

Course Syllabus
KNP2555 – Spirituality in Professional Practice
Knox College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2025

Instructor Information

Instructor: Angela Schmidt
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Course Identification

Course Number: KNP2555HS
Course Format: *Hybrid – with majority of classes in person*
Course Name: Spirituality in Professional Practice
Course Location: Room TBA, Knox College
Class Times: Tuesday afternoon 200 pm – 450 pm
Prerequisites: KNP1512, Foundations of Counselling

Course Description

This course builds on the content of KNP1512, Foundations in Counselling and Spiritual Care, and has been designed to prepare students for practicums that integrate spiritual care and/or psychospiritual therapy. Students will gain an understanding of the impact of spiritual struggles and how spiritual listening and engagement with spiritual practices and beliefs can foster healing and wholeness. Students will be exposed to theological perspectives on spiritual care, the history of care of the soul, and ideas on the experience of spiritual pain as a force for transformation or despair. The themes of professional formation and communication styles will be discussed. Students will experience a variety of contemplative spiritual healing practices such as writing a lament, walking the labyrinth, and the practice of awe. The second half of the course will review and build on skills covered in core MPS courses with a focus on experiential learning to further prepare the student for their practicum. Skills may include but are not limited to building (and repairing) the therapeutic alliance, spiritual assessment, clinical documentation, engaging in spiritually integrated psychotherapy.

This course engages with the theme of enhancing spiritual and vocational development in Knox College MDiv students and the theme of spiritual and professional identity formation in MPS students.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

Pargament, K. I., & Exline, J. J. (2022). *Working with spiritual struggles in psychotherapy: From research to practice*. The Guilford Press.

Richard Rohr (2011). *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*, Jossey-Bass Publisher

Chapters from the following books (on Quercus):

- Hodges, S. (2021). The counseling practicum and internship manual: A resource for graduate counseling students (3rd ed.), Chapter 6 Clinical Writing and Documentation, page 131 – 155, Springer Publishing Company.
- Hodges, S. (2021). The counseling practicum and internship manual: A resource for graduate counseling students (3rd ed.), Chapter 12: Termination in Counseling: How to say goodbye, pages 301-317. Springer Publishing Company.
- Masters, R. A. (2010). *Spiritual Bypassing: When Spirituality Disconnects Us From What Really Matters*, Chapter One: Avoidance in Holy Drag (page 1-8); Chapter Two: Cutting Through Spiritual Bypassing (page 9-14); and Chapter Four: Blind Compassion: Neurotic Tolerance in Caring's Robes (page 21-27). North Atlantic Books.
- McBride, H. (2025). *Holy Hurt: Understanding Spiritual Trauma and the Process of Healing*, Chapter Two: Shards of Glass (page 39-63). Brazos Press.
- Maynard and Snodgrass (2015) *Understanding Pastoral Counselling*, Chapter One: An Introduction to Pastoral Counselling (page 1-15) and Chapter Two: Pastoral Counselling's History (page 17-37). Springer Publishing Company.
- Strauss, E. (2024), *When you Care: The Unexpected Magic of Caring for Others*, Chapter Eight: The Revolution Takes Places at Home, page 223-252. Gallery Books.

Course Website - Quercus: <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>. Students experiencing difficulties accessing Quercus should contact the registrar's office of their college.

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1

Tues Sept 9, 2025

Introduction to the course and syllabus

Exploring A Christian Understanding of Wellness

Reading - <https://councilofchurches.ca/news/explore-a-new-ecumenical-resource-on-theology-and-mental-wellbeing/>

Reading – Exline and Pargament Chapter One

Reading – Richard Rohr – Forward and Introduction

Week 2

Tues Sept 16, 2-25 *Understanding Your Communication and Relationship Styles*
Professional Formation – development of identity; role of practicums; supports
needed throughout career; role of theological reflection
Reading – Exline and Pargament Chapter 2
Reading – Richard Rohr – Chapter 1-4

Week 3

Tues Sept 23, 2025 *A theological understanding of Spiritual Struggle*
An Expectation of Wounds
Reading – Exline and Pargament Chapter 3-5
Reading – Richard Rohr – Chapter 5-8

Week 4

Tues Sept 30, 2025 *Understanding Spiritual Struggle*
Practice with case studies
Reading – Exline and Pargament Chapter 6-7
Reading – Richard Rohr Chapter 9-10

Week 5

Tues Oct 7, 2025 *Working with Spiritual Struggle*
Practicing listening for the spiritual and responding
Reading – Exline and Pargament Chapter 8-9
Reading – Richard Rohr Chapter 11-12

Week 6

Tues Oct 14, 2025 *Contemplative Practices in Healing – lament, prayer, labyrinth, practice of awe,*
music
Reading – Exline and Pargament Chapter 13
Reading – Richard Rohr Chapter 13

No Class During Reading Week October 20 – 25, 2025

Week 7

Tues Oct 28, 2025 *Spiritual Care and Therapy Practice and Preparation 1*
Brief History of the Pastoral Counselling Movement (leading to psychospiritual
counselling or Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy)
Therapeutic Alliance and Repairing a Break in Alliance
-Practice case studies/role play for alliance and assessment skills
Reading – Maynard and Snodgrass (2015) Understanding Pastoral Counselling, Chapter One: An
Introduction to Pastoral Counselling (page 1-15) and Chapter Two: Pastoral
Counselling's History (page 17-37)

Week 8

Tues Nov 4, 2025 *Spiritual Care and Therapy Practice and Preparation 2*
Client variables (multi-cultural competencies; working with LGBTQ+; spiritual by-
passing; multi-faith competencies)

-Practice case studies/role play

Reading – Masters, R. A. (2010). *Spiritual Bypassing: When Spirituality Disconnects Us From What Really Matters*, Chapter One: Avoidance in Holy Drag (page 1-8); Chapter Two: Cutting Through Spiritual Bypassing (page 9-14); and Chapter Four: Blind Compassion: Neurotic Tolerance in Caring's Robes (page 21-27)

Week 9

Tues Nov 11, 2025

Spiritual Care and Therapy Practice and Preparation 3

Record Keeping Skills (Intake Forms; Writing an Intake Summary; The Clinical record and Writing Clinical Notes; Termination Summaries)

Using Electronic documentation systems (Jane; Owl)

-Practice documenting for different clinical environments

Reading – Hodges, *The Counselling Practicum and Internship Manual*, Chapter 6 Clinical Writing and Documentation, page 131 - 155

Week 10

Tues Nov 18, 2025

Spiritual Care and Therapy Practice and Preparation 4

Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy

-Practice case studies/ role plays

Reading – McBride, H. (2025). *Holy Hurt: Understanding Spiritual Trauma and the Process of Healing*, Chapter Two: Shards of Glass (page 39-63)

Week 11

Tues Nov 25, 2025

Spiritual Care and Therapy Practice and Preparation 5

Assessing Danger (Duty to Warn; Suicidality; child abuse and neglect; aggressive behaviors); Developing a plan of care; Termination in Counselling

-Practice case studies/ role plays

Reading – Hodges, *The Counselling Practicum and Internship*, Chapter 12, pages 301-317

Week 12

Dec 2, 2025

Spiritual Care and Therapy Practice and Preparation 6

Facilitating Spirituality Groups and Principles of Group Therapy

Person as Carer

Reading – Strauss, E. (2024), *When you Care: The Unexpected Magic of Caring for Others*, Chapter Eight: The Revolution Takes Places at Home, page 223-252

Exam Week - No Exam in this class

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas. This course is about spiritual formation, personal growth and professional development. AI is not to be used for any assignment.

Basic Degree Students (MPS, MTS, MDiv):

(1) Participation (25%) – In addition to participating in the regular activity of the class, including the reading of the required texts, students are expected to contribute to class discussions and engage in

small group activities. The final 45 minutes of each class will be in small groups for discussion, role plays, and activities. A rubric for grading participation will be placed on Quercus.

(2) Reading Reflections (45%) – Students are expected to submit three reading reflections from a chapter from Exline & Pargament or Richard Rohr or the CCC journal article. Each reflection is worth 15% each. Each will be submitted onto Quercus, using 12 point font, times new roman, with name of student and course code in the header, and approximately 500 words (two pages double spaced). Do no more than two reflections from the same book. **Due dates are: Monday Sept 22 (midnight); Monday Oct 6 (midnight); Monday Oct 27 (midnight)**

1. Summarize the main message of the chapter or article as you understand it.
2. In what way does the content connect with or challenge your own spiritual understandings?
3. How might the content influence your current or future practice of spiritual care with others?

(3) Final paper (30%) – Case conceptualization. Due Monday Nov 24 (midnight) A case study will be provided for students to explore and write their final paper. From the content, create a case presentation with the following sections (and you may embellish or extrapolate in areas where insufficient information was provided. A case study guideline document will be found on Quercus that expands upon the following categories:

1. Write a one page (single spaced) intake summary based on the model provided in class. This will include some background information on the client.
 2. Write a one page (single spaced) case note based on the first session with the client. You can be creative with your interpretation of the case provided as to what happened in the first session. Include the presenting issue and a summary of client interaction.
 3. Write a one page (single spaced) spiritual assessment noting spiritual strengths, struggles and resources. [In Fall 2025 you will not yet have done the Assessment course.]
 4. Write a one page (single spaced) reflection on this case noting the following - what questions were raised for you as you read this case study? How might you introduce the idea of a goal in therapy or working with someone? What might be a goal that aligns with what you know about this client? What might you like to explore with this client? [It is early in your education. Identifying a treatment plan and a theological reflection are not expected.]
- Grading for this assignment will be 6% for each page and 6% based on writing style, clear and concise expression of ideas, presentation, and organization.

Grading System - Basic Degree Students

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale:

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 90-100 (A+) | Exceptional |
| 85-89 (A) | Outstanding |
| 80-84 (A-) | Excellent |
| 77-79 (B+) | Very Good |
| 73-76 (B) | Good |
| 70-72 (B-) | Acceptable |
| 0-69 (FZ) | Failure |

Grading System - Graduate Degree Students

5000, 6000 and 7000 level courses use the following alpha grading scale:

| | | |
|----|----------|---------------------|
| A+ | (90-100) | Profound & creative |
| A | (85-89) | Outstanding |
| A- | (80-84) | Excellent |
| B+ | (77-79) | Very Good |
| B | (73-76) | Good |
| B- | (70-72) | Satisfactory |
| FZ | (0-69) | Failure |

Please see the appropriate Conjoint Degree handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc.).

Policies

Class attendance. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner congruent with the vocation they are seeking to enter and in which they desire to give leadership. To that end, it is a regulation of Knox College that a minimum of approximately 80% attendance at courses (10 of 12 weeks) is required for credit; 100% attendance is expected at seminar courses. Habitual lateness for class will be counted as absence.

Teaching and learning are interactive, not passive, activities. Therefore, students may not “attend” an in-person class through unauthorized audio or video streaming or by watching or listening to a recording; instructors are not obligated to record or permitted to stream their in-person classes. Online classes that include a synchronous video component require the same level of attendance as an in-person course, and students may not “attend” by watching or listening to a recording. Online classes that include an asynchronous component require participation in all the activities for each week or module to meet the attendance requirement. Students requiring accommodations to attend class must present medical and/or Accessibility Services documentation that outlines the type and duration of accommodation(s) required.

Class recording. Much of the learning that goes on in the virtual or in-person classroom is founded upon mutual disclosure that takes place between instructor and student, and between students. Parties outside of this learning community have not committed themselves to this relationship of trust. A student without an approved accommodation who wishes to make an audio recording of an in-person class must secure the agreement of the instructor and all classmates; livestreaming and video recordings are not permitted. Online video-streamed classes may be recorded at the discretion of the instructor. Personal recordings may be used only by the student who made the recording; no recording may be reproduced, posted, or distributed without the written permission of the instructor.

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. The instructor will decrease a percentage point per day for late work for when an extension has not been requested. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/grading-practices-policy-university-assessment-and-january-26-2012>, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Inclusive Language. Knox College has an inclusive language policy, available at https://knox.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Knox-College-Policy_Use-of-Language-Policy-and-Glossary_221003.pdf.

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to their head of college or delegate according to the Graduate program Handbook linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>. A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges: <https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/research/theology/avoiding-plagiarism-in-theological-writing/>

Use of Generative AI, e.g., ChatGPT. The use of generative artificial intelligence tools and apps is strictly prohibited in all course assignments unless explicitly stated otherwise by me and posted to the course Quercus site. This includes ChatGPT and other AI writing assistants. Use of generative AI in this course may be considered use of an unauthorized aid, which is a form of cheating. This course policy is designed to promote your learning and intellectual development and to help you reach course learning outcomes.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of assignments before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the

ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from me may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address. Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Basic Degrees – Knox and TST

| <i>This course has the following course-level learning outcomes</i> | |
|--|--|
| Outcome | Evaluation |
| 1. Students will gain a theological understanding of the problem of pain and role of wounds in healing and wholeness | Book Chapter reflections Class discussion |
| 2. Students will develop case conceptualization skills. | Final assignment |
| 3. Students will be able to identify their communication and relationship styles | Book Chapter reflections |
| 4. Students will demonstrate spiritual assessment skills and theological reflection | Final assignment |

| <i>A student successfully completing this course has made progress towards the following Knox College degree program learning outcomes:</i> | | |
|--|---|---|
| MDiv | MTS | MPS |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interprets Scripture and Christian tradition (Reformed), using a variety of methods, sources, and norms, to preach, teach, write, and to provide care and witness. <i>Evaluation:</i> Book Chapter Reflections | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines. <i>Evaluation:</i> Book Chapter Reflections | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge at a basic level in various theological disciplines, in the Reformed or another tradition. [* the student may come from another tradition] <i>Evaluation:</i> Final Assignment and Class discussions Book chapter reflections |

| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates skills in creative, faith-centred, adaptive, and innovative leadership for current and emerging communities of faith. <i>Evaluation:</i> Class Discussions and Participation | <input type="checkbox"/> Finds, selects, reads, and appropriately integrates theological information. <i>Evaluation:</i> Click or tap here to enter text. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates knowledge and skills in spiritual care and therapy, grounded in appropriate theories, for professional practice and leadership in community and institutional settings. <i>Evaluation:</i> Final case conceptualization assignment |
|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Enhances the vocational and spiritual development, practices, and well-being of self and others. (See Professional and Critical Competencies.) <i>Evaluation:</i> Class participation in communication and relationship style exercises | <input type="checkbox"/> Engages respectfully and constructively in a theological community of scholarship. <i>Evaluation:</i> Click or tap here to enter text. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates an appropriate spiritual and professional identity formation in relation to specialized practice. <i>Evaluation:</i> Book Chapter Reflections |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Analyzes and evaluates social, cultural, and community contexts to enable communities of faith to participate in God's work and justice in a diverse and changing world. <i>Evaluation:</i> Book Chapter Reflections Final case conceptualization assignment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in theological discourse. <i>Evaluation:</i> Book Chapter Reflections Final Case Conceptualization assignment | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Writes and speaks in English sufficiently well to engage in professional practice. <i>Evaluation:</i> Book Chapter Reflections Final case conceptualization assignment |
| TST BASIC "DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS" | CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES (see college outcomes above) | CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS |
| EXPECTATIONS: <i>In this course students are expected to demonstrate the following:</i> | | |
| 1. Depth and Breadth of Knowledge | Students will gain a theological understanding of the problem of pain and role of wounds in healing and wholeness | <i>Book Chapter Reflections</i> <i>Class discussion</i> |
| 2. Knowledge of methodologies | Students will demonstrate spiritual assessment skills and theological reflection | Final Assignment |
| 3. Application of Knowledge | Students will develop case conceptualization skills. | Final Assignment |
| 4. Communication Skills | Students will write five papers and also examine their own communication and relationship styles | Book Chapter Reflections Final Assignment |

| TST BASIC “DEGREE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS” | CORRESPONDING COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES (see college outcomes above) | CORRESPONDING COURSE ELEMENTS / ASSIGNMENTS |
|--|--|--|
| 5. Awareness of Limits of Knowledge | Students will write five papers and also examine their own communication and relationship styles | <i>Book Chapter Reflections</i> <i>Final Assignment</i> |
| 6. Autonomy and Professional Capacity | Students will demonstrate spiritual assessment skills and theological reflection | Final Assignment |