



# Master of Arts in Counseling

## Course Syllabus

### Course Information

COUN698 - MINDFULNESS & PSYCHOTHERAPY  
Spring 2020  
1 Semester Hour

### Location/Date/Time

TBA  
Thursdays, 2:15 – 4:15  
February 20, 2020-March 26, 2020

### INSTRUCTOR'S INFORMATION:

**Cheree Hammond, PhD**

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Office Phone: 540.432.4228

Office Hours: by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will provide you with the foundational tools you need to make use of mindfulness, meditation and mindful self-compassion within the therapeutic relationship. The course will be built on three primary pillars: personal practice of mindfulness and meditation, an understanding of the applications and populations with which one can use mindfulness and meditation in therapy, and skill-building through practice. Students participating in this course can expect to gain a breadth of mindfulness, meditation and self-compassion practices for use in therapy as well as exposure to the theory and research that supports these practices.

### COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Participants in this course will demonstrate the following capacities:

- Will be able to describe and discuss mindfulness and meditation with clarity and confidence
- Will be able to identify uses of mindfulness and meditation for different populations
- Will be able to identify uses of mindfulness and meditation for different mental health concerns
- Will be able to discern when practices may not be helpful and to adapt mindfulness and meditation for special populations such as those struggling with psychosis

### Syllabus Disclaimer:

This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor reserves the right to alter the course requirements, schedule, and/or assignments based on new materials, class discussions, or other legitimate objectives. Students will be given notice of relevant changes in class or via e-mail.

### Technology:

- **Please turn cell phones off and please do not text during class as it is disruptive and takes away from the focus of the class.** Inadvertently, we all forget to turn them off and that's okay. If for some reason you need to have your cell phone on, please let me know prior to class.
- The EMU MA in Counseling program, in accordance with a national professional conversation about the use of technology in counselor education, is supporting a return to engagement and paper notebooks. As we are in the profession of presence and attunement, we want to be intentional about how we address this in our classes. Therefore, we will ask that you keep your phone and your computer/iPad in your bag, unless you are required to use it in class. We have been reading and researching about the impact of technology on the brain related to social engagement and learning, in addition to the strong correlation between writing and learning. We

wish to promote an embodied learning and discovery experience and can only be successful to do so in a context that minimizes disruption and interruption. We recognize there will be times when access to a phone is necessary and want to encourage advanced planning and communication with faculty.

**PREREQUISITES:**

N/A

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES:**

- **Required Reading:**
  - Gardner, Seigal & Fulton (2016). *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*
  - Neff & Germer, (2018). *The Mindful Self Compassion Workbook*
- **A Journal:** You will need a journal to record your personal mindfulness/meditation practice plan, to record your experiences of your practice and to note any obstacles, shifts or triumphs you experience. Choose a journal that is sturdy, easily portable, and if you would like to use mediums, such as water color paints, markers, fabric, etc., choose a journal or sketchbook that will readily hold those materials.
- **A Piece of Your Choice (Step 5):** Please select a counseling concern, such as depression, anxiety, developing healthy eating habits, parenting, for example, and identify a mindfulness-based or mindfulness infused practice to address that concern, such as Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Compassion-Focused Therapy. Read a book or 4 peer-reviewed journal articles that describe its use and efficacy.

**Course Requirements and Procedures:**

Attendance Policy: Due to the interactive nature of this training experience, students are **required** to attend and actively participate in **ALL** class sessions. Attendance and active participation are necessary for mastery of course material. Class work will build upon weekly assignments. Please make a commitment to attend every class punctually. If you know you will be absent, please let me know at the beginning of the semester or a class period in advance. If an emergency arises, please call or email me and let me know you will not be in class.

- **Step 1: Participation, Presence, & Preparation (15 points):** In a mindfulness and psychotherapy course your presence and participation are, of course, essential. Our goal is to be fully present for ourselves and with each other. You are invited to step fully into the discussions and activities as they unfold. A typical class period will unfold in this way:
  - *Opening:* we will open with a Soft Landing meditation (3-5 minutes)
  - *Discussion & Didactics:* we will sit together and discuss the readings. I will add to our conversation with instruction on our topic of the day and bring in information from sources outside of our readings. This is meant to be a discussion period rather than a lecture (30-40 minutes)
  - *Practice:* We will take time to practice introducing mindfulness and meditation activities/tools into the therapeutic relationship and we will provide feedback to one another (20-40 minutes)
  - *Break:* take a break, stretch, get a drink or snack. Avoid your screens, such as phones or email (10 minutes)
  - *Filling your Toolbox:* in the last part of class I will teach a meditation, providing support materials where helpful (10-25 minutes)
  - *Engaging the Practice* and we will do this together (10-25 minutes)
  - *Working with Your Experience:* journal briefly about your experience of the activity (5 mins): Remember that whatever you observe in your meditation experience is **just right**. You don't need to have a profound experience or to generate a terribly insightful question to gain benefit from sitting. The *noticing* is much more important than *what gets noticed* and *way more important* than any "meaning" behind the noticed experience. In this way, you are

invited to *just be* with your experiences. Don't worry too much about judging them, being judged and, for heavens sake, don't worry if you find that you are judging! Just notice that. That's all you need to do. Know that I will not be evaluating your experience. There is no meditation Olympics.

- *Process and Questions: Tying it All Together:* At the end of each class we will process experiences, ask questions and make connections to our work with clients (15-20 mins)
- **Step 2: Envisioning Reflection (10 points):** You are asked to envision three short-term (within the next 5 weeks) and three long-term goals (next 5 years) for your learning in this course and to describe these goals in a brief reflection. Your journal reflection should describe your hopes personally and educationally. For example, would you like to use mindfulness and meditation to soften the edges of anxiety or shift judgmental, negative or self-critical mind chatter? Would you like to develop a daily mindfulness/meditation practice? Are you hoping to gain skills in supporting teen clients with depression, for example? Please remember to describe personal and professional goals in both the short and long-term. Finally, describe how you will know you are on your way to achieving these goals. (Don't worry, this is not a contract, this reflection is for the purpose of envisioning and for providing the foundation of your personal practice plan.) *Complete this before or shortly after class on 1/17.*
- **Step 3: Your Personal Mindfulness/Meditation Practice Plan: (15 points):** Each of us (including your instructor) will create a mindfulness/meditation plan for the span of the course and we will each do our best to implement it, documenting our experience along the way. Your plan should be shaped in such a way that that it is reasonable/doable but also gently challenging. You may implement any of a wide number of practices into your plan (for example daily breath meditation, prayer, yoga, etc.), but once you've made your plan, sticking to it will be important in forming good habits. A sample plan is found in the back of this syllabus. You can "check out" a meditation cushion, a counter, and/or a bio-feedback monitor for the duration of the course. Some of these items we will have to share, so please plan to return them each class session. Please use your journal to record your plan and to jot notes about your experiences. *Complete your plan and bring your journal to class on 1/24.*
- **Step 4: Journaling (20 points):** Each journal will look different depending upon the plan you build for yourself, but your journal will serve as a space to document your journey. Please bring it with you to class, you may be asked to jot notes about your in-class experiences in your journal. Feel free to "art this journal" and to document your progress in a way that makes sense to you and, if you like, in a way that adds to your happiness. Your journal will include:
  - Your Envisioning Entry (step 2)
  - Your personal practice plan for the semester (step 3)
  - Some in-class prompt responses
  - A self-guided reflection entry for each class period (step 4)
  - A minimum of *three documentation entries per week*: here you will describe your experiences of your practice (for example, if you are meditating 15 minutes a day and doing 5 minutes of biofeedback, you will note any experiences or challenges in your meditation and jot down questions that arose, and you will document your biofeedback experience (% on coherence levels, for example)
  - Your final reflection (step 6).

The journal is for you, though I will look at it, so make it something that supports you and that you enjoy working with!

- **Step 5: Cultivate the Seeds of Expertise (20 points):** You are asked to write a paper, 5-7 pages, in which you will focus on a population and counseling concern of interest to you (such as anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, parenting, and so on). In your paper you will

describe the use of a mindfulness-based or mindfulness-infused approach that has been developed for this concern and has some evidence to support it, such as DBT for borderline personality constructions, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for substance use disorders, or Compassion Focused Therapy for anxiety. Identify a book **or** 4 peer-reviewed journal articles. Your paper should do the following:

- Outline the basic approach of selected model
- Describe the theory behind its use with your selected concern
- Describe briefly the support you found for its use
- Describe how well the approach might fit with your own developing counseling style
  - How would this approach challenge you?
  - How would this approach highlight your strengths?
  - Describe where you will “go next” (for example, will you seek out a training, do you have another book in mind to further your understanding, or look at another approach, etc.)
- **Step 6: Final Reflection (20 points):** This reflection is due on the Friday following our final class by 12 noon, with the rest of your journal. In this reflection you will answer the following questions:
  - ❖ What did you take away from the course that you would like to incorporate into your own practice of counseling? Do you see yourself working with mindfulness and meditation explicitly, implicitly or both, neither? Why?
  - ❖ What aspects of mindfulness and meditation do you find come most easily to you? Which are most challenging? What can you do to support yourself through these challenges? What resources are available? How do you anticipate your challenges with mindfulness & meditation might mirror the challenges your client’s face? How might you support clients through these obstacles?

**SCHEDULE AND TOPICS:**

**Course Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Reading/Assignments Due</b>
2/20/20	<b>Introduction to Mindfulness &amp; Meditation:</b> <i>A Course on Sitting, Attending &amp; Arriving</i> <i>An Introduction to the History of Mindfulness &amp; Meditation in Psychotherapy</i>	Gardner: Chapters 1, 2 & 6 Neff & Germer: 1-3
2/27/20	<b>Self-Compassion: A Foundation for Growth &amp; Stability</b>	Gardner: Chapters 3, 4, & 5 Neff & Germer: 4-6
3/12/20	<b>Mindfulness &amp; Meditation for Mental Health Concerns (Adults)</b>	Gardner: Chapters 7-12 Neff & Germer: 7-9
3/19/20	<b>Mindfulness &amp; Meditation for Mental Health Concerns (Children)</b>	Gardner: Chapter 13 Neff & Germer: 10-12
3/26/20	<b>Mindfulness &amp; Meditation for Mental Health Concerns (Trauma)</b>	Neff & Germer: 12-15 Final Paper Due to my mailbox Friday Journals Due Friday

**Please Note:** The above schedule and procedures for this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

**GRADING CRITERIA AND OTHER POLICIES:**

The Master of Arts in Counseling faculty support students in actively engaging their academic and applied work throughout their training, valuing this as a core professionalism skill. Students should be aware that graduate university policy allows two C grades before being dismissed from the program.

Grading Scale (based on percentage)

**A = 93      A- = 87      B+ = 84      B = 80      B- = 78      C = 76**

SAMPLE

## **Developing Your Personal Mindfulness/Meditation Practice Plan: Guidelines for Step 3 (15 points):**

This is your chance to make use of your coursework to cultivate solidity, build and preserve needed energy, and strengthen habits of self-compassion and kindness. Five weeks, if used wisely, is plenty of time to build new habits and shift old patterns of thinking or behaviors that create challenges in an already hectic life.

Below, find a sample practice plan. As you can see, it doesn't have to be fancy, elaborate or long, but it does need to be written in a way that you can use it over the course of the semester.

Try following these steps:

1. Review your envisioning reflection and identify a few goals that feel both important to you and "doable."
2. Consider how you would like those goals to be met in the short-term (5 weeks) and the long term (5 years)

### **Sample Personal Practice Plan**

**Goal 1:** I would like to have more quiet and uninterrupted time that is devoted to just being still while still being productive, since if I don't get work accomplished I will be stressed out.

**Short-Term Goal 1:** I will use a productivity app to work in 25 minute intervals. During the 5 minute breaks, I will stretch, walk, or use a brief mindfulness or meditation visualization. I will also check in with my shoulders where I tend to hold tension. I will use the breaks to support my energy and refocus at least 3 times a day during work periods.

**Long-Term Goal 1:** If I find that the above goal is working for me I will continue it and work to incorporate it every day and not just 3/5 of the time. If it is not working, I will re-evaluate and find new ways to relax and refocus throughout the work day.

**Goal 2:** I would like to continue to grow my ability to observe my own thoughts without judging, rejecting or engaging them. This will help reduce anxiety, and will support connection with others.

**Short-Term Goal 2:** 15 minutes of mediation (open space) per day 5 of 7 days a week, 5 minutes of biofeedback during a gratitude meditation with an aim of 80% coherence at Level 3 by week 5

**Long-Term Goal 2:** 45 minutes of meditation (open space) per day, 10 minutes of biofeedback per day, 80% coherence at Level 4

**Goal 3:** I would really like to gain some physical flexibility and upper body strength in order to strengthen my health.

**Short-Term Goal 3:** 15 minutes of easy/restorative yoga before I go to bed at night, 5 of 7 days each week

**Long-Term Goal 3:** I would like to return to an intermediate level of skill in yoga within the next 2-5 years, integrating yoga into my schedule more completely.

**Goal 4:** I would like to learn more about Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for clients who experience substance addiction.

**Short-Term Goal 4:** I am going to read the Hayes, Strosahl and Wilson text on ACT and practice using the urge surfing technique.

**Long-Term Goal 4:** Provided I resonate with the theory when I am done reading the text, I'm going to look for a workshop or even a training in ACT. If I don't like the model I think I will explore more training in DBT.

- **Writing Guidelines:**

*Writing* will be a factor in evaluation: EMU has adopted a set of writing guidelines for graduate programs that include four sets of criteria: content, structure, conventions and style (see below). It is expected that graduates will be able to write at least a “good” level with 60% writing at an “excellent” level. All written work must conform to APA writing style standards.

- **Academic Integrity Policy (AIP):**

Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his/her own work, that which he or she has not produced, is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated, for example, if they copy the work of another, or use unauthorized notes or aides during an examination or turn in their own paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentionally or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in cheating or plagiarism on any assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and a report of this incident will be filed in the dean’s office. Repeated violations will invoke a disciplinary process.

- **Turnitin:**

Students are accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Thus, you should be familiar with EMU’s Academic Integrity Policy (see above) in order to meet the academic expectations concerning appropriate documentation of sources. In addition, EMU is using Turnitin, a learning tool and plagiarism prevention system. For more information about or to watch a demo of Turnitin, please see: [http://turnitin.com/en\\_us/features/demos](http://turnitin.com/en_us/features/demos).

- **Moodle:**

Moodle is the online learning platform that EMU has chosen to provide to faculty, administrators and students. Students will have access to course information within Moodle for any class they are registered for in a given term. The amount of time a student has access to information before and after the class is somewhat dependent on the access given to students by the individual faculty member. However, please note that courses are not in Moodle permanently – after two years the class is no longer accessible. Please be sure to download resources from Moodle that you wish to have ongoing access to.

- **Academic Support Center**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your work in this course, it is your responsibility to contact Office of Academic Access on the third floor of the Hartzler library, 540-432-4233. They will work with you to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. All information and documentation is treated confidentially. <http://emu.edu/academics/access/>

Please refer to the Student Handbook, which can be found at <http://www.emu.edu/studentlife/student-handbook/> for additional policies, information, and resources available to you.

- **Institutional Review Board:**

All research conducted by or on EMU faculty, staff or students must be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board to assure participant safety: <http://www.emu.edu/irb/>.

“The Federal Office of Human Research Protection defines research as follows:

Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are

conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities.

The IRB requires all researchers submitting proposals to complete the online researcher training provided by NIH (the website requires the establishment of a no-cost account). This training covers basic concepts, principles, and issues related to the protection of research participants. When training is successfully completed, the researcher will receive a certificate. This certificate should be saved (as an image or pdf file) and kept on file – proof of training is required when submitting an IRB proposal."

- **Graduate Writing Center:**

Please take advantage of the free individual tutoring from graduate student tutors (see <http://www.emu.edu/writing-program/> for more information). To make an appointment, please access ASC Tutoring through the myEMU portal: <https://emu.mywconline.com/index.php>. See Academic Program Coordinator for more information about available services and tutoring times.

- **Course Extensions and Outstanding Grades:**

For fall and spring semesters, all coursework is due by the end of the semester. If a student will not be able to complete a course on time, the student must submit a request one week before the end of the semester for an extension (up to 6 months), by emailing the instructor, academic advisor and the Academic Program Coordinator. If the request is granted the student will receive an "I (incomplete) for the course which will later be replaced by a final grade when the work has been turned in on the agreed upon date. If the request for an extension is denied, the student will receive a grade for the work that has been completed up until the time the course was expected to have been completed. If no work has been submitted, the final grade will be an F (or W under unusual circumstances and with permission of the Program Director). Extensions will be given only for legitimate and unusual situations. Extensions are contracted by the student with the program for up to a maximum of 6 months after the deadline for the course work.

PLEASE NOTE: If the outstanding course work is received within the first 6 weeks of the extension, no grade reduction will be imposed; after 6 weeks any outstanding coursework will be reduced by ½ letter grade. If the extension deadline is not met, the student will receive a final grade based on the work completed.

**Academic Program Policies:**

<http://emu.edu/graduate-and-professional-studies/graduate-student-handbook.pdf>

<http://www.emu.edu/catalog/graduate/graduate-professional-policies.pdf>

- **Title IX:**

*The following policy applies to any incidents that occur (on or off campus) while you are a student registered at EMU. It does not apply if you are talking about incidents that happened prior your enrollment at EMU.* It is important for you to know that all faculty members are required to report known or alleged incidents of sexual violence (including sexual assault, domestic/relationship violence, stalking). That means that faculty cannot keep information about sexual violence confidential if you share that information with them. For example, if you inform a faculty member of an issue of sexual harassment, sexual assault, or discrimination he/she will keep the information as private as he/she can, but is required to bring it to the attention of the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to talk to this office directly, Irene Kniss, Title IX Coordinator, can be reached at [540-432-4302](tel:540-432-4302) or [irene.kniss@emu.edu](mailto:irene.kniss@emu.edu). Additionally, you can also report incidents or complaints through our online portal at <http://emu.edu/safecampus/>. You may report, confidentially, incidents of sexual violence if you speak to Counseling Services counselors, Campus Ministries' pastors, and Health Services

personnel providing clinical care. These individuals, as well as the Title IX Coordinator can provide you with information on both internal and external support resources.

**Writing Standards – Graduate Level** *(revised Spring 2012)*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>A excellent</b>	<b>B good</b>	<b>C minimal expectations</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Content</b> <i>(quality of the information, ideas and supporting details.)</i>	- shows clarity of purpose - offers depth of content - applies insight and represents original thinking	- shows clarity of purpose - offers substantial information and sufficient support - represents some original thinking	- shows clarity of purpose -lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - represents little original thinking	
<b>Structure</b> <i>(logical order or sequence of the writing)</i>	- is coherent and logically developed -uses very effective transitions	-is coherent and logically developed -uses smooth transitions	-is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed -has some awkward transitions	
<b>Rhetoric and Style</b> <i>(appropriate attention to audience)</i>	- is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective - uses varied sentence structure -is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read	- displays concern for careful expression - uses some variation in sentence structure -may be wordy in places	- displays some originality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted - uses little varied sentence structure - frequently uses jargon and clichés -uses generally clear but frequently wordy prose	
<b>Information Literacy</b> <i>(locating, evaluating, and using effectively the needed information as appropriate to assignment)</i>	- uses high-quality and reliable sources - chooses sources from many types of resources - chooses timely resources for the topic - integrates references and quotations to support ideas fully	- uses mostly high-quality and reliable sources -chooses sources from a moderate variety of types of resources -chooses resources with mostly appropriate dates - integrates references and quotations to provide some support for ideas	-uses a few poor-quality or unreliable sources -chooses sources from a few types of resources -chooses a few resources with inappropriate dates -integrates references or quotations that are loosely linked to the ideas of the paper	
<b>Source Integrity</b> <i>(appropriate acknowledgment of sources used in research)</i>	- cites sources for all quotations - cites credible paraphrases correctly - includes reference page - makes virtually no errors in documentation style	- cites sources for all quotations - usually cites credible paraphrases correctly - includes reference page - makes minimal errors in documentation style	- has sources for all quotations - has mostly credible paraphrases, sometimes cited correctly - includes reference page with several errors -makes several errors in documentation style.	
<b>Conventions</b> <i>(adherence to grammar rules: usage, mechanics)</i>	- uses well-constructed sentences - makes virtually no errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices	- almost always uses well-constructed sentences -makes minimal errors in grammar and spelling - makes accurate word choices	- usually uses well-constructed sentences - makes several errors - makes word choices that distract the reader	
The weighting of each of the six areas is dependent on the specific written assignment and the teacher's preference. Plagiarism occurs when one presents as one's own "someone else's language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source" (adapted from Council of Writing Program Administrators).				<b>Grade</b>