

**HDC 6420**  
**Trauma: Impact and Intervention**  
**Mondays, 4:10 – 7:00 pm**

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*“To study psychological trauma is to come face to face both with human vulnerability in the natural world and with the capacity for evil in human nature. To study psychological trauma means bearing witness to horrible events. When the traumatic events are of human design, those who bear witness are caught in the conflict between the victim and the perpetrator. It is morally impossible to remain neutral in this conflict. The bystander is forced to take sides. It is very tempting to take the side of the perpetrator. All the perpetrator asks is that the bystander do nothing. He appeals to the universal desire to see, hear, and speak no evil. The victim, on the contrary, asks the bystander to share the burden or pain. The victim demands action, engagement, and remembering. After every atrocity, one can expect to hear the same predictable apologies: it never happened, the victim lies, the victim exaggerates, the victim brought it on herself and in any case there is a time to forget the past and move on. The more powerful the perpetrator, the greater is his prerogative to name and define reality and the more completely his arguments prevail. In the absence of strong political movements for human rights, the active process of bearing witness inevitably gives way to the active process of forgetting. Repression, dissociation and denial are phenomena of a social as well as individual consciousness”*

*Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery, 1997.*

*“What is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood.”*

*Audre Lorde, “The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action,” Sister Outsider, 1984.*

**Purpose of the Course:**

The purpose of this course is to learn how to bear witness to trauma. We will examine the various ways that trauma impacts a person; including psychological, biological, developmental, cultural and social impacts. By reviewing the history of the study of trauma, we will unpack the influences of cultural and social movements on the response to trauma. We will look at the current understanding of the theory of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and we will learn about, and experience, different treatment modalities. Throughout the course, we will pay significant attention to vicarious traumatization resulting from both the study of trauma and from working with trauma survivors. This will include a focus on self-care for the student/counselor and the importance of doing one’s own work.

**Methods of Instruction:**

As a community, we will learn from one another, so your preparation, attendance and participation are critical to the success of this course. Productive discussion requires not only your ability to summarize the readings, but also your comments, opinions, questions, and

engagement with the material. We are jointly responsible for creating an environment that encourages the participation of everyone in class. I also encourage your comments and suggestions concerning the direction of the course, itself.

### **A Few Basic Ground Rules:**

I believe that living and learning are inseparable, that there is a relationship between our experiences as women and men, as cultural beings, and how we see the world. Some of you may choose to discuss your personal experiences during this class. You are under no pressure to reveal personal experiences of trauma. It is critical, however, that we work together to create an environment that is as safe as possible. Essential to the establishment of such an environment is confidentiality. You should not share the personal experiences revealed by members of this class with anyone outside of class.

In addition, many of the issues we will discuss involve our personal and political values and philosophies. There is no reward and no penalty for having a particular set of beliefs. It is important, however, that we be clear about what we believe and why. We can differ respectfully and learn from one another. One of the benefits of learning within an academic environment is that diverse points of view and opinions are encouraged and should be respected. Such an environment can also be challenging and can bring up feelings of discomfort about one's own or other's beliefs and values. If this occurs, I encourage you to express your discomfort and to remember that an opinion not shared by the majority of the class is not necessarily incorrect.

## **POLICY ON INSTRUCTIONAL MODIFICATION**

### **Disability Statement**

Vanderbilt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities that may affect your ability to complete course assignments or otherwise satisfy course requirements. If you may require accommodations, please contact the Office of Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Disability Services at Baker Building, Suite 108 (615) 322-4705 (V/TDD) to discuss and determine any accommodations. If you have a disability for which you may request accommodation in Vanderbilt University classes and have not contacted them, please do so as soon as possible. You are also encouraged to see your instructor(s) privately in regards to this matter, ideally no later than the second week of the semester, so that we can ensure that your needs are met appropriately and in a timely manner.

### **Diversity Statement**

As we all grow and develop as people and professionals, we constantly strive to improve ourselves in numerous areas of our lives. We value the diversity of our learning community and consider peoples' varied identities and differences as strengths and resources upon which to build community and facilitate human development. HDC students and faculty welcome your informal and formal suggestions for improvement of our classroom, program and university climate and culture, as well as course materials and content.

### **Personal Reactions Statement**

At times this semester, we will be discussing topics that may be disturbing and even traumatizing to some students. If you ever feel the need to step outside during one of these discussions, either

for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to this material, either with the class or with me, I would welcome such a conversation as an appropriate part of your professional development. Learning to manage personal reactions to potentially disturbing material that our clients discuss is an important part of preparing to be a counselor.

### **Taking Care of You**

The study of trauma is difficult. As Herman says, it requires us “*to come face to face both with human vulnerability in the natural world and with the capacity for evil in human nature.*” This material may bring up a variety of feelings and responses, especially for those of us who have experienced or witnessed trauma in our own lives. Throughout the course we will be discussing techniques for you to use to deal with vicarious traumatization. While I cannot be a counseling resource for members of this class, I can certainly listen to the impact of the class in your life and help you connect with others who can be a resource. Some examples include:

Psychological and Counseling Center:	(615) 322-2571
Nashville Crisis Hotline:	(615) 244-7444
Sexual Abuse Center Crisis Line:	(615) 256-8526 or 1-800-879-1999
YW Domestic Violence Crisis Line:	(615) 242-1199 or 1-800-334-4628
Not Alone (military trauma):	NotAlone.com 1-888-454-0950

### **Required Texts:**

- Brown, L. S. (2008). *Cultural competence in trauma therapy: Beyond the flashback*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Herman, J. L. (2015). *Trauma and recovery*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

### **Suggested Reading:**

- Courtois, C. A., & Ford, J. D. (2009). *Treating complex traumatic stress disorders: An evidenced-based guide*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Ogden, P., Minton, K., & Pain, C. (2006). *Trauma and the body: A sensorimotor approach to psychotherapy*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Marlock, G., Weiss, H., Young, C., & Soth, M. (2015). *The handbook of body psychotherapy and somatic psychology*. New York, NY: Penguin Random House.
- Siegel, D. J. (2010). *The mindful therapist: A clinician's guide to mindsight and neural integration*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Van der Kolk, B. A. (2014). *The body keeps the score: The brain, mind, and body in the healing of trauma*. New York, NY: Penguin Group.

### **Course Requirements:**

1. Midterm Exam (35%): The (take home) midterm exam will cover information about the impact of trauma and will be in short answer format. The exam will be **due by class time on March 14th**.
2. Case Study/ Final Exam (35%): The final exam will consist of a case study that requires you to both analyze a case and develop treatment responses in a group consultation. It will be due by the final exam date.

3. Attendance, Participation, and Reflection: (30%): Except in emergencies, any absences should be discussed with me in advance. Because this course is largely experiential, your attendance and participation are crucial.

**Class Schedule:**

This schedule is **tentative** and will be adjusted as necessary.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>	<b>Reading</b>
1	Introduction, Self-Care Plan, What is Trauma?	
2	From Trauma to Transformation Kenneth Robinson, MS, MTS	
3	A Forgotten History Culturally Sensitive Approaches	Herman, Ch. 1 ADDRESSING, OAK Brown, Ch. 1 and 2
4	Terror	Herman, Ch. 2 Trauma and the Brain, OAK
5	Disconnection	Herman, Ch. 3
6	Captivity	Herman, Ch. 4 Power and Control Wheel, OAK
7	Child Abuse Connections & Attachment	Herman, Ch. 5 Attachment and Body, OAK
8	New Diagnosis <b>TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE</b>	Herman, Ch. 6
9	A Healing Relationship	Herman, Ch. 7
10	Safety	Herman Ch. 8 Brown Ch. 3, 10
11	Remembrance and Mourning	Herman, Ch. 9 Brown Ch. 8
12	Reconnection	Herman Ch. 10 Brown, Ch. 6-7
13	Treating Children Lori Myers, Clinical Director, Nashville Children's Alliance	TBA
14	Groups, Activism, etc. Wrap Up and Final Exam Prep	Herman, Ch. 11