

**AM 731 Psychology of Trauma**  
**Hartford International University**

**Instructors:** Dr. Hooman Keshavarzi, MA, Psy.D

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Email:** [hoomankeshavarzi@gmail.com](mailto:hoomankeshavarzi@gmail.com)

**Location:** Online

**Course Description:**

This course is focused on the study of psychological trauma. It will provide students with a comprehensive review of psychological trauma and its types (sexual abuse, combat, life tragedies), using readings, lectures and clinical case discussions. The course begins with a discussion of a range of traumatic events and definitions of trauma symptoms and responses. The course will then explore etiology, assessment, identification, process exposure approaches in working with trauma, vicarious and secondary trauma, 'spiritual' manifestations of trauma, the physiological impact of trauma on the brain and some common comorbid conditions that accompany trauma. Other various expressions and associated symptoms of psychological trauma are discussed as it pertains to the work contexts of chaplains. Research on the relevant risk and protective factors associated with traumatic stress is presented.

**Instructor Bios:**

Hooman Keshavarzi is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, holds a doctorate of Clinical Psychology, Masters of Clinical Psychology and a Bachelors of Science – specialist psychology track/minor in Islamic Studies. He is currently a visiting scholar at Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul, Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Argosy University Chicago, Hartford Seminary, American Islamic College, instructor of psychology at Islamic Online University and founder/director of Khalil Center – a Muslim community mental health center based out of Chicago. He is also a fellow at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding at the Global Health Center, conducting research on topics related to Muslims and Mental Health. Hooman Keshavarzi specializes in the treatment and training of clinicians in the area of Islamically integrated Psychotherapy and has delivered this training through multiple teaching modalities and capacities. He has developed an internship curriculum for graduate students at Khalil Center and currently serves as a clinical supervisor at the Village of Hoffman Estates, Dept of Health & Human Services. Additional special areas of his research include: mental status implications on Islamic jurisprudence, uncovering targeted Islamic treatment approaches for specific mental illnesses and investigating the psycho-social issues of Muslim minorities in the West.

**Core Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will develop a familiarity with types and basic manifestations of psychological trauma in order to assess and rule out trauma their pastoral work with congregants or clients.
2. Students will learn about the basic models and frameworks of how to address psychological trauma both as a first responder as well as a potential liaison between the client and their mental health treatment.
3. Students will be able to better distinguish between true spiritual experiences and manifestations of trauma that resemble 'spiritual' states in the interest of directing congregants/clients to the appropriate treatment settings for their conditions.

4. Students will become familiar with the different types of traumatic reactions including but not limited to sexual abuse, combat, disasters and even vicarious and secondary/communal trauma.
5. Students will develop an understanding of the variables that serve as protective factors in alleviating or creating resiliency against psychological trauma, including spiritual coping and support.

### Readings:

Required journal articles can be downloaded from the course website.

Required Texts:

1. van der Kolk, B.A., McFarlane, A.C., and Weisaeth, L., (Eds.) (2007). *Traumatic Stress: The Effect of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body, and Society*. Guilford Press: New York.
2. Briere, J. & Scott, C. (2014). *Principles of Trauma Therapy: A Guide to Symptoms, Evaluation and Treatment*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication

### Course Plan:

Each week the instructor will post the lecture, discussion questions, and a case study. Students are expected to review the lecture and assigned readings in their entirety. Each week, students will be responsible for posting two written responses **by Saturday morning at 9am:**

**Discussion Topics:** Each student is responsible to write a lengthy response based on both the lecture and reading material for that week. This response should be no more than 500 words and no less than 400. It will be in the form of a response to the discussion questions posed by the instructor, but it can also include student's questions and requests for further clarification of the material in lecture and/or the readings. Discussion responses **should NOT summarize the readings and lecture but integrate them.** It is encouraged for students to respond to one another in the discussion forum.

**Case Studies:** Each week students are expected to participate in a virtual class discussion of the case of the week. Students are expected to read the case and write a short response of what they would do if they were presented with this case in the field. Students are expected to read all of the responses in the thread and to indicate whether they agree or disagree with the approaches of their peers in the previous posts. These threads are intended to help students develop practical, hands-on skills as well as to generate healthy discussion and constructive feedback.

**Mid-Term Paper:** This assignment requires you to write a literature review of psychological trauma as it applies to Muslims (refugee crisis, sexual abuse, secondary trauma like Islamophobia, treatment of PTSD in Muslims, spiritual manifestations of trauma, expressions of trauma in Muslim populations etc). Much like the articles and book chapters assigned to you, your essay should provide an overview of the topic and summarize the major literature published on the topic. It should reflect an academic analysis that extends beyond your own personal, subjective experience. Your essays should be thorough, rely on the literature, thoughtful, and conform to the rules of proper academic citation (use Chicago Style, American Medical Association, or American Psychological Association style—be consistent).

This research paper will be a brief literature review in which the student focuses in-depth on a specific issue within the traumatic stress field as explained above (10-12 typed, double spaced pages and citing at least 5 scholarly references.

There is a dearth of literature on Muslim mental health. As graduate students you should aim to produce an essay that could potentially be published in an academic journal (such as *The Journal of Muslim Mental Health*, *Hospital Chaplaincy*, *American Journal of Pastoral Care Counseling*). In other words, unlike the casual writing style of your posts on the Discussion Board, which is intended as a space for “thinking-out-loud” and informal reflection, this essay should be written in a professional, formal tone appropriate for an academic journal. While it is understood that we have not covered all the material for the midterm, the lectures, blackboard discussions, and reading assignments should provide an initial framework to address each question. You are encouraged to use other literature.

**Final Paper:** Your Final paper will be a re-submission of your mid-term paper after it has been extensively revised and improved based upon the feedback given to you by your instructor.

<b>Grading Rubric for Mid-Term/Final Paper</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Summarizes the Literature	20%
Clarity and structure	20%
Paper is supported by Evidence	20%
Style & Tone	20%
Integrates relevant course material on mental health	10%
Integrates relevant course material on Islam or Muslim population	10%

Essays should be no longer than 7-10 pages double spaced Times New York Font.

**Grades:**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Weekly Discussion Topics	15%
Weekly Case Studies	15%
Mid-term (Due Late Nov)	25%
Final Paper (Due: Early Dec)	45%

***Late Midterm and Final papers will not be accepted***

**Class Schedule:**

**Monday-** the power point lecture, readings, and discussion questions of the week will be posted by the instructor. Students are expected to review the lecture, complete all of the readings before Wednesday.

**Friday-** Students must post reaction papers and case discussions **before 11:59 pm.**

**Sunday-** Instructor will post a response to the case discussion thread as well as individual student questions by Sunday evening.

## Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings/Assignments
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the Course &amp; an Overview of Trauma research               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is psychological trauma – Defining and Understanding Trauma</li> <li>➤ Types of trauma</li> <li>➤ Theories of Trauma</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Scott: Chapter 1
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Abuse and Communal secondary trauma               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Detecting, Assessment &amp; diagnosis of trauma</li> <li>➤ Adult markers of childhood sexual abuse</li> <li>➤ Adult reactions and impact of childhood sexual trauma (ex. Relationships, emotional awareness, etc)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Briere & Scott: Chap. 3
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reactions to Trauma               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Comorbid conditions</li> <li>➤ Role of dissociation and memory</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	van der Kolk: Chap. 12 <sup>[SEP]</sup> Briere & Scott: Chap. 2 Kirmayer: “Confusion of the Senses: Implications of Ethnocultural Variations in Somatoform and Dissociative Disorders for PTSD” <sup>[SEP]</sup>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of Psychological Trauma on the Brain               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Brain and Trauma (limbic system, neuronal connections)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	van der Kolk: 10 <sup>[SEP]</sup> Briere & Scott: Chap. 11 <sup>[SEP]</sup>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process exposure oriented strategies in working with Trauma               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Empathy</li> <li>➤ Emotion Focused Therapy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Paivio. S (2010). Emotion Focused Therapy for Complex Trauma Article  Paivio. S (2001). Empathy & Emotion Regulation: Reprocessing Memories of Childhood Abuse

		Briere & Scott: Chapter 8
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process exposure oriented strategies in working with Trauma → Continued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ EMDR</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>What is EMDR – See Link</p> <p>Abdul Hamid. W &amp; Hughes, J. H. (2015). Integration of religion and spirituality into trauma psychotherapy: An example in sufism. <i>Journal of EMDR Practice and Research</i>, (9), 150-156</p>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process exposure oriented strategies in working with Trauma → Continued <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CPT – Process oriented</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Briere &amp; Scott: Chap. 7</p> <p>van der Kolk: 22<sup>[SEP]</sup></p> <p>Wilson., L. C. &amp; Jones, R. T. (2010). <i>Therapists as Trauma Survivors: A Case study detailing cognitive processing therapy.</i> Sage</p>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping with Trauma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Religious/Spiritual</li> <li>➤ Psychological</li> <li>➤ Healthy &amp; unhealthy coping</li> <li>Emotional reprocessing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>van der Kolk: Chap. 8,<sup>[SEP]</sup></p> <p>Briere &amp; Scott: Chap. 10<sup>[SEP]</sup></p> <p>Berzengi. A (2017). Role of Islamic Appraisals, Trauma-related appraisals and religious coping in the posttraumatic adjustment of Muslim trauma survivors. American Psychological Association.</p> <p>Aflakseir, A. &amp; Coleman, P.G (2009). The influence of religious coping on the mental health of disabled Iranian war veterans. <i>Mental Health, Religion &amp; Culture.</i></p>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Spiritual’ Manifestations of trauma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Differentiating between ‘spiritual’ experiences, disorders and psychological trauma symptoms.</li> <li>➤ Spiritual Conditions that overlap with psychological trauma</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Mid-Term Due
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vicarious Trauma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Compassion Fatigue</li> <li>➤ Intergenerational Transmission</li> <li>➤ Trauma and Resilience</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>van der Kolk: Chap. 2<sup>[SEP]</sup></p> <p>Briere &amp; Scott: Chap. 7<sup>[SEP]</sup></p>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crisis Intervention</li> </ul>	<p>van der Kolk: Chap. 21<sup>[SEP]</sup></p> <p>Briere &amp; Scott: Chap. 6<sup>[SEP]</sup></p>
Week 12 – Thanksgiving Break		

13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual First aid for Chaplains <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Disaster Relief</li> <li>➤ Spiritual Reframing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Spiritual First Aid: Disaster Chaplain Guide. Humanitarian Disaster Institute: Wheaton College.
14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wrapping it up – Summary of course,</li> </ul>	FINAL PAPER DUE

**Policy:**

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of the Sunnah and integrity during the learning process, Hartford Seminary requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual and become familiar with its content as well as consulting your instructor for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Credit will not be given for work containing plagiarism, and plagiarism can lead to failure of a course. Faculty will report all instances of plagiarism to the Academic Dean. The Academic Dean will then collect documented details of the case and advance any recommendations for further action to the Academic Policy Committee. Through this process the situation will be reviewed and any additional penalties that may be warranted (up to and including expulsion from the school) will be determined.

Scholarly Writing:

It is expected that students can read and write at a college level. The instructor will have the expectation that students' writings be free of grammatical and spelling errors and be in compliance with APA standards. Additionally, writing must reflect critical thinking and an integrative synthesis of the material presented in lecture, readings and your personal thought. As potential leaders of your respective communities, we demand an exerted effort and that you take your education very seriously.

Attendance Policy for Weekly Classes (Including Posts) :

Participation in class is required and will be judged primarily by the weekly posts. (Note the website records the time/author for each post.) If you know you will be unable to attend a class session please inform Mr Keshavarzi in advance. Missing two sessions will result in an automatic lowering of your final grade by 10%. Missing three or more sessions will result in automatic failure of the cour

