



SPIRITUAL COMPETENCY TRAINING IN GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Sub-project 1 of the Spiritual and Religious
Competency Project

Meet the SCT-MH team

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS

Michelle Pearce, PhD

Michelle Pearce, PhD, is a Professor in the Graduate School at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, where she directs the Integrative Health and Wellness graduate certificate program. She is also an adjunct Assistant Professor in the department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Duke University Medical Center. Her current research includes the development of a spiritual competency training for mental health graduate students, funded by the John Templeton Foundation. She is the co-developer of the national online training program for mental health providers called Spiritual Competency Training in Mental Health. She is the author of the books *Night Bloomers: 12 Principles for Thriving in Adversity* and *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Christians with Depression: A Practical, Tool-Based Primer*. She is the coauthor of *Religion and Recovery from PTSD*. Dr. Pearce is a clinical psychologist licensed to practice in Maryland.



Ken Pargament, PhD

Kenneth Pargament is a professor emeritus of psychology at Bowling Green State University. He has authored *The Psychology of Religion and Coping* and *Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy*. Dr. Pargament is Editor-in-Chief of the two-volume *APA Handbook of Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality*. With Julie Exline, he has authored the recently released *Working with Spiritual Struggles in Psychotherapy: From Research to Practice*. His awards include the Oskar Pfister Award from the American Psychiatric Association in 2009, the Distinguished Service Award from the Association of Professional Chaplains in 2015, and the first Outstanding Contribution to the Applied Psychology of Religion and Spirituality Award from Division 36 of APA in 2017.



Joe Currier, PhD

Joe Currier, PhD is a Professor of Psychology at University of South Alabama (USA) and Clinical Supervisor Veterans Recovery Resources. His research focuses on trauma, moral injury, and applied psychology of religion and spirituality. He has published 120 peer-reviewed articles and two books, entitled *Trauma, Meaning, and Spirituality: Translating Research into Clinical Practice* and *Addressing Moral Injury in Clinical Practice*. His work has been funded by John Templeton Foundation, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), and SAMHSA. He served as Director of Clinical Training for the Clinical and Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program at USA from 2015-2020 and was a RWFJ Clinical Scholar Fellow from 2018-2021.

Serena Wong, PhD

Serena Wong is an early career psychologist at Parkwood Institute Mental Health, St. Joseph's Health Care London. She has published over 15 peer-reviewed articles and chapters on spirituality and mental health. She is also an Adjunct Professor in the Psychiatry Department at the Schulich School of Medicine and Dentistry, Western University. She provides spiritually-informed care to geriatric psychiatry and adult psychiatry patients. Her awards include the APA Division 36: Society for the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality Student Research Award, Katzner Graduate Student Research Award, and Larry Nulton Clinical Dissertation Research Award from Bowling Green State University.



PROJECT COORDINATORS



Hannah Hinkel, M.A.

Hannah Hinkel is a 4th year Ph.D. student in the combined-integrated Clinical and Counseling Psychology (CCP) program at the University of South Alabama, studying under the mentorship of Dr. Currier. She has published 3 peer-reviewed articles and 2 book chapters on religion/spirituality and mental health. Her awards include the Jennifer Langhinrichsen-Rohling Clinical Services CCP Student Clinical Award, the Team-Based Trauma-Informed Integrated Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training (BHWET) Program for Professionals, University of South Alabama's (USA) Graduate Student Activities Enhancement Award Program, and USA's Mahon-Brandon Fund for Research in Gender Studies and Women's History.

Sarah Salcone, M.S.

Sarah Salcone is a 3rd year Ph.D. student in the combined-integrated Clinical and Counseling Psychology (CCP) program at the University of South Alabama, under the mentorship of Dr. Currier. Her research interests focus on addressing spiritual struggles in psychiatric populations and chronic mental health conditions. Prior to graduate school, Sarah worked in the Spirituality and Mental Health Program at McLean Hospital assessing the feasibility of a spiritually integrated group CBT protocol for patients with various psychiatric conditions. She has 4 peer-reviewed articles and 2 book chapters regarding spirituality/religion and mental health and is actively involved in APA Division 36.



BIOS OF PARTICIPATING FACULTY BY DISCIPLINE: PSYCHOLOGY

Dr. Evangelina Alonso

Dr. Alonso is currently an Associate Professor for the PsyD Program at Albizu University and has held various director positions for the organization. She worked 15 years in community mental health centers and was part of the executive leadership team. She has served on APA's Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest, and is a site visitor for APA's Commission on Accreditation. Dr. Alonso belongs to APA's Division 36 and has presented at the NCSP and at the Southern Organization for Human Services Annual Conference on Training Students to be Culturally Competent Regarding Religion and Spiritual Diversity.



Dr. Anthony Isacco

Dr. Anthony Isacco is a Professor in the Graduate Psychology Programs and Director of Training for the PsyD in Counseling Psychology program at Chatham University, Pittsburgh PA. Primary research and clinical interests include psychological assessment of Catholic clergy applicants.



Dr. Nancy Liu

Nancy H. Liu, Ph.D. is an Associate Clinical Professor in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB). In this role, she serves as the Director of the UCB Psychology Clinic & Center for Assessment. She has interests in clinical training, cultural adaptations to evidence-based treatments, and underserved populations. Prior to her role at UCB, she was a Clinical Psychologist at the National Center for PTSD and a Consultant with the World Health Organization. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln and completed her internship at the University of California, San Francisco. She speaks both Mandarin and Spanish and has conducted therapy in both languages.



Dr. Gina Magyar-Russell

Gina Magyar-Russell, Ph.D. is a Professor of Psychology at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore and a licensed psychologist in Maryland. She specializes in psychological and spiritual adjustment following adverse life events, with emphasis on treating anxiety and mood disorders. She has served on the Executive Committee of APA's Division 36, The Society for the Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, and has co-authored over 45 scholarly publications. She maintains a program of research on non-theistic sanctification and spiritual struggles and enjoys teaching courses in the treatment of psychopathology and cognitive behavioral therapy, as well as serving as a supervisor for clinicians in training.

Dr. Edward Selby

Dr. Edward A. Selby, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor and the Director of Clinical Training in the Psychology Department at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where he also directs the Emotion and Psychopathology Lab. Dr. Selby's work explores the roles of various forms of emotion dysregulation in the onset of adolescent and adult psychopathology, especially borderline personality disorder, suicidal and self-injurious behavior, and eating disorders. Dr. Selby was named a "Rising Star" in 2015 by the Association for Psychological Science and in 2019 was elected by his peers to join the Board of Directors of the Council of University of Directors of Clinical Psychology. Dr. Selby is a licensed clinical psychologist.





Dr. Craig Warlick

Craig A. Warlick is an Assistant Professor at the University of Southern Mississippi's School of Psychology, where he primarily serves the APA-Accredited doctoral program and the MPCAC-Accredited masters program in Counseling Psychology. He received his degrees from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas and the University of West Alabama in Livingston, Alabama. He completed his clinical internship at the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Houston, Texas. His research lies in intersections of religious belief and non-belief, assessment, applied psychology training, and adapting evidence-based care practices to better fit historically underprivileged populations.

End of psychology faculty

BIOS OF PARTICIPATING FACULTY BY DISCIPLINE:

COUNSELING

Dr. Kacie Blalock

Kacie Blalock is an Associate Professor and Director of the Counseling Program in the Department of Psychology at Louisiana State University Shreveport. She is a certified rehabilitation counselor who earned her Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Counseling Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was previously an Assistant/Associate Professor of Rehabilitation Counseling at North Carolina A&T State University where she served as the Project Director of two long-term training grants (Rehabilitation Psychology and Behavioral Medicine; Vocational Evaluation and Work Adjustment) from the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. Her research areas include vocational rehabilitation, multicultural counseling, and psychosocial aspects of disability.





Dr. Kevin Curtin

Kevin is a Professor of Counseling at Alfred University and has over fifteen years of graduate teaching experience in Mental Health and School Counseling programs. He is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and maintains a private practice working with children, adults, couples, and families. His training includes EMDR, Play Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Group Psychotherapy, and Mind-Body Work. Kevin's scholarly activities include topics on the integration of counseling into nature, spiritual wellness and military personnel, therapeutic lifestyle changes, resiliency and exceptional youth, the self-regulation benefits of yoga, and service learning. Kevin is an avid hiker, snowshoer, and trail runner who is very invested in the physical, spiritual, and mental health benefits of mindful movement within nature.

Dr. Jessica Haas

Jessica Haas, PhD, NCC is a researcher, educator, and nationally board-certified psychotherapist specializing in cultural and spiritual competency integration. Located at Texas's US/Mexico border, she co-founded Counselors Without Borders, Texas chapter. Dr. Haas serves her community through immigration and refugee advocacy. As core faculty in the M.Ed. Counseling Program at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley a Hispanic Serving Institute, she facilitates research on equity and resilience exploring systemic racism-trauma. With 20+ years of experience working with a multicultural equity development consultation team, she has worked in cities across the nation affected by community uprisings and civil unrest.



Dr. Danny McCarty

Dr. McCarty is an assistant professor of Clinical Mental Health Counseling at the University of South Alabama. He seeks to teach through cooperative experience with students. He primarily researches ways to apply creativity to theory and practice. He often uses Adventure therapy concepts in both teaching and research. And he generally desires to serve his community through working with people recovering from addiction.



Dr. Heather Smith

Hi all! My name is Heather Smith and I am faculty and the assessment coordinator for the department of counseling at New Mexico Highlands University. I spent 14 years as faculty in the counseling program at Vanderbilt University and I continue to teach and conduct research with them. I am happy to be back "home" to fulfill a mission to serve a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and emerging Native American Non-Tribal Serving Institution (NANTSI). This training has been an eye-opening and reflective experience for me thus far and I look forward to getting to know you.



Dr. John Super

John T. Super is an associate lecturer in the University of Central Florida's counselor education program. He primarily teaches courses in the Marriage, Couples and Family Counseling track and many other counseling related courses. He earned his master's degree in marriage, couples and family counseling and his doctorate in counselor education. After receiving his master's degree, he worked in and developed a clinical private practice with a focus on helping LGBTQ+ couples with relational issues. He is a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and is also licensed by the state of Florida as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

Dr. Tes Tuason

Tes is a Professor, Clinical director of the CMHC program, and a Psychologist. She was born and raised in the Philippines, where she learned resilience of spirit and using one's personal power for transformative teaching and social justice research (over 50 publications). She did her Ph.D. at the University of Albany and her postdoc at the University of Utah. The most affirming and gratifying award Tes has received is the Outstanding Graduate Teaching Award in 2009 & 2019. An external reviewer for her promotion letter wrote, "Tes is a faculty member you not only want to promote, but to clone."





Dr. Dogukan Ulupinar

Dr. Ulupinar is an Assistant Professor at Long Island University. He earned his Ph.D. degree in Counselor Education and Supervision at the Pennsylvania State University. He has worked as a professional counselor in a variety of different settings including college mental health, community mental health and vocational rehabilitation. He is a licensed professional counselor in Pennsylvania. His research is situated in counseling outcome studies, with a special focus on collegiate mental health and counselor performance in integrated primary and behavioral healthcare settings. He serves on the editorial board in the International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling.

End of counseling faculty



BIOS OF PARTICIPATING FACULTY BY DISCIPLINE: SOCIAL WORK



Dr. Rachel Burrage

Rachel L. Burrage, MSW, PhD (they/she) is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at the Thompson School of Social Work & Public Health, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, where they chair the Behavioral Mental Health specialization for MSW students. Coming from a family of educators and service providers who found deep importance in spirituality, Dr. Burrage prioritizes community-based research on cultural understandings of health and the integration of traditional healing practices into systems of care, particularly for Native Hawaiians. Outside of work, Dr. Burrage is a parent and spouse and enjoys various creative pursuits and spending time in nature.

Dr. Brian Droubay

Brian Droubay, PhD, LCSW, is an assistant professor of social work at Utah State University. Dr. Droubay's research centers on the intersection of sexuality and religion. He is interested in how cultural values and environmental context shape perceptions about personal sexual behaviors and how these issues manifest themselves in clinical practice. Current topics of focus include pornography use in religious communities and how the World Health Organization's new compulsive sexual behavior disorder diagnosis might impact sexual minority populations. Dr. Droubay's primary teaching interests include practice and research methods courses. Outside of academia, Dr. Droubay has practiced psychotherapy for several years, in settings ranging from penal institutions to private practice.



Dr. Erin King

Dr. Erin King is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work at the University of West Florida, and a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) in the state of Florida. Her practice experience relates primarily to the intersection of trauma, mental health, and substance abuse in women, and mental health counseling with children, adolescents, and adults. Her research interests concentrate on the influence of trauma on mental health, most recently work-related trauma and its influence on child welfare worker and first responder mental health, and personal and work-related outcomes.

Dr. Elizabeth Russell

Elizabeth (Beth) Russell, PhD, LCSW, is an Associate Professor at SUNY Brockport, and is the MSW Program Director and Co-chair of the Department of Social Work. Beth teaches practice, research, and cultural diversity classes, as well as electives in sexual health, creativity in practice, and evidence-based practice. She is a licensed clinical social worker in New York State who worked with youth and adults in various mental health setting. She has contributed to several books & peer-reviewed articles, and presented her research on cultural humility, creativity, and sexual health nationally and internationally in the social work and counseling fields.





Dr. Vincent Starnino

Dr. Starnino is an Associate Professor at the Indiana University School of Social Work where he teaches graduate courses on mental health treatments, as well as advanced qualitative research methods. His main area of research is examining the intersection between spirituality, mental health, and trauma. He has conducted several studies in this area, including an in-depth qualitative study examining the spiritual impact of combat related trauma among military veterans, as well as intervention research on a widely used recovery program (called "Wellness Recovery Action Planning") for people with severe mental illnesses. Dr. Starnino's most recent project includes a multisite study examining the efficacy of a spiritually integrated intervention, called "Search for Meaning," for veterans with PTSD. He has numerous publications in this area.

Dr. Sha-Lai Williams

Dr. Sha-Lai Williams is an associate professor in the School of Social Work at University of Missouri - St. Louis, where she teaches Social Work Practice and Human Behavior courses in their graduate and undergraduate programs. Dr. Williams received her PhD from The Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis in 2013. Her research interest focuses on issues related to race/ethnicity and mental health and utilization of mental health services, particularly among African Americans and emerging adults and the intersection between mental health and spirituality/religiosity. She is also interested in factors associated with cultural awareness/sensitivity among social work and helping professionals.

