grade by 5 percent for each half class missed after one absence. If a special problem should arise, please see me. If an emergency occurs and you cannot notify me, leave a message with a number for me to contact you.

Professional Unsuitability
The Department of Social Work may require any student to withdraw from the Social Work Program if deemed to be unsuitable in aptitude for the profession of social work. The
Department recognizes there are professional competencies and conduct not measurable by academic achievement alone, therefore the Social Work Department reserves the right to ongoing monitoring and evaluation of students on their professional behaviour demonstrated both in and out of the classroom. Continuance in the program is outlined in the Continuance Policy.

Bibliography


