

**Course Syllabus**  
**Mindfulness, Compassion, and the Self**  
**Fall 2015**

EDP 362 Unique number: 10695

Instructor: Kristin Neff

Room: SZB 435

Class time: Monday 4:00 - 6:30 (Five minutes leeway at beginning)

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Office: George Sanchez Bldg. Room #506D

Office hours: by appt.

Teaching Assistant: PHOEBE LONG GET DETAILS!

Office Hours: ?

Location: ?

e-mail: ?

**Course Objectives:** The goal of this course is to give you an understanding of mindfulness, self-compassion, compassion for others. Recent years have seen an explosion of interest in these topics, as well as a dramatic increase of research studies on the benefits of mindfulness and compassion for mental health. This course will not only cover research into mindfulness and compassion for self and others, it will also provide you with first-hand experiential knowledge of these states through meditation and other exercises (meditation will be taught in a secular context). Because of the relevance of mindfulness and compassion for our own lives, readings will be drawn from both academic and non-academic sources, so that topics can be understood from each perspective. Video clips will also be used to illustrate concepts. You will be expected to take responsibility for your own learning process, which means taking an active part in making sense of the readings, practicing the exercises, and participating in class discussions.

**Class Format:** In general, we will have about 1 hour 15 minutes of lecture, a 15 minute break, then 45 - 60 minutes of experiential exercises and discussion.

**Class Notes:** The notes from all power-point presentations will be posted shortly after each class on Canvas.

**Electronics Policy:** Because we have reduced the pressure to take notes in class by providing access to the notes from the PowerPoint presentation, we ask that you do not use electronic devices during class in order to fully focus on class discussions and exercises.

**Reading Responses:** Each week you will be asked to provide a 1-2 paragraph response to one of the week's assigned readings. There are no prompts; you are free to respond to whatever captures your interest. Response options include, but are not limited to, an idea in the reading that you agree with, disagree with, find interesting, or want to know more about. Reading responses will not be graded on quality of writing or ideas. In other words, you will not be

expected to generate brilliant insights but, instead, simply demonstrate that you read the assigned material. Also, these reading responses are not intended to be overly burdensome. If you have done the readings, a response should not take more than 10 minutes.

**Observation Papers:** There will be two 3 to 5 page papers (double spaced) that report on the use of a particular assigned home practice (see home practice sheet). There will be one paper on mindfulness and one on self-compassion. In the papers, students will discuss and define the topic related to the practice, describe their personal experience of using the practice, and consider how the practice impacted their daily life experience. (See observation papers assignment sheet). Observation papers will be submitted through Canvas.

**Midterm Exam:** The midterm exam (taken in class) will contain multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short answer questions. A study guide will be provided before the exam.

**Final paper:** This paper will focus on either mindfulness, self-compassion, or compassion for others as applied to a topic of your choosing (ex., self-compassion and body image, mindfulness and athletic performance, compassion and parenting, etc.). The paper will also contain an annotated bibliography. The final paper should be 8 to 10 pages long in total (double spaced) - 6 to 7 pages for the main text and 2 to 3 pages for the bibliography. See assignment sheet and sample paper on Canvas. The first draft of the paper will be due on Nov. 23. If you would like help drafting the paper, we encourage you to use the University Writing Center, PCL 2.330, 471-6222, [uwc.utexas.edu](http://uwc.utexas.edu)). Feedback will be provided on the first draft by the teaching assistant, which should be incorporated into the final version of the paper due on Dec. 07.

**Writing Flag.** This course carries a writing flag, and is designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

**Canvas:** All electronic materials used for this course will be available on Canvas. Grades for examinations and assignments will also be available on Canvas. Please access the training for students (<http://edutech.ctl.utexas.edu/students/>) for help with setting up your account and navigating the system. You will also be responsible for checking the Canvas course site regularly for announcements, and copies of the class notes. Please do not email the instructor or teaching assistant through Canvas, but rather email us directly using regular email.

**Grading System:**

10 points for class participation - 1 point for every class day attended (not counting the exam or introductory day). Since there are 11 class days you can miss one class or else get extra credit.  
5 points for reading responses - 0.5 point for each week you respond to the reading assignments  
25 points for two observation papers (12.5 points each)  
25 points for the midterm exam  
35 points for the final paper

**Grading Scale (decimals rounded up):**

A = 100-93%	B = 86-83%	C = 76-73%	F = 67-0%
A- = 92-90%	B- = 82-80%	C- = 72-70%	
B+ = 89-87%	C+ = 79-77%	D = 69-67%	

**Required texts:**

Neff, K. D. (2011). *Self-Compassion*. New York: William-Morrow. (Available from Amazon and other booksellers.)

All other assigned readings are available on Canvas as PDF files.

***Course Topics*****Aug. 31 – Introduction****Sept. 08 - No Class (Labor Day)****Sept. 14 - What is mindfulness?**

Kabat-Zinn, J. (1994). *Wherever you go, there you are: Mindfulness meditation in everyday life*. New York: Hyperion. (pp 1-55).

**Sept. 21 - Developing mindfulness**

Siegel, R. D. (2010). *The mindfulness solution*. New York: The Guilford Press. Chap. 3 (pp. 52-80).

Williams, M., Teasdale, J. Segal, Z., & Kabat-Zinn, J. (2007). *The mindful way through depression* Chap. 2-4. New York: The Guildford Press.

**Begin home mindfulness exercise to practice for one week around now**

**Sept. 28 – Mindfulness: Research and Interventions**

Shapiro, S. L. & Carlson, L. E. (2009). *The art and science of mindfulness*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association. (Chap. 4).

Hassed, C. & Chambers, R. (2014) *Mindful learning*. NSWales: Exisle Publishing. (Chap 2).

### **Oct. 05 – What is self-compassion?**

Neff, K. D. (2011). *Self-compassion*. New York: William Morrow. Chap. 1-5.

**Observation paper #1 on mindfulness exercise due (by midnight)**

### **Oct. 12 – Self-compassion: Theoretical Issues**

Neff, K. D. (2011). *Self-compassion*. New York: William Morrow. Chap. 7-8,12-13.

**Begin home self-compassion exercise to practice for one week around now**

### **Oct. 19 - Self-compassion Interventions**

Gilbert, P. (2009). Introducing Compassion Focused Therapy. *Advances in psychiatric treatment*, 15, 199–208.

Germer, C. K., & Neff, K. D. (2013). Self-compassion in clinical practice. *Journal Of Clinical Psychology*, 69(8), 856-867.

### **Oct. 26 – Research on self-compassion**

Neff, K. D. (2012). The science of self-compassion. In C. Germer & R. Siegel (Eds.), *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, 79-92. New York: Guilford Press.

**Observation paper #2 on self-compassion exercise due (by midnight)**

### **Nov. 2 - Class Exam**

### **Nov. 09 - What is compassion for others?**

Feldman, C. (2005). *Compassion*. Berkeley, CA: Rodmell Press. Chap. 1-4 (pp. 1-82).

Keltner, D. (2004). The compassionate instinct. *The Greater Good*, 1, 6-9.

### **Nov. 16 – Developing compassion**

Salzberg, S. (1997). *Lovingkindness: The revolutionary art of happiness*. Boston: Shambhala. Chapter 2 (pp. 18-32).

Lasater, I. & Kinyon, J. (2014). *Choosing Peace*. Amherst, MA: Mediate Your Life. Chapter 2 (pp. 28-42).

Optional - (look at <http://www.compassion-training.org/>)

### **Nov. 23 - Researching compassion**

Davidson, R. (2012). The neurobiology of compassion. In C. Germer & R. Siegel (Eds.), *Compassion and Wisdom in Psychotherapy*, 111-118. New York: Guilford Press.

Shapiro, S. L., & Sahgal, M. (2012). Loving-kindness. In T. G. Plante (Ed.) *Religion, spirituality, and positive psychology: Understanding the psychological fruits of faith* (pp. 109-126). Santa Barbara, CA US: Praeger

**First draft of final paper due (by midnight)** - written feedback on this will be provided by the Teaching Assistant within about a week. You will also be assigned to a four person peer discussion group, and a copy of the draft will be sent to the other group members. Students are expected to read over the drafts written by their group members and provide verbal feedback next week.

### **Dec. 01 – Peer discussion groups (last class day)**

Students will meet in their assigned discussion groups. Peer feedback on drafts of the final paper will be provided, and paper topics discussed in general. Groups will also discuss what they found meaningful in the mindfulness, self-compassion, and compassion practices they have learned, and consider how some of these practices might be incorporated into daily life. Discussion will also focus on how these practices could increase personal responsibility, including the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

### **Dec. 08 - Final paper due**

The paper should incorporate the written feedback provided by the teaching assistant and verbal feedback received in the peer discussion group.