**Journal Assignment Outline and Grading Rubric**

***Engaging in a literature search to clarify your beliefs and values, develop intentional beliefs, values and spiritual practices, and use an evidence-based approach to spiritual care (up to 8/20 points taken off for incomplete and inadequate use of references; note that references to your literature search will most often be featured in the part 5 when you elaborate your intentional values and beliefs and ways of coping but could also be part of part 3 when you elaborate the immediate lived theology/orienting system that arose in the aftermath of this stressful experience)***

1. *Course Goal: Develop critical thinking about your values and beliefs using religious and theological studies.* Once you have identified the values and beliefs that may gave rise to religious, spiritual and moral struggles for you, you will use the Iliff library (e.g., Primo and the ATLA database) to identify key terms that help you do a search on for theologies/philosophies of religion help you in your search for meanings. The interdisciplinary course you took likely had Dr. Micah Saxton guide you through this process. See the course page with links to Dr. Saxton’s videos on how to do a literature search.

You are also required to use course readings if they are relevant and meaningful or readings from other courses.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Doehring, C. (2015). Resilience as the relational ability to spiritually integrate moral stress. *Pastoral Psychology*. *64*(5), 635–649.  doi: 10.1007/s11089-015-0643-7 [Doehring 2015 Resilience...spiritual integrating moral stress.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/140220200/download?verifier=zEB6a5BRcF8E7KrGu2z0pmJHxnXeONoJIJUaNwKg&wrap=1)

Doehring, C. (2018). Searching for wholeness amidst traumatic grief: The role of spiritual practice that reveal compassion in embodied, relational, and transcendent ways. *Pastoral Psychology*. doi: 10.1007/s11089-018-0858-5 [Doehring 2018\_Searching For Wholeness Amidst Traumatic Grief.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/140889519/download?verifier=bpY7ZSENJZEe5CSc9kHjS1R8L6d2y6I7Ko4sktlu&wrap=1)

Doehring, C. (2018). Military moral injury: An evidence-based and intercultural approach to spiritual care. *Pastoral Psychology*. doi: 10.1007/s11089-018-0813-5 [Doehring 2018 Military moral injury.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/141599327/download?verifier=J7f0LhGVvKkUOk9Ix8QaZgrqDkbftnpiZCdKl8HS&wrap=1)

Ellison, C. G., Roalson, L. A., Guillory, J. M., Flannelly, K. J., & Marcum, J. P. (2010). Religious resources, spiritual struggles, and mental health in a nationwide sample of PCUSA clergy. *Pastoral Psychology, 59*(3), 287-304. doi: 10.1007/s11089-009-0239-1 [Ellison 2010 Religious struggles among clergy.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/140640744/download?verifier=0U8SfBaUPkhCHFDIMZgYq9IPWaVXE1UJSqTZ0O5W&wrap=1)

Graham, L. K. (2017). *Moral injury: Restoring wounded souls*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.

Nelson, S. L. (2003). Facing evil: Evil's many faces: Five paradigms for understanding evil. *Interpretation, 57*(4), 399-413. doi: 10.1177/002096430005700405 [Nelson\_FACING\_EVIL.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/141534505/download?verifier=LLP4cmm6touRDl2fgl6naq0Q18p3EgcStTXekW2U&wrap=1)

Doehring, C & Jeavons, W. (2012) Synopsis of Nelson's Five Paradigms  [Doehring & Jeavons 2012 Synopsis of Nelson's five paradigms 7-5-2015.docx](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/142846283/download?verifier=btCuEhHRcMjeYUz1qEl5l0JLrQH8N6HQtTHxiD77&wrap=1)

Sanders, C. J. (2013). Preaching messages we never intended: LGBTIQ-based microaggressions in classroom and pulpit. *Theology & Sexuality, 19*(1), 21-35. doi: 10.1179/1355835814z.00000000026 [Sanders 2013 Preaching Messages We Never Intended.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/141603871/download?verifier=oUQlUdlZGW6zhUkflUqMkmzd1cWIUHl8NguZupPg&wrap=1)

Sue, D. W., Alsaidi, S., Awad, M. N., Glaeser, E., Calle, C. Z., & Mendez, N. (2019). Disarming racial microaggressions: Microintervention strategies for targets, White allies, and bystanders. *American Psychologist, 74*(1), 128-142. doi: 10.1037/amp0000296 [Sue et al 2019 Disarming racial microaggressions.pdf](https://iliff.instructure.com/courses/2449969/files/141603889/download?verifier=cGFAE1Agxvs88VL02CQVxsc6Xd0qocmCInX0f4ku&wrap=1)

You will then substantively use at least 2 references from your search, quoting from them in elaborating your beliefs and/or values. The library staff (<https://www.iliff.edu/research-center/>) and the writing lab can be helpful <http://www.iliff.edu/writinglab/> (**2 points off for each reference not quoted for a total of 4 points off).**

*Look, for example, at the references included at the end of the sample assignment and identify which references are from religious and theological studies. What key terms in a literature search might have helped Carrie Doehring find these articles (e.g., suffering, suicide, mental illness, moral injury, disability, religious multiplicity, etc.). Next, go through the sample assignment to see how these references were used to elaborated/explore intentional beliefs and values.*

1. Course Goal: Develop critical thinking about the psychological dimensions of moral stress, injury, and resilience using psychological research that helps you understand how/when aspects of religion, spirituality, and moral values help or harm in your particular struggles and context. You will use at least one of the articles from the list below and at least one from your own literature search in order to bring an evidence-based approach to better understand your experience of moral struggles. Note that if you use Doehring’s publications in order to think about research on religious coping, you will focus on the research on religious coping that she cites, and not on the sections of her work focusing more theologically on beliefs and values in spiritual orienting systems. The journal *Pastoral Psychology* is a good source for such research. Articles/chapters by Pargament and Exline provide comprehensive descriptions of research on when aspects of religion or spirituality are likely to help or harm people:

Doehring, C. (2015). Resilience as the relational ability to spiritually integrate moral stress. *Pastoral Psychology*. *64*(5), 635–649. doi: 10.1007/s11089-015-0643-7

Doehring, C. (2018a). Military moral injury: An evidence-based and intercultural approach to spiritual care. *Pastoral Psychology*. doi: 10.1007/s11089-018-0813-5

Doehring, C. (2018b). Searching for wholeness amidst traumatic grief: The role of spiritual practice that reveal compassion in embodied, relational, and transcendent ways. *Pastoral Psychology*. doi: 10.1007/s11089-018-0858-5

Ellison, C. G., Roalson, L. A., Guillory, J. M., Flannelly, K. J., & Marcum, J. P. (2010). Religious resources, spiritual struggles, and mental health in a nationwide sample of PCUSA clergy. *Pastoral Psychology, 59*(3), 287-304. doi: 10.1007/s11089-009-0239-1

Exline, J. J., Pargament, K., Grubbs, J. B., & Yali, A. M. (2014). The Religious and Spiritual Struggles Scale: Development and initial validation. *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality, 6*(3), 208-222. doi: 10.1037/a0036465.supp

Pargament, K., Desai, K. M., & McConnell, K. M. (2006). Spirituality: A pathway to posttraumatic growth or decline? In L. G. Calhoun & R. G. Tedeschi (Eds.), *Handbook of posttraumatic growth: Research and practice* (pp. 121-135). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Pargament, K., Wong, S., & Exline, J. (2016). Wholeness and holiness: The spiritual dimension of eudaimonics. In J. Vittersø (Ed.), *The handbook of eudaimonic wellbeing* (pp. 379-394). Switzerland: Springer International.

**(2 points off for each reference not quoted for total of 4 points off)**

**The Writing Lab has helpful resources:**

**https://iliff.bloomfire.com/posts/2858956-online-writing-resources-suggested-sites**

*Look, for example, at the references to psychological research at the end of the sample assignment and identify the references from psychological studies. What key terms in a lit search might have helped Carrie Doehring find these articles (e.g., religious struggles, moral stress, religious coping, suicide, mental illness). Next, go through the sample assignment to see how these references were used in an evidence-based approach to spiritual integration of moral stress.*

**Part 1: Self-care through spiritual practices (200 – 400 words) UNGRADED**

Think about a body-centered spiritual practice that helps you pay attention to how you experience stress in your body and what emotions often accompany such stress. Use a mindfulness/contemplative practice that helps you be mindful of and compassionately accept such stress/emotions, and connect with goodness in your body/life, in others, and in a transcendent way with nature, and/or humanity, and/or God (if you are part of theistic traditions/practices/communities). For example, some people breath-centered contemplative practices helpful. Some people use activities in nature. Some use traditional prayers/meditations from their faith tradition. Remember that sometimes moral stress makes it hard for people to use spiritual practices that used to be helpful. For example, moral stress that gives rise to divine struggles (e.g., struggles with a judging God and/or struggles arising from experiences of prayers not being answered in the ways one hoped). Such struggles may cause people to experience guilt and/or anger when they try using a previously helpful practice. If this happens to you, set aside that previously helpful practice, and/or one you think you ‘should’ do because of guilt about not being a good enough Christian or Buddhist or Wiccan or Humanist. Try any practice that helps you be mindful of the stress/emotions you experience without judging yourself.

**Part 2: Describe a life-changing experience of stress that involved core values and beliefs (up to 300 words) UNGRADED**

Describe a life-changing experience that was stressful and/or transformative because it involved core beliefs and values. Make sure you feel comfortable describing this experience to your spiritual care partner and your faculty. Examples of life-changing experiences are: troubled pregnancies and birth; the birth of a child and parenting crises; being in a committed intimate relationship; a spiritual/religious search and/conversion; being part of a faith community; seeking and having a spiritual vocation affirmed; financial, health, vocational, or relational crises/trauma; death and grief). You must edit your narrative description so that it is no longer than 300 words.

*As our learning covenant notes in referencing levels of self-disclosure: The purpose of self-disclosure is to develop competencies in spiritual care, especially a commitment to one’s own process of spiritual integration that enhances self-differentiation and a capacity for empathy. The purpose of self-disclosure in this learning context is not for personal healing. In deciding how to use/disclose personal experiences in assignments, students need to track their levels of stress as they work on assignments, and to not use/disclose experiences that overwhelm their capacities for self-differentiation, spiritual integration, and critical thinking skills. Students need to use their support systems when they become overwhelmed and in making decisions about what personal experiences to share in weekly posts and journal assignments.*

**Part 3: Elaborate the automatic stress/emotion-based theology/spiritual orienting system of values, beliefs, and coping that arose in the immediate aftermath of this morally stressful event by answering the following questions (1000-2500 words) Up to 5/20 points deducted for not using critical thinking skills and engaging in a process of spiritual integration that enhances self-differentiation. You might also want to refer to articles/chapters from your literature search that help you identify life-limiting beliefs, values and ways of coping.**

EMBEDDED/INITIAL STRESS/EMOTION-BASED THEOLOGY/SPIRITUAL ORIENTING SYSTEM

***Emotions:*** describe what emotions (like shame, guilt, anxiety, fear of causing harm or being judged, anger, loneliness, sadness, relief, guilt, or joy) shaped your immediate response.

***Values:*** describe three to four relevant values that did or could have generated spiritual struggles/moral stress (see shortened list of values if you have difficulty identifying what values were at stake[[2]](#endnote-1)). Add a narrative description of whether/how this value might come from your family’s ethnic/religious/cultural identity. If you are describing a recent experience, use this section to identify immediate values and beliefs and whether these came from childhood/family or from your current relationships and communities.

***Beliefs:*** what beliefs, particularly about suffering and hope, did you initially have about this experience? Use course readings and your readings in theology/philosophy to describe these beliefs. Those in theistic traditions (either in childhood or now) will need to consult Graham (2017), especially the chapter on God as a conundrum. Nelson (2003) provides a helpful orientation to traditional and contemporary ways of understanding suffering and evil in theistic traditions.

***Coping:*** How did you cope? If you are describing a more recent experience, see if you can separate out ways of coping that were automatic habits from the past/childhood/our consumer culture that are often default ways of coping. Add a narrative description of whether/how such coping might be shaped by your family’s ethnic/religious/cultural identity. Assess the pros and cons of such coping.

**Part 4:** **How was your embedded/initial theology shaped by intersecting social systems, like religious sexism, heterosexism, racism, classism, ableism….? (200 to 250 words). Up to 2/20 points off if students do not seem to have clearly thought through relevant aspects of social advantages/disadvantages that enhances social empathy**

Describe aspects of your social identity that shaped your experience by giving you social disadvantages or social advantages. See if you can identify layers from childhood: like social advantages or disadvantages that shaped your parents’ religious/spiritual existential identities in ways that helped or harmed their coping with life changing events; and the extent to which you internalized and still experience these dynamics inter-generationally.

**Part 5. Describe the intentional theology** that is energized by positive emotions like compassion, joy, gratitude, hope, or sadness experienced in spiritual practices, which hold together values and beliefs that make up an intentional theology/spiritual orienting system specific to this experience of moral stress. Your spiritual practices and this intentional theology/spiritual orienting system help you integrate moral stress in ways that resist/protest embedded family, cultural/religious values/beliefs/coping that are perpetuate sexism, racism, classism, heterosexism, ableism and other forms of social oppression. This intentional theology may be what you want to experience, and/or may have evolved for you over a long term process of using spiritual practices and searching for meanings that helped you integrate this life-changing experience into your life. **(1000 – 2500 words). Up to 5 points off if not clearly articulated and elaborated, which would reflect difficulties in engaging in a process of spiritual integration and self-differentiation and developing meanings complex enough to bear the weight of suffering.**

***Emotions*** *(emotions that arise from life-giving coping and spiritual practices identified below):*

***Spiritual practices:***

***Values:***

***Beliefs:***

**Note in your follow-up assignment, you will read your partner’s journal and then you will have a spiritual care conversation, video recorded, with your learning partner.**

Schedule a 60- 80” block of time, on Zoom, or face to face, when you can each have about 20-30” for a spiritual care conversation.

**Grading Rubric for Journal Assignment:**

8/20 points: literature search and references used to enhance critical think in sections 3 and/or 5

5/20: Part 3 critical thinking, engaging in a process of spiritual integration that enhances self-differentiation

2/20: Part 4 critical thinking, reflecting on social advantage and disadvantages in order to enhance social empathy

5/20: Part 3 critical thinking, engaging in a process of spiritual integration that enhances self-differentiation

**Additional References**

Graham, L. K. (2017). *Moral injury: Restoring wounded souls*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon.

Nelson, S. L. (2003). Facing evil: Evil's many faces: Five paradigms for understanding evil. *Interpretation, 57*(4), 399-413. doi: 10.1177/002096430005700405

1. For example, if you took IST 2510, you might review readings for that course, such as James Cone, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree;* Anne Joh, *Heart of the Cross;* B. A. Gerrish, *Christian Faith: Dogmatics in Outline.* [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. |  |
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| Here are examples of values. This is a shortened list taken from Zuckoff, A., & Gorscak, B. (2015). *Finding your way to change: How the power of motivational interviewing can reveal what you want and help you get there*. New York, NY: Guilford Press. |
| Achievement: to have important accomplishments  |
| Adventure: to have new and exciting experiences  |
| Authenticity: to be true to who I am  |
| Autonomy: to determine my own actions  |
| Belonging: to feel like a part of something  |
| Challenge: to take on difficult tasks and problems  |
| Contribution: to add something to the world  |
| Creativity: to have original ideas and create new things  |
| Dependability: to be reliable and trustworthy  |
| Duty: to carry out my duties and obligations  |
| Family: to have a happy, loving family |
| Generosity: to give what I have to others |
| God’s will: to seek and obey the will of god |
| Growth: to keep changing and growing |
| Justice: to promote fair and equal treatment for all |
| Knowledge: to learn and add to valuable knowledge |
| Passion: to feel strongly and live with intensity  |
| Purpose: to have meaning and direction in my life  |
| Responsibility: to make and carry out responsible decisions  |
| Risk: to take risks and chances  |
| Spirituality: to live and grow spiritually  |
| Tradition: to follow respected patterns of the past  |
| Work: to work hard and well at my life tasks  |

 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)