I. COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

This course focuses on clinical social work with women from a feminist perspective. A variety of feminist theories will be discussed and examined for their implications for social work interventions. In recognition of the importance of diversity and the effects of oppression, particular attention will be paid to cultural context and addressing issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, and social and economic oppression in social work practice with women. Given its prevalence, emphasis will be placed on the impact of violence against women and evidence-based interventions available to address that impact. In addition, the Relational-Cultural Model, a feminist model for practice will be explored in depth through a 6-week experiential group process.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To enable students to develop knowledge of feminist theories and approaches to working with women;

2. To enable students to develop an understanding of the importance of race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and age in social work practice with women.

3. To enable students to develop an understanding of social and economic justice as it relates to social work practice with women.

4. To enable students to develop knowledge of and skills in implementing capacity building interventions that recognizes client strengths and is designed to address women’s issues on an individual and societal level.

5. To enable students to develop skills in identifying and assessing evidence-based interventions with women.

6. To enable students to develop skills in utilizing social work and feminist values, and recognizing and responding appropriately to ethical dilemmas that may arise within the context of social work practice with women;
7. To enable students to deepen their understanding of use of self in the context of practice with women.

8. To enable students to recognize the importance of ongoing postgraduate professional development and commitment to the social work profession.

III. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of and ability to apply feminist theories and practice approaches to working with women;

2. Professional understanding of the importance of race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, and age in social work practice with women.

3. Knowledge of social and economic justice as it relates to social work practice with women.

4. Knowledge of and skills in implementing capacity building interventions that recognize client strengths and are designed to address women’s issues on an individual and societal level.

5. Skills in identifying and assessing evidence-based interventions with women;

6. Skills in utilizing social work and feminist values, and recognizing and responding appropriately to ethical dilemmas that may arise within the context of social work practice with women;

7. Professional understanding of use of self in the context of practice with women.

8. Knowledge of the importance of ongoing postgraduate professional development and commitment to the social work profession.

IV. RELATIONSHIP TO PRACTICUM LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Knowledge gained in this course will provide a basis for meeting the following practicum learning objectives:

1. Student is able to apply basic humanitarian and social work values and ethics to practice at the concentration practicum site.

2. Student demonstrates an ability to use supervision to improve the student’s practice.

3. Student is able to apply and evaluate empirically supported theories to practice at the practicum site.

4. Student demonstrates an understanding of and the ability to use service delivery systems and resources relevant to the practicum site.

5. The student’s conduct and communication demonstrate social work professionalism.

6. Student demonstrates competence in work with diverse clients.

7. Student understands the dynamics of social and economic justice, especially the consequences of poverty, discrimination, exploitation and oppression in human societies in the context of concentration practicum work.

8. Student can effectively assess and intervene in client systems at an advanced level.
V. READINGS

Required Texts (may be purchased at the Campus Bookstore):


Optional Texts (available in the library or purchase off campus):


Reading Packet On E-Res

VI. ORGANIZATION OF COURSE

This course will include a variety of teaching methods such as lecture, class discussion, audiovisual materials, small group exercises and guest speakers. Students are expected to be active in the learning process through class participation; however, quality of participation will be judged over quantity. Students are expected to demonstrate their mastery of the course content through class discussion and written assignments.

VII. ROLE OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS

1. Students are expected to attend class regularly.

2. Students are expected to enhance the learning potential of the class by actively participating. Sharing opinions, ideas, concerns and viewpoints is strongly encouraged.

3. Students are expected to be respectful of the opinions and feelings of other students and guest speakers, even though they may differ from their own.

Special Needs: If you have a learning disability, sensory, or physical disability or other impairment, or if English is your second language, and you may need special assistance in lecture, reading assignments, and/or testing, please contact the instructor.
VIII. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Grades. Grades are assigned based on the student’s ability to assimilate and apply class materials. Course grades will be based on the following assignments:

1. **Class Participation** is expected and class attendance and participation will determine 10% of your final grade. Questioning of course material is encouraged and expected. Two or more unexcused absences will lower your final grade.

2. **Critical Analysis Paper**: Students will use feminist theory, as well as the information and experience of watching the film “Dialogues with Mad Women” to provide a 5-6 page written analysis of the video and its implications for intervening with women. This assignment will be worth 15% of your final grade. Due: February 6, 2008.

3. **Intervention with Women in Clinical Social Work Practice**: This project involves three related, but independently graded assignments: (1) a community collaboration project, (2) an evidence-based literature review, and (3) a substantive practice paper. For this project, you will need to select an issue related to practicing clinical social work with women about which you would like to develop in-depth knowledge to enhance your future practice. For example, working with adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse, immigrants and refugees, domestic violence, substance abuse, or reproductive counseling.
   - **Community Collaboration Project**: Based on the topic that you have selected, identify the services available in the St. Louis area. In other words, if you were looking for a job or trying to make a referral related to your topic where would you go? What agencies would you call? Identify an agency that you would be interested in collaborating with to learn more about your topic of interest. You will need to interview a direct practitioner from the agency to gather information for this assignment, but you also want to provide the agency with something in return. At a minimum, you can prepare a report for them about the results of your literature review to provide them with the latest evidence-based practice information available that might be useful in guiding practice in your area. However, there may be other mechanisms for collaboration, such as your conducting an in-service for staff, volunteering to work with their clients, or volunteering to assist them with a project. There is room for flexibility and creativity in this assignment. Details of the paper requirements for this aspect of the assignment will be provided in class. This assignment will be worth 25% of your grade. The proposal for your collaboration and the summary of your interview will be Due: March 5, 2008.
   - **Evidence-Based Literature Review**: Develop a thorough evidenced-based literature review that provides significant descriptive information about your selected topic. Provide a strong rationale for why the area you have selected is important. Identify the major intervention approaches that are used to treat your issue of interest and discuss the evidence available (or lack there of) to support such approaches. Cite at least 10 sources, most of which should be peer reviewed journal articles. At least 8 of these sources should have been published in the last five years. This assignment should be 8-10 pages in length and written in compliance with APA guidelines. This assignment will be worth 20% of your final grade. Due: April 2, 2008
• **Intervention with Women Paper:** Use your literature review to guide the completion of your paper. Make sure you incorporate any feedback that you have received on the previous assignments into your final paper. Identify and describe one or more theoretical perspectives that you adhere to that are used as a model for understanding your issue of interest. Provide your perspective on the utility of a feminist analysis or theoretical perspective for understanding and responding to the issue you have selected. Discuss the extent to which the theoretical perspectives are linked to any intervention(s) that you discovered in your literature search. Indicate the extent to which the intervention(s) are responsive to the needs of diverse groups of women and provide any available evidence that support claims of their effectiveness with such groups. Drawing from your interview with a practitioner, discuss the extent to which current practice in that agency appears to be evidence-based. In addition, discuss whether the existing evidence seems relevant for that agency. Include in your paper a detailed, specific plan for acquiring any post-graduate training that would be required to implement the intervention(s) you have selected as most salient for addressing your topic of interest. Cite at least 15 sources, most of which should be peer reviewed journal articles. At least 12 of these sources should have been published in the last five years. This assignment should be 20-25 pages in length and written in compliance with APA guidelines. This assignment will be worth 30% of your final grade. **Due: April 25, 2008.**

### Assignment Point Value

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Analysis Paper</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Practice Collaboration Project</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence-Based Literature Review</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Issues Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Except under extremely unusual circumstances, assignments must be turned in on the due date. Late assignments will result in a deduction of points for each day late (including weekends) off the assignment score unless prior approval is obtained from the instructor or a compelling situation prevents prior approval. A death in the family is an example of a compelling or extreme situation. Additionally, points will be deducted from the final scores accumulated in each lab for lack of attendance and participation.

**Grade Scale:** 100-94 A 93-90 A- 89-88 B+ 87-84 B 83-80 B- 79-78 C+ 77-74 C 73-70 C- 69 and below F

**IX. COURSE OUTLINE**

**SECTION I: THEORY, PHILOSOPHY & VALUES**

**Class meeting 1 (January 16, 2008)**

Topic: Following a brief review of the syllabus and course expectations, an overview of major feminist theories and the manner by which one’s theoretical orientation impacts intervention selection will be presented and discussed. The importance of the utilization of feminist theory and philosophy in social work practice with women will be emphasized.
Class meeting 2: (January 25, 2008)

Topic: An overview of feminist theory continues. In addition, the importance of the utilization of feminist values and ethics when working with women and how such an orientation influences professional use of self will be discussed.

Readings:


SECTION II: Trauma, Mental Health, and Treatment

Class meeting 3: (January 30, 2008).

Extended Class Session: 5:30-8:30 pm

Topic: The impact of sexism, racism and heterosexism within psychology and mental health institutions will be examined through the context of the assigned readings and the video *Dialogue with Mad Women.* Students will discuss their reactions and critical analysis of the video. Connections will be drawn between violence against women and traumatically induced mental health problems such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression that were illustrated in the film. Students will be expected to use feminist theory, values and ethics to provide a written critical analysis of the film’s content.

Readings:

Class meeting 4: (February 6, 2008)
Critical Analysis Paper Due

Topic: Students will learn about specific models of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) that are evidence-based interventions effective in treating PTSD, anxiety and depression. Students will first learn about Prolonged Exposure. The class will consider the strengths and limitations of various CBT methods and discuss the ways in which they could be used in conjunction with a feminist approach to practice. In addition, we will discuss the ethics of brief verses long-term treatment.

Readings:


Class meeting 5: (February 13, 2008)

Topic: Students will continue to learn about specific CBT intervention approaches, with an emphasis placed on Cognitive Processing Therapy. The class will consider the strengths and limitations of these CBT methods and discuss the ways in which they could be used in conjunction with a feminist approach to practice. In addition, we will discuss the ethics of brief verses long-term treatment.

Readings:


Class meeting 6: (February 20, 2008)

Topic: In this class the discussion of evidence-based intervention approaches for treating trauma induced PTSD, anxiety and depression continues with an examination of Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). The benefits, limitations and ethics of using this treatment will be explored. In addition, we will discuss the potential for integrating other practice approaches with EMDR, including feminist methods.

Readings:


**Class meeting 7: (February 27, 2008)**

**Topic:** In this class students will be introduced to Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), an empirically supported treatment specifically designed for individuals who engage in self-harming behaviors. It is a modification of CBT developed by Marsha Linehan as a treatment for borderline personality disorder.

**Readings:**


**SECTION III: Models of Feminist Practice**

**Class meeting 8: (March 5, 2008)**

**Community Collaboration Proposal Due**

**Topic:** In this class the Empowerment Model, which was originally developed as a practice approach for working with women of color will be presented in class as a feminist, capacity building approach to working with women and other oppressed groups. The model emphasizes the importance of conducting a power analysis when working with oppressed populations, raising consciousness,
building on existing strengths, developing skills, mobilizing resources, advocating for clients and engaging in efforts to facilitate social change on the macro level.

Readings:


**Class meeting 9: (March 19, 2008)**

**Topic:** In this class the Empowerment Model will be examined further with particular attention to its value in working with survivors of domestic violence, prostitution, and trafficking. Community practitioners will share examples of the ways in which they have effectively used an empowerment approach and the challenges inherent in implementing it.

**Readings:**


Class meeting 10: (March 26, 2008)

Topic: The Relational-Cultural Model, which began as a feminist theory of women’s development, and has evolved into an approach to practice, will be introduced. The class will study and work with the principles of the model through a 6 week in-class group process.

Readings:


Class meeting 11: (April 2, 2008)
Evidence Based Literature Review Due

Topic: The class will begin group session two using the Relational-Cultural Model to explore connections and disconnections that occur in therapeutic and personal relationships. Anticipatory empathy, compassion, authenticity, mutuality, empowerment and engagement are key concepts within the model that are related to issues of connection and disconnection. These concepts will be used within the group session to deepen our understanding of them from an experiential perspective.

Readings:


Class meeting 12: (April 9, 2008)

Topic: The class will begin group session three using the Relational-Cultural Model to explore the opportunities for growth created through understanding diversity and difference. Particular attention will be paid to the importance of cultural context and issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, social and economic oppression, and how they relate to privilege, non-mutuality, and power differences. Clinical issues that emerge when the clinician and client come from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, or sexual orientations will also be discussed.
Readings:


**Class meeting 13: (April 16, 2008)**

Topic: The class will begin group session four using the Relational-Cultural Model to learn about cycles of disconnection and isolation in therapeutic and personal relationships. We will examine the ways we hold parts of ourselves out of relationships, the strategies of disconnection that we use, the role that inauthenticity plays in this process and the decrease in creativity and productivity that can result.

Readings:


**Class meeting 14: (April 23, 2008)**

**Interventions with Women Paper Due**

Topic: The class will begin group session five using the Relational-Cultural Model to learn about transforming disconnections in therapeutic and personal relationships. Students will learn about ways to recognize relationships in which conflict can be worked through and to differentiate between relationships that are growth fostering and those that are growth inhibiting. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of active, responsive listening, and mutual understanding.
Readings:


**Class meeting 15: (April 30, 2008)**

Topic: In group-session six, the final group session, the class will explore how to use the Relational-Cultural Model to empower others and build community. Students will learn about relational strategies that can be employed in a non-relational world to facilitate collective action and social change. In this class time will also be spent on evaluation and termination of Intervention Approaches with Women. Students will be provided the opportunity to discuss the learning activities experienced over the course of the semester and to provide the instructor with verbal and written feedback regarding the course.

Readings:


**Class meeting 16: (May 7, 2008)**

Topic: In this class time will also be spent on evaluation and termination of Intervention Approaches with Women. Students will be provided the opportunity to discuss the learning activities experienced over the course of the semester and to provide the instructor with verbal and written feedback regarding the course.