

**EDUC 314: Mindfulness and Well-Being in Higher Education
Spring 2024**

Term Date: May 6 – June 17, 2024

Class Dates: Tuesday/Thursday, May 7 to June 13

Last Day to Add/Drop/Swap: Due to the non-standard dates associated with this program, please check your Student Centre for the important dates pertaining to your section.

Pre-requisites:

- If you are taking this course as part of the *Certificate in Mental Wellbeing and Resilience*, please speak with an advisor in that program (minimum pre-requisite is 18 credits at the 200 level).
- If you are taking this course as part of your *Bachelor of Education* degree, please consult Undergraduate Programs in Education for questions related to pre-requisite courses.

Office Hours: By appointment only.

Email: Students are required to use a University of Calgary (@ucalgary.ca) email address for all correspondence.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:**Calendar Description:**

Drawing on secular mindfulness programs, this course offers a skills-based approach to navigating stresses. Students will learn a variety of practices, and research that supports them, to cultivate holistic well-being.

Extended Description:

This course is designed to create a space of refuge, rest, community, and calm focus in an institution that often creates conditions for distraction, rushing, competition, and stress. The course is based on principles of **contemplative/slow pedagogy**, and on **principles of autonomy and self-determination** as paths to individual and community well-being. The meanings of these terms will be explored and experienced during this course.

The 12-week MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction) program will be embedded in a condensed format in this course experience. Your instructor is a certified and experienced teacher of the MBSR program. The course will also draw on related aspects of the Mindful Self-Compassion program. Attending classes and making a personal and disciplined commitment to daily home practice and homework is essential to your learning and to completion of the course assignments. We will also be learning about the extensive research that supports the practices and skills learned in secular mindfulness programs.

This course is based on *experiential, inquiry-based, in-person learning*. This active and embodied mode of learning is both individual (your own experience) and collective (our shared experience). Please do your best to attend *every* class. Assignments are based on daily mindfulness homework, readings, experiences in class, as well as group work and whole class inquiry. Notify the instructor ASAP of absences so that we can decide how you can best learn what you have missed. Given the ongoing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, absences due to illness or isolation are anticipated. Please stay home if you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms. Unpredictable absences due to illness will be addressed with flexibility and grace, depending on the needs of the student.

For TUESDAY classes, please bring a yoga mat (or blanket or towels to lay on the floor). Dress in comfortable clothing that enables you to participate in movement activities. All mobility abilities and concerns can be accommodated, and this will be discussed on the first day of class. If you have concerns before class starts, please contact the instructor. Some yoga mats are available for loan.

For ALL classes, be prepared for the possibility of learning **outdoors** for all or a portion of the class. Check the weather and bring what you require to be comfortable (something to sit on, hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, sweater/jacket, etc.).

LEARNER OUTCOMES:

The learning outcomes for you/us in this course are:

- 1) Practice and learn secular-scientific mindfulness practices and skills that can support us in navigating both chronic and acute stresses of our everyday human lives.
- 2) Gain knowledge and skill in communicating about the research that supports these practices.

Additional outcomes include:

- Practicing skills for inquiring into the nature of our own experiences.
- Learning about the contemplative sciences and the nature of the human mind/consciousness.
- Cultivating enhanced attention in the present moment to self and world.
- Inquiring into and learning about the critical social and ecological justice implications of this field of study and practice for both individuals and communities.
- Learning skills for enhanced concentration and choice-making in a world of distraction and overwhelm.
- Consciously cultivating compassion for self, others, and the more-than-human world.
- Practice building a learning community of friendship and care for one another.
- Practicing inquiring into and paying attention to our somatic (body/embodied) experiences.

COURSE DESIGN AND DELIVERY: This course will be delivered **face-to-face on campus**.

REQUIRED RESOURCES:

- Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction course materials/readings available on D2L and/or will be printed and provided during class.
- Centre for Mindfulness Studies mindfulness app (download for free to phone/tablet or computer) here <https://www.mindfulnessstudies.com/get-the-app/>
- We will also explore some mindfulness practice links from this site. <https://www.mindfulnessstudies.com/meditations/>

Selected chapters from

- Nhất Hạnh, T. (1987). *The miracle of mindfulness: An introduction to the practice of meditation*. Boston: Beacon Press.

*Note: several copies of this book are available at the U of C and local bookstores. But we will only be reading short sections so rather than purchase you may read at:

https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/mtt0p8/01UCALG_ALMA51752149360004336

OPTIONAL RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

***YOU MAY FIND SOME OF THESE RESOURCES USEFUL FOR THE OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT IF YOU WISH TO PURSUE THESE TOPICS**

BOOKS

Germer, C. (2009). *The mindful path to self-compassion*. Guilford Press.

<https://ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=288478&site=ehost-live>

Neff, K., & Germer, C. (2018). *The mindful self-compassion workbook*. The Guildford Press.

[BookShelf](#) ; [RedShelf](#) ; [Amazon Kindle](#) ; [Google Play](#) ; [publisher](#)

FILMS

We will watch parts together in class, but you may wish to view again or view the entire films on your own.

Dorrie, D. (2007). *How to cook your life* [film]. Samuel Goldwyn **Films**

https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/gftrd3/alma991028340726004336

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<https://media3-criterionpic-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/htbin/wwform/006?t=MON1451>

Francis, M.J. & Pugh, M. (2018). *Walk with me* [film]. SpeakIt Productions Ltd.

<https://www.kanopy.com/en/ucalgary/video/5855781>

Goldsworthy, et al. (2004). *Rivers and tides: Andy Goldsworthy working with time*. Docurama: New Video Group.

https://ucalgary.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01UCALG_INST/46139d/alma991028743502604336

LEGANTO LINK:

https://ucalgary.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/01UCALG_INST/lists/22604350180004336?auth=SAML

LEARNING PROJECTS OVERVIEW

NOTE: Due to the contemplative/slow pedagogical orientation of this course, and the focus on autonomy in your own learning, there are several paths available from which to choose. You may choose to complete the two mandatory projects for a final grade of B, and one additional *optional project* for a final grade of A.

There will be a focus on learning to determine for ourselves and as a community when our work is *good*, and when we have *done enough*. Most of our learning experiences in post-secondary are based on external criteria and assessment. This is a critical and important aspect of our school, learning, and work lives, but it is also a significant source of both positive and negative stress for many. In this course you will be provided with constructive verbal and written feedback from the instructor, and you will also learn to practice forms of individual and collective assessment of your own learning, progress, and work. This approach enables us to inquire into and examine our relationship to the forms of assessment we experience in post-secondary and the ways we respond to assessment as a potential stressor (and more importantly, the ways we can be aware of and choose to respond to it using the skills and practices we learn in this course).

LEARNING PROJECT	DESCRIPTION OF LEARNING PROJECTS	GROUP / INDIVIDUAL	WEIGHT	DUE DATE
LP 1: Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction and Self-Compassion program AND Learning Self-Reflection	Part A: Participatory in-person inquiry-based learning, completing daily practice homework and worksheet activities (worksheets will be provided in class). Bring these to every class as your participation, learning and our collective inquiry activities depend on them being complete. Part B: Learning self-reflection essay based on work in Part A (or a non-essay format by proposal)	Individual	Completion of this assignment is mandatory for the final “B” grade and to pass the course.	Part A: Ongoing (each class period) Part B: June 11 or earlier (if you want to present orally to instructor) *Note: if you wish to use a non-written format, please let the instructor know your intentions by June 6 th .
LP 2: Reading and Sharing Research in the Discipline	Part A: One page handout for class Part B: Group teaching/Presentation	Group (4-6)	Completion of this assignment is mandatory for a final “B” grade and to pass the course.	Part A: June 4 Part B: June 4 and 11 (presentation dates will be determined by draw).

LP 3: Optional Inquiry Project	This project is based on principles of self-determination and autonomy. You may propose your own (small) project arising from and following your own interests and learning desires <i>within the themes of the course</i> . Options will be discussed in depth during the first several classes.	Individual or Group	Choosing and completing this project, in addition to the two mandatory assignments, will result in an A grade.	PROPOSAL due by or before May 21 th . Project due: June 13 (or earlier if you wish to present orally to instructor)
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WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE:
CHANGES TO SCHEDULE:

Please note that changes to the schedule may occur to meet the emerging needs and dynamics of the participants in the course.

Date	Topic	Readings and Homework	Due Dates
TUESDAY May 7	Introduction to the course and one another.	Bring (today and then to all Thursday mindfulness days): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga mat (or something to lay on, towel, blanket etc.) • A warm sweater, wrap, blanket etc (sometimes people feel chilled during mindfulness practices) • Device with MBSR materials available on D2L or materials printed out (and homework completed) **you don't need this for the first day. Bring device on which you can access this book through the Library: Nhất Hạnh, T. (1987). <i>The miracle of mindfulness: An introduction to the practice of meditation</i> . Boston: Beacon Press. https://ucalgary-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/mtt0p8/01UCALG_ALMA51752149360004336	

THURSDAY May 9	Mindfulness skills, practice, and inquiry day:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga mat (or something to lay on, towel, blanket etc.) • A warm sweater, wrap, blanket etc (sometimes people feel chilled during mindfulness practices) • Device with MBSR materials available on D2L or materials printed out (and homework completed) 	
TUESDAY May 14	Research, group work, learning day	Discussion of and group activity with MBSR handouts provided for this week online. Please read the posted handouts Film: <i>Walk with Me (excerpts)</i> https://www.kanopy.com/en/ucalgary/video/5855781 Introduction to Learning Project #2: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group research and presentation assignment • Choosing groups • How to locate high quality research articles for this assignment. 	
THURSDAY May 16	Mindfulness skills, practice, and inquiry day	Bring assigned and completed homework.	
TUESDAY May 21	Research, group work, learning day	Discuss MBSR handouts/readings provided for this week online. Group work time including <i>consultation with instructor</i> on Learning Task #2.	Optional Learning Project #3: Proposals due on or before today, May 21
THURSDAY May 23	Mindfulness skills, practice, and inquiry	Bring assigned and completed homework and readings.	
TUESDAY May 28	Research, group work, learning day	Group work time including <i>consultation with instructor</i> on Learning Project #2.	

THURSDAY May 30	Mindfulness skills, practice, and inquiry	Bring assigned and completed homework and readings.	
TUESDAY June 4	Research, group work, learning day	Learning Project #2: GROUP PRESENTATIONS	Learning Project #2: Part A (summary handout) DUE by Tuesday, June 4 for all groups
THURSDAY June 6	Mindfulness skills, practice, and inquiry day	Bring assigned and completed homework and readings.	
TUESDAY June 11	Research, group work, learning day	Learning Project #2: GROUP PRESENTATIONS	Learning Project #1B due.
THURSDAY June 13	Mindfulness skills, practice, and inquiry	<p>Presentations of LT#3 for those who wish to share with class.</p> <p>Bring assigned and completed homework and readings.</p> <p>Closing our time together in a good way.</p>	<p>Learning Project #3:</p> <p>Due today or any day before this day if you choose to do this project. If you propose to present this project orally to the instructor, you must arrange to present it prior to this day as part of your initial proposal.</p>

LEARNING PROJECTS AND ASSESSMENT

There are TWO *mandatory* projects that you must complete to pass the course (for a grade of B) and one additional optional project (for a grade of A). Learning Project #1 and #2 are mandatory.

1. LEARNING PROJECT #1: Individual project

Part A: MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction) and MSC (Mindful Self-Compassion program). DUE: ongoing participation and daily homework (bring to class)

Part B: Learning Self-Reflection Essay. DUE June 11.

Part A: MBSR/MSK program. This is an inquiry-based, in-person, experiential learning program that involves commitment to daily homework/practice outside of class. The homework includes completion of worksheets (available on D2L). Please bring your homework to class as assigned so that we can draw on it in our collective learning inquiries. While you do not need to hand in this homework to the instructor, you will not be able to complete Part B of this project without completing the homework.

Part B: Learning Self-Reflection Essay

Compose a 4-6 page (double spaced, 12pt font) self-reflection essay using the following questions to organize your thoughts:

- 1) What is an important new skill(s) that I learned (am learning) in this program?
- 2) What evidence do I have that I have learned (am learning) this skill(s)?
- 3) How might I use and continue to practice this skill(s) to support my well-being in my academic program and in my everyday life

*As we work through the program and discuss this assignment, we may add additional questions for reflection.

*If you wish to use another expressive mode to create or communicate this assignment, please let the instructor know by June 6th (i.e., a recorded/verbal essay/reflection, a graphic comic, poetry, artwork, etc.)

* Referencing style: In Werklund School of Education we conventionally use APA referencing. B.Ed. students are encouraged to use APA; however, all students may use the conventional style of referencing used in your own discipline/faculty/program as long as you are consistent.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING PROJECT #1 PART B

Criteria for Assessment of Learning Project #1 Part B will be discussed and designed collaboratively by our learning community with a focus also on skillful discernment and confidence in what is “good” work and how we know that for ourselves.

2. LEARNING PROJECT # 2: GROUP project (4-6 students)

READING AND SHARING RESEARCH IN THE DISCIPLINE

Part A: Handout for presentation Due June 4

Part B: Group presentation to class Due June 4 or 11 (date to be determined by draw)

Class time will be given to group work and instructor mentorship/guidance for each group. Each group will choose ONE research article focused on the themes of the course, following your group’s own interest. Instruction will be given on how to find credible articles in our library database (keywords, which journals to choose, etc.). You may also choose a book chapter from a research-oriented book. Suggestions will be given once each group has the opportunity to discern their interest.

Prepare a one-page handout summarizing your article and its research findings and implications. A suggested template for the handout will be provided, however, your group may also create your own style.

Prepare a succinct and professional presentation summarizing the article, its focus of inquiry/research, methods, and findings. Formats for presentation will be discussed during our group work periods and will depend on each group's chosen article and style. Generally, about 5-8 minutes should be given to the presentation, and the remainder of the time to an engaging activity, class questions, and discussions about your article.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING PROJECT #2

Criteria for Assessment of Learning Project #2 Parts A and B will be discussed and designed collaboratively by our learning community. There will be time provided to complete a significant portion of this project during class with instructor guidance/support, however, some parts of it may have to be completed outside of class either in person or collaborating with your group at a distance.

Our focus will be on navigating the skills and requirements of preparing and sharing/communicating a professional research-focused group presentation in post-secondary education and beyond. It is common and normal for some students to experience collaborative/group work and oral presentations as stressful or anxiety-provoking in a variety of ways, while others find this mode of learning and sharing learning to be how they work best. We will work together through this process on learning skills to better cope with these stressors and ways to communicate effectively with group members to elevate the success and well-being of all group members as well as the success of the project/presentation.

3. OPTIONAL LEARNING PROJECT # 3: Individual OR Group (for a grade of A)

INQUIRY PROJECT (WITH PROPOSAL APPROVED BY INSTRUCTOR)

Proposal due May 21th or earlier.
Project due June 13th or earlier.

Ideas for this optional learning project will be discussed and brainstormed in class. For this project you may individually or in a group design your own inquiry or challenge experience following your own interest in the practices, skills, themes, and topics of the course and in a mode that aligns with your own best way of learning/expressing yourself or in a way that challenges how you normally engage in your learning.

A form for brief proposals will be provided. Proposals will include the inquiry idea/topic/challenge, the steps you will take to pursue your learning, the project style (i.e., writing, arts, oral presentation to instructor, etc.), and assessment criteria (how you know your project is complete and is *good* work). Final project will include a self-assessment component followed by instructor feedback.

THE EXPECTATION OF EXCELLENCE IN PROFESSIONAL WORK

Please review the Academic Calendar carefully. It describes the program and provides detailed schedules and important dates. It contains information on expectations for student work and professional conduct. In addition, procedures are described regarding concern about student performance in the program. Please pay especially careful attention to details and descriptions in the following topic areas:

- *The Importance of Attendance and Participation in Every Class*

As this is an inquiry-based, experiential learning course where learning happens both individually AND in community from one another, the course is designed with the **expectation that all members will be fully involved in all classes and in all coursework experiences**. As you are a member of a learning community your contribution is vital and highly valued. It is expected that you will not be absent from class except for personal or family illness or for religious requirements. Please notify the instructor by email if you will be missing a class.

- *Engagement in Class Discussion and Inquiry*

Another reason for the importance of attendance and participation in every class is that the course involves working with fellow students to share ideas and thinking, and to learn together and from one another. Learning the skills of inquiry into our own lives, into our places and institutions and cultures, and into our individual and collective human lives is an **essential skill** for mature and compassionate humans. These are skills we will practice together in class.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

Writing skills include not only surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) but also general clarity and organization. Sources cited must be properly documented. You may use the citation style conventional to your discipline. If you need help with your writing, you may use the writing support services in the Learning Commons. For further information, please refer to the official online University of Calgary Calendar, Academic Regulations, E. Course Information, E.2: Writing Across the Curriculum: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

LATE SUBMISSIONS

All late submissions of assignments must be discussed with the instructor **prior to the due date**. Students may be required to provide written documentation of extenuating circumstances (e.g., statutory declaration, doctor's note, note from the University of Calgary Wellness Centre, obituary notice). A deferral of up to 30 days may be granted at the discretion of the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs with accompanying written evidence.

ISSUES WITH GROUP TASKS

If your group is having genuine difficulty collaborating effectively, please contact the instructor immediately. If a group is unable to collaborate effectively, the instructor may re-assign members to different groups or assign individual work for completion.

GRADING

Grade	GPA Value	%	Description per U of C Calendar
A+	4.0	95-100	Outstanding
A	4.0	90-94	Excellent – Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.7	85-89	
B+	3.3	80-84	
B	3.0	75-79	Good - clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete
B-	2.7	70-74	
C+	2.3	65-69	
C	2.0	60-64	Satisfactory - basic understanding of the subject matter
C-	1.7	55-59	
D+	1.3	52-54	Minimal pass - Marginal performance
D	1.0	50-51	
F	0.0	49 and lower	Fail - Unsatisfactory performance

Students in the B.Ed. program must have an overall GPA of 2.5 in the semester to continue in the program without repeating courses.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Student-Accommodation-Policy.pdf>. Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: [ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf](https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/sites/default/files/teams/1/Policies-Accommodation-for-Students-with-Disabilities-Procedure.pdf). Students needing an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor.

Academic Misconduct

For information on academic misconduct and its consequences, please see the University of Calgary Calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Attendance/ Prolonged Absence

Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Students are encouraged to submit documentation that will support their situation. Supporting documentation may be dependent on the reason noted in their personal statement/explanation provided to explain their situation. This could be medical certificate/documentation, references, police reports, invitation letter, third party letter of support or a statutory declaration etc. The decision to provide supporting documentation that best suits the situation is at the discretion of the student.

Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html>

The Freedom of Information Protection of Privacy Act prevents instructors from placing assignments or examinations in a public place for pickup and prevents students from access to exams or assignments other than their own. Therefore, students and instructors may use one of the following options: return/collect assignments during class time or during instructors' office hours, students provide instructors with a self-addressed stamped envelope, or submit/return assignments as electronic files attached to private e-mail messages.

For additional resources including, but not limited to, those aimed at wellness and mental health, student success or to connect with the Student Ombuds Office, please visit

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>

Education Students Association (ESA) President for the academic year is Claire Gillis,

esa@ucalgary.ca.

Werklund SU Representative is TBA, educrep@su.ucalgary.ca.