



PAST307/MINS405

Special Topic: Trauma-Informed Ministry

Distance Course Outline 2025

A Semester 1 paper, with a block course from 1pm Monday 27 Jan to 1pm Friday 31 Jan, at the University of Otago, Dunedin.

This course familiarises students with origins, definitions, and treatment of trauma from multiple disciplines. Trauma's impact on the body, soul, relationships, and spirituality will be highlighted, along with congregational and community care. The course explores individual mental health concerns in the contexts of family of origin, intergenerational trauma born by repeated oppression and injustice, and community-wide traumas. Students will learn key principles of trauma-informed pastoral care in multi-ethnic contexts and discuss and develop their own ethical standards for trauma care.

Pastors and members of congregations are especially vulnerable after a member's traumatic death whether by accident, suicide, or another cause. Communities can experience traumatic symptoms as a result of war, climate change and natural disasters, pandemics, racial violence, transgenerational oppression, and migration. How can the pastor and the congregation as a whole reduce lingering trauma, avoid retraumatizing situations, and promote trauma healing? What policies and practices need to be put in place? Responders in faith communities can use principles that inform their care such as safety, empowerment, avoidance of harm through re-traumatization, and knowledge of recovery stages and roadblocks.

In this course participants will learn to assess key symptoms of primary and secondary trauma in order to provide care and support healing, and gain the skills and strategies necessary to avoid overwhelming secondary trauma while caring for others. Students will learn the mistakes from trauma providers in the past so as not to repeat them. They will contemplate their role as providers of trauma healing and focus in on their strongest gifts in this work. They will recognize the breadth of appropriate responses: from sitting in ash heaps of overwhelming pain, to joining in protest and lamentation. Students may find themselves wrestling theologically with injustice, replacing shame with grace, drawn into contemplation, or offering prayer and scriptures of hope and healing. Questions will inevitably arise about resiliency and recovery.

The course will explore the theological messages in the Christian Lenten narrative and the concept of atonement from the trauma victim's lived experience and meaning making. From Job to the Cross – Biblical messages suggest faith as a way to redeem pain and suffering. These stories ask us to wrestle with God's felt absence during trauma suffering. Hard

questions about God's infliction of suffering or apparent impotence in the face of it will be discussed. How does the Christian narrative of Jesus' death on the cross uplift and/or oppress people with traumatic wounding? Students will learn to recognize spiritual quests that are common during and after trauma and explore healing modalities from multi-faith practices. They will be asked to present a practice from a religious tradition that can be used to reduce both immediate symptoms and enhance long term recovery.

As an Intensive Course, the paper requires all students to attend a week of lectures in Dunedin, at the University of Otago from 1pm on Monday 27 January to 1pm on Friday 31 January. Students are expected to arrange their own travel and accommodation

LECTURER'S INTRODUCTION

The course lecturer for this paper is Rev Dr Karen McClintock. Karen has published extensively within the area of pastoral care, trauma recovery, and trauma-informed care. She is a former faculty member in the psychology department at Southern Oregon University. She continues to teach online courses in family secrets, trauma recovery, and trauma-informed care.

Her books include:

- *Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care: What to do when things fall apart* (Fortress Press, 2022)
- *When Trauma Wounds: Pathways for Healing and Hope* (Fortress Press, 2019)
- *My Father's Closet* (Ohio State University Press, 2017)
- *Shame-Less Lives, Grace-Full Congregations* (Alban Press, 2012)
- *Healthy Disclosure: Solving Communication Quandaries in Congregations*, with K. Ruth (Alban Press, 2007)
- *Preventing Sexual Abuse in Congregations*. (Alban Press, 2004)
- *Sexual Shame: An Urgent Call to Healing*. (Fortress Press, 2001)



For further information about Karen go to: <https://karenmcclintockauthor.com/>

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students taking this paper at the 300 level will have:

- Learned ethical principles and standards of practice within trauma-informed care
- Learned the signs and symptoms of trauma and secondary trauma
- Recognized the specific needs of diverse constituents with multiple-traumatic losses

- Examined both individual and systemic oppression as a cause of stress and trauma
- Reviewed commonly made mistakes in trauma care and learned to avoid them
- Become familiar with trauma indicators in congregational systems
- Learned how to make space for spiritual questions and ways to support “quests”
- Explored the healing stages of trauma and learned multiple ways to promote recovery

Students taking this paper at the 400 level will have:

- Written a personal ethic that matches standards of practice within trauma-informed care
- Studied signs and symptoms of trauma and secondary trauma and identified trauma-vulnerability in themselves and others
- Recognized the specific needs of diverse constituents with multiple-traumatic losses
- Reviewed commonly made mistakes in trauma care and learned to avoid them
- Learned how to make space for spiritual questions
- Explored the healing stages of trauma and learned multiple ways to promote recovery
- Wrestled with atonement theology and the question of redemption for traumatically wounded people
- Analysed a current or past faith-based community to learn its trauma history and its strengths for trauma resiliency

The generic and specific attributes of the Graduate Profile that are achieved by this paper:

- **scholarship:** Commitment to the fundamental importance of the acquisition and development of knowledge and understanding.
- **critical thinking:** Ability to analyse issues logically, to challenge conventional assumptions, to consider different options and viewpoints, make informed decisions and act with flexibility, adaptability and creativity
- **cultural understanding:** knowledge and appreciation of multiculturalism; and an ability to apply such knowledge in a culturally appropriate manner.
- **ethics:** Knowledge of ethics and ethical standards and an ability to apply these with a sense of responsibility within the workplace and community

OUTLINE OF TOPICS

Module 1: Introduction to the Topic of Trauma.

The question, “What is trauma?” will be explored in each module, starting from the biomedical approach. Students will learn ways that fear activates the central nervous system and leads to reactions within the brain. This module explores the history of the trauma diagnosis within the fields of psychiatry and psychology and the limitations within models of individual

psychopathology. Symptomology of trauma will be explored, including Acute Stress, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and Complex Post-Traumatic Stress after prolonged trauma. Students will be introduced to traumatic memory formation, and trauma's interference with interpersonal relationships. This module will prepare students with tools, perspectives, and discussion points that will be engaged throughout the remainder of the course.

Module 2: Offering Trauma-Informed Care – Principles and Prejudices

In this module students are introduced to principles that guide trauma-informed care. They explore policies that protect, as well as institutional retraumatisation. Trauma from families of origin and cultures of origin will be explored. We again ask the question “What is trauma?” for communities where stress and oppression are constant, and hypervigilance is required for personal safety. Reviewing the work of authors who study racial, historic, and transgenerational trauma, students will discuss ways that chaplains, ministers and congregations can increase safety and reduce harm. Using case studies, they will also begin to identify their own learned biases when serving others.

Module 3: Building Confidence and Competence

In this module students will develop skills to address specific types of trauma and traumatic losses. From natural disasters to a congregant's suicide, to work with sexual abuse survivors, each different type of trauma requires unique responses. Students will be encouraged to use a circumstance from their current or past ministry and briefly present it for class discussion. This module will also present secondary trauma. Students will discuss the difference between burnout and trauma symptomology. Ways to respond to individuals during and soon after trauma will be discussed, along with common mistakes and ways to avoid them. This module will also include time to explore the interpersonal damage of trauma and secondary trauma from the lens of attachment. Lastly, what can ministers do when an individual who has self-identified as “victim,” interacts negatively with others in the faith community? Students are prepared to address this concern.

Module 4 Theological questions as “quests”

This module will prepare students to respond to questions that trauma survivors ask, including “Why God?” “Why me?” “Why evil?” and “Why injustice?” The class will explore resilience and recovery. Theological concepts of suffering and redemption will be introduced. Biblical teachings and individual meaning-making suggest faith as a way to redeem pain and suffering. Hard questions about God's infliction of suffering or impotence in the face of it will be discussed. How does the Christian narrative of Jesus' death on the cross uplift and/or oppress people with traumatic wounding? Christian and Buddhist teachings on suffering and attachment to suffering will be considered. The issue of shame in trauma and grace as a unique alternative are presented.

Module 5 Healing Modalities

Western medicine offers specific modalities for trauma recovery. Spirituality offers even more ancient methods of care such as ritual, silence, exorcism, drumming, dancing, corporate prayer. Students in this module will look at the art of healing and the mystery of healing. Insights from the Black church in the USA and mātauranga Māori will inform this module. The story people tell about their trauma can uplift communities and challenge systemic injustice. A

three-stage model for trauma recovery is offered. Students will finish the class with a plan to bring their new learning into their churches or non-profit organizations and create a ritual for healing for themselves, their families, or their congregations.

Each day students will be expected to engage with the reading that is assigned and to think through and discuss how the reading applies to their particular situations and contexts.

TEACHING

The course is taught as an Intensive block course in Dunedin, at the University of Otago, commencing at 1:00pm on Monday 27 January and concluding at 1pm on Friday 31st of January. Students are required to provide their own meals, or purchase locally. Students wishing to study this paper for interest only (audit) will need to contact Susan Peters at registrar@knoxcentre.ac.nz to arrange this. Presbyterian ministers are encouraged to check regarding possible Ministry Study Leave assistance.

NOTE: All students are required to attend the Intensive, and will need to arrange their own travel, meals, and accommodation.

A note on wellbeing

This course may bring up individual student's trauma experiences as matters relating to trauma are discussed in class. Therefore, it will be important for students to consider what actions they might take and what trusted sources of care they may draw on if any of the material is overwhelming. The University of Otago has chaplains onsite and various helplines are available (See also <https://mentalhealth.org.nz/helplines>). The course is not intended to be therapy and people in active recent trauma may want to either have therapy on stand-by during the course or may decide to take another course to fulfill their study requirements.

ASSESSMENT

The course is assessed at 300 level by one **2,000-word essay**, worth 40%, one two-to-four-page paper discussing ways apply the five ethical principles for trauma care discussed in class to their faith community or work setting, worth 20%, and one **2,500-word essay** worth 40%.

The course is assessed at 400 level by one **2,500-word essay**, worth 40%, one two-to-four-page paper discussing ways apply the five ethical principles for trauma care discussed in class to their faith community or work setting, worth 20%, and one **3,000-word case study presenting a situation of trauma and a plan to address and heal the trauma in their congregation or workplace**. This assignment is worth 40%.

There is no final examination for this paper.

BIBLE

The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) published in 1989 is the recommended Bible text. Note that there are editions with or without the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical books. The full edition (with the Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical books) is recommended. It is sometimes helpful to compare the NRSV's translation with that of other modern English versions, but the NRSV is the text from which we shall be working.

REQUIRED READINGS

In order to prepare for the Intensive course, students must read the text book and the required readings listed below. For University of Otago credit students, readings can be accessed and printed from Blackboard or the Library's electronic Course Reserve list for this paper (see link on the Blackboard page). For audit students who enrol through KCML, readings will be available on KCML Moodle. (Audit students are strongly encouraged to undertake the reading, in order to enhance their learning and the work done in group sessions.)

You should read the compulsory text before the course begins and each of the

additional readings before the day.

Compulsory Text:

McClintock, Karen A. *Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care: How to Respond When Things Fall Apart*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2022.

Additional compulsory readings:

Day 1

R1: Chapter 5, "The Body-Brain Connection", in Bessel Van Der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (Viking Press, 2014), 74-88.

R2: Chapter 6, "Losing Your Body, Losing Your Self", in Bessel Van Der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma* (Viking Press, 2014), 89-104.

Day 2

R3: M. Jan Holton and Jill L. Snodgrass, "A Theoretical and Theological Reframing of Trauma" *Pastoral Psychology*, 2023; 72 (3): 337-351.

W1: Prepare a case study for day 3, using your experience of a traumatic circumstance in your community or congregation.

R4: Chapter 4: "Trauma's Damaged Relationships", in Karen McClintock, *When Trauma Wounds: Pathways to Healing and Hope* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2019), 61-80.

Day 3

R4: Julian DeShazier and Damon A. Williams, "When the Movement Gives Back", in Danielle J. Buhuro, ed., *Spiritual Care in an Age of #BlackLivesMatter: Examining the Spiritual and Prophetic Needs of African Americans in a Violent America* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2019), 23-36.

R5: Rita Nakashima Brock, in *Proverbs of Ashes: Violence, Redemptive Suffering, and the Search for Meaning* (Beacon Press 2001). Pages 51-69.

Day 4

R6: Read the Book of Job

R7: Chapter 10: "The Practice of Feeling Pain" in Barbara Brown-Taylor, *An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2017), 157-173.

R8: Chapter 8: “Becoming Spiritually Whole Again” in Karen McClintock, *When Trauma Wounds: Pathways to Healing and Hope* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2019), 133-143.

Day 5

R9: Chapters 9: “Next Steps in Healing” in Karen McClintock, *When Trauma Wounds: Pathways to Healing and Hope* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2019), 145-156.

R10 Chapters 10: “Rediscovering Hope” in Karen McClintock, *When Trauma Wounds: Pathways to Healing and Hope* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2019), 157-165.

RESOURCES

- This Course Outline
- A required textbook: **Trauma-Informed Pastoral Care: What to do when it all falls apart. Fortress press, 2022.** The textbook is available as a Kindle eBook, and also for purchase through the University Bookshop, Dunedin. Limited electronic copies will be available to borrow via the University Library's eReserve system.

NOTE: A full list of Karen's books that are currently in the University Library can be found here:

https://otago.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?query=any,contains,McClintock,%20Karen%20A.&tab=all&search_scope=all&vid=64OTAGO_INST:DU NEDIN&mfacet=rtype,include,books,1&offset=0

THIS IS IMPORTANT!

Please Note: You **must have access to Blackboard and your University email address** in order to complete this paper. You will receive access once your enrolment is complete. Communications from your lecturer regarding teaching matters will be provided only through Blackboard and your University email address, as outlined in the University's Student Communications Policy, so you must check these emails regularly. eVision will also send important messages through your University email. If you have any concerns about your access to Blackboard or to other course resources, please contact the lecturer or administrative staff immediately so that these can be resolved.

You will find there is a lot of helpful information and resources on the Theology Programme website. In particular, we require you to read the section called

“Essential Student Information.” You will find it here:

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>

This page provides a number of useful resources such as the Style Guide and the Plagiarism Declaration Form you must attach to your assignments. It supplies detailed information on assessment and student support. In particular, it contains guidance on the topics of plagiarism and deadlines, both of which can incur penalties if not heeded. This also is where you will find instructions for making online discussion posts and submitting assignments electronically. So it is very important you make yourself familiar with this material. Our assumption is that you have read it.

We will make reference to information on the website in the following pages, so do take the time to follow the links and absorb the material. It will save you from making costly mistakes and help to make the practical experience of distance study a straightforward one.

ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS

At 300 level

Assignment 1: Essay

Length: 2000 words

Value: 40% of final mark

Due Date: Wednesday 26 March, 11.59pm

Topic: Explain what happens inside the body and brain during trauma, and how stored memories are acted out when triggered.

Assignment 2: Essay

Length: 2-4 pages, double spaced.

Value: 20% of final mark

Due Date: Wednesday 30 April, 11.59pm

Topic: Put together a plan of care for people to whom you minister, (or place of work/service) using the five principles of trauma-informed care discussed in class, and describe your process in deciding what to include/exclude.

Assignment 3: Essay

Length: 2500 words

Value: 40% of final mark

Due Date: Friday 23 May, 2025, 11:59pm

Topic: Discuss one or more theological perspectives on human suffering and discuss their helpful and unhelpful messages for trauma victim/survivors following individual and transgenerational trauma.

At 400 level**Assignment 1: Essay**

Length: 2,500 words

Value: 40% of final mark

Due Date: Wednesday 26 March, 11.59pm

Topic: Explain what happens inside the body and brain during trauma, and how stored memories are acted out when triggered. Discuss ways that these symptoms disrupt loving attachment. Describe ways that these symptoms are transferred from one generation to another in oppressed cultures.

Assignment 2: Essay

Length: 2-4 pages, double spaced.

Value: 20% of final mark

Due Date: Wednesday 30 April, 11.59pm

Topic: Put together a plan of care for people to whom you minister, (or place of work/service) using the five principles of trauma-informed care discussed in class, and describe your process in deciding what to include/exclude.

Assignment 3: Case Study

Length: 3,000 words

Value: 40% of final mark

Due Date: Friday 23 May, 2025, 11:59pm

Topic: Case study presenting a situation of trauma and a plan to address and heal the trauma in their congregation, community, or workplace. Include a section on theological viewpoints that will assist or provide roadblocks to the implementation of your plan.

RESOURCES

- The Block Course;
- Blackboard, the University's online learning tool;
- eReserve, a resource for extra readings, which you can access via Blackboard;
- The Theology Programme's "Study and Style Guide" which recommends students use the 16th edition of the Chicago citation style when writing essays. It is available online at <http://www.otago.ac.nz/theology/study/studentresources/>
- The handbook *Distance Learning Information and Support*, providing advice on administrative matters not covered in this course book and on the Distance Library Service. (You may download the PDF from the 'Essential Information' web page).

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We will make reference to information on the website in the following pages, so do take the time to follow the links and absorb the material. It will save you from making costly mistakes and help to make the practical experience of distance study a straightforward one.

SUBMITTING WRITTEN WORK

All assignments shall be submitted **electronically** via the "Assignment" feature on Blackboard by **11:59pm** on the due dates notified. Please do not submit paper copies. For full instructions about how to submit assignments electronically via Blackboard as well as other important information on plagiarism, grading, and deadlines, please see the "Essential Information" web page. See below for the *Plagiarism Declaration Form*.

We are using Turnitin as a Plagiarism checker. You are not required to use Turnitin to check your Draft, but we **strongly recommend** it as a very good way to ensure you have not inadvertently plagiarised.

When you go to the “Assignment” page on Blackboard, you will see there a link called “Assignment One – draft” and “Assignment Two – draft”. Click on this and follow the steps outlined here:

<https://help.otago.ac.nz/blackboard/assessing-your-students/turnitin/turnitin-for-students/>

Turnitin will generate a “Similarity Report” you can check – it will tell you what sources Turnitin has found for your essay. Go through this carefully and see if there are any unattributed quotes.

Then submit the final version of the essay in the “Assignment – Final” link.

GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE and CHAT GPT

The recent emergence of more powerful Generative Artificial Intelligence such as ChatGPT is forcing universities to rethink their assessment. This year our university will develop guidance on assessment in an age of AI and assessment for this paper will be reconsidered in the light of that statement. I have already provided material for you to work with in eReserve so I don't mind if you use Generative AI to identify other source material, but I need to be clear that you are *not to use it in the actual writing of your essay*. We learn by doing, not by using a computer algorithm to do the writing for us, and it is the act of writing that sharpens our thinking. For that reason, all of the writing in each essay is to be your own.

See the Plagiarism Declaration below for the Declaration you must include with your essay.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND THE PLAGIARISM DECLARATION FORM

All Assignments submitted in the Theology Programme must be prefaced with a student Plagiarism Declaration Form (or the plagiarism declaration on Blackboard must be ticked when submitting an assignment).

Here is the Plagiarism Declaration – under the Assignments Tab.

Declaration: I have read and understood the University plagiarism policy. I declare that this assignment is entirely my own work, I have not used any generative AI (such as Chat GPT) in any part of the essay, all sources have been properly acknowledged, and that I have not previously submitted this work, or any version of it, for assessment in any other paper. I have supplied page references for all the books and articles cited (whether quoted or referred to) in the footnotes of this assignment.

It is on the Blackboard site for this course.

Academic integrity means being honest in your studying and assessments. It is the basis for ethical decision-making and behaviour in an academic context. Academic integrity is informed by the values of honesty, trust, responsibility, fairness, respect and courage. Students are expected to be aware of, and act in accordance with, the University's Academic Integrity Policy.

Academic Misconduct, such as plagiarism or cheating, is a breach of Academic Integrity and is taken very seriously by the University. Types of misconduct include plagiarism, copying, unauthorised collaboration, taking unauthorised material into a test or exam, impersonation, and assisting someone else's misconduct. A more extensive list of the types of academic misconduct and associated processes and penalties is available in the University's Student Academic Misconduct Procedures.

It is your responsibility to be aware of and use acceptable academic practices when completing your assessments. To access the information in the Academic Integrity Policy and learn more, please visit the University's Academic Integrity website at www.otago.ac.nz/study/academicintegrity or ask at the Student Learning Centre or Library. If you have any questions, ask your lecturer.

<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116838.html>
<http://www.otago.ac.nz/administration/policies/otago116850.html>

STUDENT SUPPORT

The “**Essential Information**” web page provides helpful information on how to access the University Library's resources, as well as a guide to the support services available to students at the University of Otago, including the Student Learning Centre and Disability

For all **administrative and distance learning enquiries**, please contact:

Email: theology@otago.ac.nz Phone: 03 479 8639

For after-hours enquiries or assistance with IT support, eVision, and other University services, please contact **AskOtago: ask.otago.ac.nz or phone 0800 80 80 98.**

We recommend that you contact the Theology Programme as soon as possible if you have any problems participating in the course or accessing resources. Please remember to check your University email account regularly for updates and announcements.

THEOLOGY PROGRAMME

University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054, New Zealand
www.otago.ac.nz/theology