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SUBMISSION FORM

TITLE OF RESOURCE:	TIMEFRAME (e.g., a class unit in number of minutes; entire class period in hours/minutes; theme for year, class period, homework assignment): Two class periods of 60–90 minutes. Assigned readings that will take 1–2 hours. Optional homework or out of class assignments range from 2–4 hours.
Collaborative Interdisciplinary Relationships With Chaplains	

BRIEF DESCRIPTION [250 word limit]

Those entering the social work profession must be prepared to interface in a competent manner with professionals of other disciplines to provide holistic interventions for individuals with the goal of improving their overall quality of life. Social workers and social work interns regularly work with chaplains in settings such as health care facilities, mental health agencies, residential care facilities, correctional institutions, hospice, and the military. Chaplains and social workers often have different philosophies that are equally valuable in terms of holistic intervention on the client or patient's behalf. Chaplains bring varying qualifications to their professional role depending on the requirements of the agency or the organization that employs them. Many will have completed 10 years of professional educational and clinical training and are accredited by a professional chaplaincy organization such as the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. They are considered to be experts at providing spiritual, emotional, relational, and ethical care with a commitment to interfaith ministry that respects the diverse cultures and beliefs of the individuals they serve. Social workers often find that chaplains are knowledgeable and well-trained colleagues

who can aid them in interpreting faith-based issues in assessment and in developing appropriate interventions. Chaplains can be a vital link between the social worker and the client's faith leaders and faith community. This module provides an introductory overview of cooperative interdisciplinary relationships with chaplains and also contributes to student preparation for ethical, spiritually sensitive, nondiscriminatory, and culturally sensitive practice in accordance with CSWE and NASW standards.

TOPIC ADDRESSED (keywords; fields of practice; client populations; contexts)

- Interdisciplinary relationships with chaplains
- Spirituality in practice
- Interdisciplinary teams

SUGGESTIONS FOR PREPARATION FOR THE FACULTY MEMBER

- This module will have more impact if the topic of spiritual diversity, cultural (religious/spiritual) competence has been previously integrated into the program and if students have had opportunity to explore their own beliefs and attitudes related to issues of religion/spirituality in professional practice.

- The instructor should be familiar with the required and suggested readings below before leading the class sessions.

- When using the module in an advanced/concentration MSW course that focuses on clinical practice in the specialized areas of health and mental health, the instructor should review the additional suggested readings.

- If teaching this topic for the first time, the instructor may want to complete the assignments themselves and interview a chaplain or social workers who work with chaplains before implementing the module.

| CONNECTION TO COMPETENCIES/EPAS [select 1–2] |

- **EPAS 2.1.1**—Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly.

    The curriculum guides students in their professional conduct and growth as representatives of the social work profession, its mission, and its core values while focusing on professional roles and boundaries in interdisciplinary relationships with chaplains. Students are encouraged to practice personal reflection and self-correction to assure continual professional development in the area of spirituality and to demonstrate professional demeanor in their communication with other professionals, specifically chaplains.

- **EPAS 2.1.2**—Apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice.

 Upon completing the module, students will have knowledge of the basic core values, standards of practice, and professional ethics of the chaplaincy profession and be able to compare and contrast with social work ethics.

- **EPAS 2.1.4**—Engage diversity and difference in practice.

Students will learn to evaluate the influence of commonality, diversity, and difference of the client system in engagement, assessment, and intervention as related to the area of spirituality and religion. They will increase their understanding of the application of generalist social work knowledge and skills in practice using a strengths-oriented, ecological systems perspective that demonstrates respect for human diversity and cultures as exhibited through client spirituality. The students will increase self-awareness and understanding that will assist them to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups.

- **EPAS 2.1.9**—Respond to contexts that shape practice.

The module contributes to the development of skills and knowledge for social work practice that are spiritually informed and that recognize religious contexts. Students are encouraged to ethically

integrate the values, spiritual beliefs, and religious practices of the client system into generalist social work practice.

ASSESSMENT MEASURES

Assignments: The following assignments or activities are suggested as assessment measures to reinforce the learning experience:

1. Have the students explore the Association of Professional Chaplains website and read their Code of Ethics document (see above). Students should compare the mission, values, and ethics of the chaplaincy profession to those of NASW's Code of Ethics and respond to the following questions in a paper (2–3 pages). This can be assigned a week before the first class session and is due at the second class session (EPAS 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.4).

   a. What are similarities and differences between the values and ethics of these two professions?

   b. How is the subject of diversity (i.e., religion, nonreligious, sexual orientation, culture) addressed in these documents?

   c. Are there any areas of ambiguity or tension between chaplaincy and social work values, ethics, and practice standards?

2. If time does not allow more than one class session devoted to this topic, after Session 1 the instructor could have students interview a professional chaplain who works with social workers at a human services agency or organization. The topics suggested for guest speakers in the second class session (see below) can be the focus for the student interview. The instructor can either require a 2–3 page paper or a short class presentation (EPAS 2.1.1, 2.1.4, 2.1.9).

3. Students who are in field can be assigned to shadow a chaplain (or other professional from another discipline) at their field internship for a day and write a two-page reflection which

incorporates material from the suggested articles. The instructor could make arrangements for those in field placement that do not have a chaplain on staff to shadow a chaplain from another human service setting. This assignment should be due a short time after the last class session related to interdisciplinary relationships with chaplains (EPAS 2.1.1, 2.1.4, 2.1.9).

RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS or PERSPECTIVES (main emphasis)

- Interfaith perspective
- Ethical integration of religion and spirituality into practice

HOW TO APPLY IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS

- The module is appropriate for public, religiously affiliated, and non-religiously affiliated university settings. For public or nonreligiously affiliated university settings, the focus might be on ethical integration of spirituality in practice and respect for chaplains as professionals who are trained in this specialty. For religiously affiliated universities, additional emphasis may be given to appropriate professional roles and boundaries as related to personal spirituality and client self-determination.

- The module may be used for both foundation graduate (MSW) and undergraduate (BSW) practice courses as an introduction to the concepts of interdisciplinary relationships and holistic intervention that addresses religion and spirituality.

- MSW students in concentration/advanced-level clinical practice courses in the area of health or mental health would also benefit from this curriculum. They often work closely with chaplains should be able to address possible ethical issues as well as increase their understanding of appropriate collaboration with chaplains as members of an interdisciplinary team working conjointly for the good of the client system.

Required readings:

- Bronstein, L. R. (2003). A model for interdisciplinary collaboration. *Social Work, 48*, 297–307.

    In this article, Bronstein suggests that interdisciplinary collaboration requires skills that are imperative for competent professional social work practice. The author discusses the various roles that social workers assume on interdisciplinary teams in a variety of settings and possible professional and structural influences on interdisciplinary collaboration. Bronstein stresses the importance of mutual trust, respect, understanding, and informal communication between collaborators.

- Harr, C., Openshaw, L., & Moore, B. (2006). Moving toward effective interdisciplinary collaborations to address spirituality: Chaplains share their perspectives on working with social workers. *Arête, 30*(1), 101–111.

    As human service organizations place increased emphasis on interdisciplinary teamwork in professional settings, social workers must be prepared to interface with chaplains to address the spiritual needs of clients. The authors present the results of a mixed-method study which explored chaplains' perceptions (*N*=403) of their professional relationships with social workers. The findings suggest that chaplains perceive a generally positive working relationship to exist between social workers and themselves, although areas for improvement also exist. The article discusses practical ways to improve interdisciplinary relationships with chaplains in order to provide holistic client services.

- Association of Professional Chaplains Code of Ethics. Retrieve at:

    www.professionalchaplains.org/uploadedFiles/pdf/code_of_ethics_2003.pdf

The Association of Professional Chaplains website is a valuable resource for both instructor and students. It provides information as to the qualifications for professional chaplains, the standards of practice, and the ethical guidelines.

- Sherwood, D. A. (2002). Ethical integration of faith and social work practice: Evangelism. *Social Work and Christianity, 29*(1), 1–12.

The author proposes that every social worker is influenced by assumptions, beliefs, values, and commitments that are in part faith based. He discusses the need for self-awareness of our beliefs and the impact they may have on our work. Sherwood indicates that all social workers face the issue of ethical integration of faith and practice. Although the article is addressed primarily to Christian social workers, the author suggests that the principles are applicable to social workers in general regardless of faith background. He also discusses the need to include spirituality as an aspect of the holistic person in the environment approach of the profession and the appropriate use of referrals to chaplains and other clergy.

Additional suggested readings related to health or mental health care clinical practice settings:

Greene, R. R., Vourtekis, B. S., Gelfand, D. E., & Lewis, J. S. (1992). Current realities: Practice and education needs of social workers in nursing homes. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 18*(314), 39–54.

Hilton, R. W. (1995). Fragmentation within interprofessional work: A result of isolationism in health care professional education programs and the preparation of students to function only in the confines of their own discipline. *Journal of Interprofessional Care, 9*(1), 33–40.

Iles, P. A., & Auluck, R. (1990). From organizational development in nursing practice: Improving the effectiveness of interdisciplinary teamwork and interagency collaboration. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 15*, 50–58.

Joseph, M. V., & Conrad, A. P. (1989). Social work influence on interdisciplinary ethical decision

   making in health care settings. *Health & Social Work, 14*, 22–30.

Sands, R. G. (1990). Ethnographic research: A qualitative research approach to study of the

   interdisciplinary team. *Social Work in Health Care, 15*, 115–129.

Sheppard, M. (1992). Contact and collaboration with general practitioners: A comparison of social

   work and community psychiatric nurses. *British Journal of Social Work, 22*, 419–436.

Wilson, J., & Setterland, D. (1986). Towards holistic social work practice in general medical

   setting. *Social Work in Health Care, 12*, 1–13.

Wittenberg-Lyles, E., Oliver, D. P., Demiris, G., Baldwin, P., & Regehr, K. (2008).

   Communication dynamics in hospice teams: Understanding the role of the chaplain in

   interdisciplinary team collaboration. *Journal of Palliative Medicine, 11*(10), 1330–1335.

SPECIFY CONTENT AREAS (HBSE, Policy, etc.)

- Practice With Individuals and Families

- Field Education

- Health and Social Work, Mental Health, Gerontology

RELEVANCE FOR PRACTICE

- Social workers and students must be prepared to collaborate with professionals of various

  disciplines for the benefit of their clients and patients and develop the realization that only

  through cooperation can we best bring about positive change in the lives of the clients we

  serve.

- Social workers and students should develop understanding and respect for the various human

  service professions and their unique role in addressing the needs of the client and patient.

- Social workers and students should be introduced to the ethical integration of religion and faith

into social work practice as related to interdisciplinary collaboration with chaplains.

- Social workers/students should be aware of possible biases or prejudices that might negatively impact their ability to address issues of religion and spirituality with the client and understand the possible impact of counter transference when dealing with this area in practice situations.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND PROCEDURES (maximum 6–7 double spaced pages)

Description of the module: Divide the module into two sequential class sessions.

Session I—60 to 90 minutes

This session provides an introductory overview of cooperative interdisciplinary relationships with chaplains and prepares students for ethical, spiritually sensitive, nondiscriminatory, and culturally sensitive practice in accordance with CSWE and NASW standards through readings and class discussion. Assign the required readings 2 weeks before the class session. The instructor begins by leading the students in developing two lists on the board based on the material in the readings, their own experience in field, and creative brainstorming. One list should focus on the benefits of interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork for holistic assessment and intervention both with human service professionals in general and, more specifically, with chaplains. The other list should describe the various challenges that might be encountered in interdisciplinary collaboration with human service professionals, in particular chaplains. These might include potential overlapping of responsibilities, territorialism, and conflicting priorities. The discussion should then focus on the various settings where social workers regularly interface with chaplains (i.e., hospitals, hospice, prisons, mental health facilities, faith-based organizations and agencies, law enforcement, and victim assistance) and issues related to ethical integration of faith and practice.

Possible questions for discussion:

1. When working with a chaplain, what transference or counter transference issues might you face as result of your own personal spirituality or past experiences with faith leaders? What are some possible sources of comfort or discomfort for you in addressing spirituality? How might this create issues of trust/mistrust or respect/disrespect?

2. When would you feel it appropriate to refer a client or patient to a chaplain or request that a chaplain visit with a client or patient?

3. Why can issues of territorialism be especially problematic with chaplains if roles are not clearly defined?

4. What are specific ways social workers and chaplains can collaborate and assist each other in practice with patients and clients and their families?

5. When and how could social workers and chaplains include faith leaders and faith groups as a part of the client or patient intervention plan?

6. Would you address these issues differently with a client or patient self-identifies as an atheist or spiritual, but not religious?

NOTE: When using the module in an advanced/concentration level clinical course, the Wittenberg-Lyles et al. (2008) and the Joseph and Conrad (1989) articles should be included as assigned readings as well. Additional discussion questions might include:

1. How do responsibilities and roles differ between social workers and chaplains in a health care setting?

2. How might a social worker and a chaplain each assist a patient who is receiving palliative care deal with issues of death, grief, and loss?

3. How might a social worker and a chaplain each assist the family of a patient who is receiving palliative care deal with issues of death, grief, and loss?

4. What are some of the methods that might be used to assure clear communication between social workers and chaplains in health care settings?

Session II—60 to 90 minutes

This session provides an opportunity for students to interact with chaplains and other human service professionals and to discuss the day to day cooperative interdisciplinary team work that occurs in practice settings. Invite professional guest speakers for the second session. These could be a chaplain, a social worker and a chaplain who work together in a health care setting or a panel discussion with an interdisciplinary team that includes a social worker and a chaplain.

Below are some possible topics for the panel to discuss:

1. Professional roles, building respect and trust, and the day to day collaboration and communication between the professions.

2. The challenges and benefits of working together as a team to address client or patient needs in a holistic manner.

3. Addressing spirituality with the client or patient while maintaining respect for spiritual and religious diversity of clients and patients.

4. Training and qualifications of chaplains.

5. Spiritual assessment and intervention as practiced by chaplains.

6. Overview and examples of the spiritual and religious practices/traditions of various faith groups that should be considered/addressed in developing a treatment/intervention plan (i.e., dietary needs, rituals).

7. Legal standards or guidelines for provision of spiritual care.