UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO  
APCE 661: Psychological Trauma and Intervention  
for Individuals, Families and Communities  
Course Syllabus – Spring 2015 Colorado Spring campus

CLASS MEETINGS: March 27, 28,29 & April 10,11,& 12 Fridays 4-10, Saturdays 8-5, Sundays 8-4
CREDIT HOURS: 3 semester hours

PROFESSOR: Mary Sean O’Halloran, PhD; Professor of Counseling Psychology  
Dr. O’Halloran earned her Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara,  
and is a Licensed Psychologist in Colorado. Her research interests and areas of specialization include  
psychological trauma, vicarious trauma, and crisis intervention, international psychology, child abuse and  
eglect, clinical training and supervision, and eating disorders.

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course features an overview of the impact of crises, disasters, and  
other trauma-causing events on individuals, families, and communities. Course participants will be  
introduced to strategies and interventions for working with this population.

PREREQUISITES: APCE 558, APCE 607, and APCE 657.

REQUIRED TEXTS

One of the following books (not ordered from the bookstore). Bibliotherapy review assignment:
New York: Cornell University Press.
- Mears, C.L. (2012). Reclaiming School in the Aftermath of Trauma: Advice Based on Experience. NY:  
Palgrave MacMillan
Written by Teen Victims, Bullies & Bystanders. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications.
- Perry, B., & Szalavitz, M. (2006). The boy who was raised as a dog: What traumatized children can  
teach us about loss, love, and healing. NY: Basic Books.
WA: Shared Hope International. Sex Trafficking

PLEASE NOTE: Several journal articles are required readings in addition to these texts. These articles  
will be noted in the Course Schedule and References List. Although many will be posted on BB, you are  
responsible for securing these readings through the UNC Library system.

Check Blackboard (BB) regularly! Materials will be posted on BB under ‘Materials’ 2 weeks before class  
starts and you may download before class. For weekend two, the PP will be posted the week before class.
COURSE CONTENT: This course is designed to meet the CACREP 2009 Standards understanding the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on individuals, families, and communities. Course content includes an overview of the impact of crises, disasters, and trauma-causing events on people, the impact of working with traumatized clients on practitioners, and interventions and strategies for working with individuals, families, and groups of people who have experienced crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events.

CACREP COURSE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES)

Upon successful completion of this course students will:
1. Know self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role (CACREP II.G.1.d).
2. Understand counselors’ roles and responsibilities as members of an interdisciplinary emergency management response team during a local, regional, or national crisis, disaster or other trauma-causing event (CACREP II.G.1.c).
3. Understand effects of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on persons of all ages (CACREP II.G.3.c).
4. Understand crisis intervention and suicide prevention models, including the use of psychological first aid strategies (CACREP II.G.5.g).
5. Understand the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on people (CACREP CMHC.A.9).
6. Understand the operation of an emergency management system within clinical mental health agencies and in the community (CACREP CMHC.A.10).
7. Understand the principles of crisis intervention for people during crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events (CACREP CMHC.C.6).
8. Understand appropriate use of diagnosis during a crisis, disaster, or other trauma-causing event (CACREP CMHC.K.5).
9. Differentiate between diagnoses and developmentally appropriate reactions during crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events (CACREP CMHC.L.3).
10. Understand the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on marriages, couples, families, and households (CACREP MCFC.A.7).
11. Understand the impact of addiction, trauma, psychopharmacology, physical and mental health, wellness, and illness on marriage, couple, and family functioning (CACREP MCFC.G.3).
12. Understand the operation of the school emergency management plan and the roles and responsibilities of the school counselor during crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events (CACREP SC.A.7).
13. Understand the potential impact of crises, emergencies, and disasters on students, educators, and schools, and knows the skills needed for crisis intervention (CACREP SC.C.6).

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION: (a) readings; (b) lectures; (c) large and small group discussions; (d) role-plays; (e) guest speakers; and (f) active reflection.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This course will increase your awareness and convey information to help you in developing knowledge about the impact of crises and psychological trauma. However, this course is not purely academic. It is very possible that you, someone you know, or any of your classmates have survived very significant crises or traumas in their lives. Some of the lectures, media presentations, and speakers may have a strong emotional impact on you. This course is not intended to facilitate the exploration and healing of trauma for individual students in the class, although it is possible that experiences you may have had may be recalled and thus be felt more deeply because of the class. Please consult with me as soon as possible regarding any concerns that you might have about the course or its material. Please consider developing and using self-care strategies both during and after this course.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS: Written assignments will be submitted as hard copies and/or electronically via e-mail. See specific requirements below for submitting each written assignment.

1) **Class Attendance/Participation:** 16 Points Possible
Please attend all course meetings in their entirety and actively participate in discussions and activities (e.g., role-plays). Please be here when class starts and ends (and for all that happens in-between). This is particularly important due to the frequency of guest speakers we will have. If you suspect that regular attendance of this class may be difficult for you, then please consider taking it at another time. Lack of participation, tardiness, or any unexcused absences will result in a loss of points from 2-5 per class meeting and may result in a course grade reduction of at least one letter grade. You may earn up to 2 points per Friday class, and 3 for each Saturday and Sunday, depending on your level of participation.

2) **“Burning Questions” Mini Paper:** Due no later than Friday, March 6 (3 weeks before class)

   4 Points Possible. Please send electronically to sean.ohalloran@unco.edu. No cover page needed
   What would you like to learn about in this class? Please respond to the following questions in 2-3 pages.
   a) What are you looking forward to regarding this course?
   b) What concerns (if any) do you have about taking this course?
   c) What are three (3) burning questions that you have related to crisis intervention and trauma?
   d) What makes each of these questions interesting to you?
   e) How do think that you might use the information from these questions in your future career?
   f) Describe your background or training in working with trauma and/or crisis intervention.
   g) What is your specific program concentration/track (e.g., MFT, School, CES)
   h) What is one thing about yourself that you wouldn't mind sharing with the class? My example: I love to swing dance and go to a ballroom about twice per month to dance!
   i) Is there anything else that you would like for me to know about you, either personally or professionally?

3) **Book Response Papers (3):** 30 Points Possible. Hand in hardcopies in class.
   The length of the paper should be three-four pages with each worth up to ten possible points.
   • Importantly, these are not book reports. Instead, these should be your responses to reading these materials along with identifying and discussing parts from the readings (provide page numbers where applicable) that you found particularly helpful for understanding and treating trauma. Be prepared for small group discussions on these respective date:
     - Herman. Due Friday 3/27 at 4PM Respond to the ‘Herman questions’ (on BB).
     - Bibliotherapy review. Respond to ‘Bibliotherapy review’ questions’ (on BB). Due 3/29 noon
     - A novel autobiogaphy, film of your choice relevant to the course content: Friday 4/10 at 4PM

4) **Research Synthesis and Implications** (up to 35 points total): Written Synthesis and Implications (30 points) Read seven (7) to eight (8) recent (within the last ten years) peer reviewed articles from scientific journals (list of possible journals follow syllabus) pertaining to a specific population of trauma survivors or area of crisis intervention (e.g., ‘crisis in schools’ or ‘trauma in males’ are both too vague). Possible topics may include, but are not limited to: Empirically supported crisis intervention models in the schools; Deployment crisis and resilience factors in military families; Cultural concerns and trauma among urban African American teens; Resilience after trauma, etc. Your topic must be approved prior to beginning your paper. Topics are due no later than Monday 9 February 5pm via email to Dr. O’Halloran (sean.ohalloran@unco.edu). Along with your topic, you must include one to two paragraphs about the topic in which you are interested, your motivation for working on this topic, and APA references for at least four (4) of the articles that you plan to use. After reviewing the articles write a 8-10 page (double spaced, APA format - https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/) synthesis of the literature and a
reflection on the implications and applications of that literature for your future practice as a counselor or psychologist, specifically in relation to your chosen specialization area. Although you may include additional information, each of these areas must be addressed in your synthesis.

- Overview of topic area (i.e., an expansion of what you sent in your topic approval)
- Why this is important to study (for counselors, community, society...). Ideally 2-3 paragraphs.
- Main Ideas or Themes in Literature (i.e., what did you learn from the literature – put it all together [aka synthesize] rather than discuss each article individually)
- Clinical Implications
- Research Implications
- How information gained will apply to your future work as a counselor/psychologist (in your area of specialization, clinical focus, and/or with your population of interest)
- How have these articles expanded or altered your view of this topic?
- What do you still want to know?
- Recommended future research and practice directions based upon what you learned

Your written synthesis will be graded as follows:

a) Article Selection (peer reviewed, quality of journal, appropriate focus): Up to 5 points for the importance and relevance of the topic, thoroughness of your research, and use of high-quality research publications. The major topic of your bibliography should be clear from the first sentence.

b) Addressing each Requisite Areas; up to 15 points

c) Writing Quality and Clarity (APA format, grammar, etc.) Up to 10 points. I expect that your product is consistent with writing at the graduate level.

d) Presentation (up to 5 points) Present highlights from your annotated bibliography topic in an informal 10-minute class presentation. Your discussion will include a brief overview of the topic, key points you took from your synthesis and the implications for your future work and research directions.

Dates of presentation and paper due: **Saturday, April 11 9 AM**

**5) PICK ONE: Resources project OR Community agency interview** Note: It is pointless for everyone to investigate the same organizations/agencies, so send me a list of agencies you may want to interview or organizations you plan to research no later than **March 15**. The sooner you choose, the more likely you will be able to explore the organizations/agency of your choice. Hardcopy due **April 11** for small group discussion/presentation (15 points maximum).

a) **Resources project**: Explore four community, national, or international organizations that deal directly with an aspect of crisis intervention or trauma work. Gather information on these agencies (i.e., goals, structure, services, funding, outcomes, research, support). Present a written 4-5-page summary of your findings (can be bullet points, but do not copy and paste from the websites! Develop your own summary), and share any accompanying material (which will be returned if you wish). Post the summary to the class via e-mail no later than **April 9** and hand in a hard copy on **April 11th**.

OR

b) **Community agency interview**. Select a community agency that works with trauma cases and employs mental health professionals. Conduct an interview (30-45 minutes) with a mental health professional. Before calling to arrange an appointment, research the organization. Most have websites or annual reports you can review. You will share this information during a small group presentation. **You may do this assignment in pairs, but your paper needs to be written independently!**

Include the following questions in your interviewee, but feel free to ask other questions, as time and interest permit. Be very considerate of the interviewee’s time, and thank them!

(a) How did you choose your profession?

(b) How do you approach your work with regard to crisis intervention and trauma treatment?
(c) How do you think your work influences individuals, families, and communities at the local, regional, and/or national or international levels? (Depending on the type of interview you are conducting).

(d) Discuss your considerations when working with diversity (e.g., culture, age, and gender differences).

(e) What are your favorite and most challenging aspects of your position?

(f) How do you manage self-care?

Write a 3-4-page summary of the interview. Discuss information collected in the interviews, your personal responses/reactions, and how this interview may influence your career direction. Again, check with me by March 15th. I would like no more than 2 people conduct an interview at the same site.

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**Grading:**
- A 93% to 100%;
- A- 90% to 92%;
- B+ 87% to 89%;
- B 83% to 86%;
- B- 80% to 82%;
- C+ 77% to 79%;
- C 73% to 76%;
- C- 70% to 72%;
- D+ 67% to 69%;
- D 63% to 66%;
- D- 60% to 62%;
- F Below 60%

Total Points Possible: 100 (not including extra credit)

**ACADEMIC CONDUCT:** Cheating on examinations, submitting work of other students as your own, or plagiarism in any form will result in penalties ranging from an “F” on an assignment to expulsion from the University.

*Plagiarism and Using Internet Resources.* Plagiarism can be a complicated topic, but the basics are simple. You need to write your papers from scratch. Do not cut and paste text from digital sources and edit it a little (whether or not you cite the original author). When you do that, you are appropriating someone else’s work. A paper should be organized by your thoughts and should bring information and ideas together into a coherent form that you create. A few quotes are fine, but “writing” a paper means constructing your own sentences and paragraphs to articulate your own arguments and conclusions, not lifting them from existing literature.

There are websites that will be useful to you. If you use any of them in your written work, you need to reference them as fully as you would a library book. Copying text from the web without treating it as an exact quotation, or modifying text slightly without crediting its original source, is plagiarism, just as it would be for text in a book.

As you know, anyone can put just about anything up on the web; there is no quality control. Be careful in assuming that “information” you find there is reliable. Academic journals have “gatekeepers” in the form of reviewers and editors who control what is published, and both these and academic websites (usually those linked to universities or government research units) tend to reflect currently accepted knowledge. Be careful and critical about what you use from the web.

**PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT:** Students are expected to adhere to the appropriate code of ethics for their particular program. Any behavior deemed unethical will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

**ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT:** Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit www.unco.edu/dss as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** All cell phones and pagers are to be turned off during class time. No text messaging during class. If a student has a particular need (is on-call for work or has children at home) s/he is expected to notify the instructor prior to the beginning of class so that accommodations can be
made. Computers are welcomed as long as students are using them only for note taking; no surfing the web or e-mailing is allowed. Due to numerous student complaints, any student found misusing his or her computer will be asked to shut it down.

**DIVERSITY STATEMENT:** The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) is committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach her or his own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, CEBS seeks to develop and nurture diversity, believing that it strengthens the organization, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. CEBS prohibits discrimination against any member of the College’s community on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability status, health status, political affiliation or veteran status.

**Tips for Success:**
1. Attend all class meetings.
2. Read all materials assigned BEFORE each class meeting.
3. Actively participate in class discussions and individual and group projects.
4. Ask questions in class.
5. Provide proper feedback and consultation to classmates.
6. Treat all guest speakers with respect, attention, and gratitude.
7. Written work is due at the START of the class for which it is assigned. Late assignments are not acceptable. PLEASE do not submit assignments DURING class!
8. You are responsible for all the reading assigned, even if we do not discuss every bit of it in class.
9. You are responsible for what we discuss in class, even if it is not in the readings.

**APCE 661: Partial Reading/Reference List (tentative, this will be updated)**

*Note: Speakers may recommend additional readings. You will be informed before the presentation.*

**Vicarious Trauma & Stress:**

**Disaster Mental Health & Psychological Frist Aid:**

** Refugees:**


Neurobiology of Trauma:


Resilience:


Posttraumatic Growth:

Sexual Assault:

Suicide & Self-Harm:


Veterans:


**Grief:**


**Culture:**


**EMDR:**


**PTSD Diagnoses:**


Useful site for information on the PCL-5 which measures PTSD symptoms according to the DSM - 5: [http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/adult-sr/ptsd-checklist.asp](http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/assessment/adult-sr/ptsd-checklist.asp)
**Journals that may be of interest as you develop your research synthesis plans**

Attachment and Human Development Home page: [www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14616734.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/14616734.asp)

Violence and Victims [http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/springer/vav](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/springer/vav)


Journal of Interpersonal Violence [http://jiv.sagepub.com/](http://jiv.sagepub.com/)


Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy (Div. 56 of APA)


The Family Journal [http://tfj.sagepub.com/](http://tfj.sagepub.com/)

Other links of interest:

- Trauma-Informed Care: [http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/trauma.asp](http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/trauma.asp)

**Specific Class Schedule and Topics TBA**