Resources Tab

Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues

Counseling

- Culture and Worldview
  - o Recognition of Client Beliefs
  - o Ability to understand the differences between spirituality and religion, as well as the various religious and spiritual worldviews.
- Counselor Self-Awareness
  - o Recognition of own beliefs, and their potential impact on the client
  - o Understanding of one's own limitations with a client's beliefs, and avenues to refer.
- Human and Spiritual Development
  - o Can describe and apply various models of spiritual and/or religious development and their relationship to human development.
- Communication
  - o Responds to clients communications of beliefs with acceptance and sensitivity, and is able to address them when therapeutically relevant.
  - o Use spiritual and/or religious concepts that are consistent with the clients beliefs.
- Assessment
  - o During the intake and assessment processes, the professional counselor strives to understand a client's spiritual and/or religious perspective by gathering information from the client and/or other sources.
- Diagnosis and Treatment
  - o When making a diagnosis, the professional counselor recognizes that the client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives can a) enhance well-being; b) contribute to client problems; and/or c) exacerbate symptoms
  - o The professional counselor sets goals with the client that are consistent with the client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives.
  - o The professional counselor is able to a) modify therapeutic techniques to include a client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives, and b) utilize spiritual and/or religious practices as techniques when appropriate and acceptable to a client's viewpoint.
  - o The professional counselor can therapeutically apply theory and current research supporting the inclusion of a client's spiritual and/or religious perspectives and practices.

https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/competencies/competencies-for-addressing-spiritual-and-religious-issues-in-counseling.pdf?sfvrsn=aad7c2c_10

Psychology

- Attitudes
  1. Psychologists demonstrate empathy, respect, and appreciation for clients from diverse spiritual, religious, or secular backgrounds and affiliations.
  2. Psychologists view spirituality and religion as important aspects of human diversity, along with factors such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, gender, and age.
  3. Psychologists are aware of how their own spiritual and/or religious background and beliefs may influence their clinical practice, and their attitudes, perceptions, and assumptions about the nature of psychological processes.
- Knowledge
  4. Psychologists know that many diverse forms of spirituality and/or religion exist, and explore spiritual and/or religious beliefs, communities, and practices that are important to their clients.
  5. Psychologists can describe how spirituality and religion can be viewed as overlapping, yet distinct, constructs.
  6. Psychologists understand that clients may have experiences that are consistent with their spirituality or religion, yet may be difficult to differentiate from psychopathological symptoms.
  7. Psychologists recognize that spiritual and/or religious beliefs, practices, and experiences develop and change over the lifespan.
  8. Psychologists are aware of internal and external spiritual and/or religious resources and practices that research indicates may support psychological well-being, and recovery from psychological disorders.
  9. Psychologists can identify spiritual and religious experiences, practices, and beliefs that may have the potential to negatively impact psychological health.
  10. Psychologists can identify legal and ethical issues related to spirituality and/or religion that may surface when working with clients.
- Skills
  11. Psychologists are able to conduct empathic and effective psychotherapy with clients from diverse spiritual and/or religious backgrounds, affiliations, and levels of involvement.
  12. Psychologists inquire about spiritual and/or religious background, experience, practices, attitudes and beliefs as a standard part of understanding a client's history.
  13. Psychologists help clients explore and access their spiritual and/or religious strengths and resources.
  14. Psychologists can identify and address spiritual and/or religious problems in clinical practice, and make referrals when necessary.

15. Psychologists stay abreast of research and professional developments regarding spirituality and religion specifically related to clinical practice, and engage in ongoing assessment of their own spiritual and religious competence.
16. Psychologists recognize the limits of their qualifications and competence in the spiritual and/or religious domains, including any responses to clients' spirituality and/or religion that may interfere with clinical practice, so that they (a) seek consultation from and collaborate with other qualified clinicians or spiritual/religious sources (e.g. priests, pastors, rabbis, imam, spiritual teachers, etc.), (b) seek further training and education, and/or (c) refer appropriate clients to more qualified individuals and resources.

Vieten, C, & Lukoff, D. (2021). Spiritual and religious competencies in psychology. *American Psychology*. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000821

Social Work

Competency 1: Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior

● Social workers understand the value base of the profession and its ethical standards, as well as relevant laws and regulations that may impact practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Social workers understand frameworks of ethical decision-making and how to apply principles of critical thinking to those frameworks in practice, research, and policy arenas. Social workers recognize personal values and the distinction between personal and professional values. They also understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions influence their professional judgment and behavior. Social workers understand the profession's history, its mission, and the roles and responsibilities of the profession. Social Workers also understand the role of other professions when engaged in inter-professional teams. Social workers recognize the importance of life-long learning and are committed to continually updating their skills to ensure they are relevant and effective. Social workers also understand emerging forms of technology and the ethical use of technology in social work practice. Social workers:
  ○ Make ethical decisions by applying the standards of the NASW Code of Ethics, relevant laws and regulations, models for ethical decision-making, ethical conduct of research, and additional codes of ethics as appropriate to context
  ○ Use reflection and self-regulation to manage personal values and maintain professionalism in practice situations
  ○ Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication
  ○ Use technology ethically and appropriately to facilitate practice outcomes; and

○ Use supervision and consultation to guide professional judgment and behavior

Competency 2: Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice

- Social workers understand how diversity and difference characterize and shape the human experience and are critical to the formation of identity. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, **religion/spirituality**, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. Social workers understand that, as a consequence of difference, a person's life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim. Social workers also understand the forms and mechanisms of oppression and discrimination and recognize the extent to which a culture's structures and values, including social, economic, political, and cultural exclusions, may oppress, marginalize, alienate, or create privilege and power.
    - ○ Social workers:
        - ■ Apply and communicate understanding of the importance of diversity and difference in shaping life experiences in practice at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
        - ■ Present themselves as learners and engage clients and constituencies as experts of their own experiences.
        - ■ Apply self-awareness and self-regulation to manage the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse clients and constituencies.

Relatedness to R/S Competence: "Namely, [Competencies] 1 and 2 recognize the NASW's (2017) Code of Ethics (which mentions religion), acknowledge the importance of managing one's personal values in practice (which includes RS values), and emphasize engaging RS diversity, practicing self-awareness, and managing one's values and biases that influence practice." (Oxhandler et al., 2021)

Competency 4: Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice

- Social workers understand quantitative and qualitative research methods and their respective roles in advancing a science of social work and in evaluating their practice. Social workers know the principles of logic, scientific inquiry, and culturally informed and ethical approaches to building knowledge. Social workers understand that evidence that informs practice derives from multi-disciplinary sources and multiple ways of knowing. They also understand the processes for translating research findings into effective practice. Social workers:
    - ○ Use practice experience and theory to inform scientific inquiry and research

- Apply critical thinking to engage in analysis of quantitative and qualitative research methods and research findings.
- Use and translate research evidence to inform and improve practice, policy, and service delivery.

Relatedness to R/S Competence: "Competency 4 discusses the importance of evidence based practice, and using the knowledge gained from practice to inform research (which includes research on RS as it relates to clients' preferences, interventions that ethically integrate clients' RS, and how RS can be positively and negatively woven into the presenting issue)." (Oxhandler et al., 2021)

Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Social workers understand that engagement is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers value the importance of human relationships. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to facilitate engagement with clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness. Social workers understand how their personal experiences and affective reactions may impact their ability to effectively engage with diverse clients and constituencies. Social workers value principles of relationship-building and inter-professional collaboration to facilitate engagement with clients, constituencies, and other professionals as appropriate. Social workers:
    - Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies.
    - Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies.

Relatedness to R/S Competence: "Competency 6 mentions "understand[ing] strategies to engage diverse clients and constituencies to advance practice effectiveness" (CSWE, 2015, p. 8), with RS included within the definition of diversity, and recognizes the role of human behavior within the social environment." (Oxhandler et al., 2021)

Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities

- Social workers understand that intervention is an ongoing component of the dynamic and interactive process of social work practice with, and on behalf of, diverse individuals,

families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers are knowledgeable about evidence-informed interventions to achieve the goals of clients and constituencies, including individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Social workers understand theories of human behavior and the social environment, and critically evaluate and apply this knowledge to effectively intervene with clients and constituencies. Social workers understand methods of identifying, analyzing and implementing evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals. Social workers value the importance of interprofessional teamwork and communication in interventions, recognizing that beneficial outcomes may require interdisciplinary, interprofessional, and inter-organizational collaboration. Social workers:

- ○ Critically choose and implement interventions to achieve practice goals and enhance capacities of clients and constituencies.
- ○ Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks in interventions with clients and constituencies.
- ○ Use inter-professional collaboration as appropriate to achieve beneficial practice outcomes.
- ○ Negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of diverse clients and constituencies.
- ○ Facilitate effective transitions and endings that advance mutually agreed-on goals.

Relatedness to R/S Competence: "Competency 8 includes advocating for diverse clients as well as collaborating with other professionals in the community, including RS leaders and chaplains, to better serve clients." (Oxhandler et al., 2021)

Educational Policy 3.0: Diversity

- ● The program's expectation for diversity is reflected in its learning environment, which provides the context through which students learn about differences, to value and respect diversity, and develop a commitment to cultural humility. The dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including but not limited to age, class, color, culture, disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, immigration status, marital status, political ideology, race, **religion/ spirituality**, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal sovereign status. The learning environment consists of the program's institutional setting; selection of field education settings and their clientele; composition of program advisory or field committees; educational and social resources; resource allocation; program leadership; speaker series, seminars, and special programs; support groups; research and other initiatives; and the demographic make-up of its faculty, staff, and student body.

Oxhandler, H. Polson, C., & Selman, S. (2021). Religion and spirituality in MSW programs' implicit and explicit curricula: A national survey of faculty. *Journal of Social Work Education, (in press)*

CSWE Resource:

https://www.cswe.org/getattachment/Accreditation/Accreditation-Process/2015-EPAS/2015EPAS_Web_FINAL.pdf.aspx

https://www.cswe.org/Education-Resources/Religion-and-Spirituality-Clearinghouse/Religion-and-Spirituality-Educational-Resources

Marriage and Family Therapy

- Recognize contextual and systemic dynamics (e.g., gender, age, socioeconomic status, culture/race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, religion, larger systems, social context) (AAMFT 1.2.1).
- Biological, Psychological, Social, and Spiritual: recognizing that health is comprised of all four areas of mutual influence (AAMFT Competencies for Family Therapists working in Healthcare Settings).

https://www.aamft.org/Documents/COAMFTE/Accreditation%20Resources/MFT%20Core%20Competencies%20(December%202004).pdf

https://networks.aamft.org/healthcare/home

Helpful Articles/Suggested Readings

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Piedmont, R. L., & Wilkins, T. A. (2019). *Understanding the Psychological Soul of Spirituality*. New York: Routledge.

Sisemore, T. A., & Knabb, J. J. (2021). *Psychology of World Religions and Spiritualities: An Indigenous Perspective*. West Conshohocken: Templeton Press.

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