Instructor: Joan R. Rentsch
Office: 271 Communications Building
Office Hours: by appointment
Phone: 974-5518
email: jrentsch@utk.edu

Course Overview
This highly experiential communication course will cover the basic practices for developing mindfulness and self-regulatory capabilities in everyday life, in communication with others, and in demanding activities. Mindfulness is defined as the state of psychological awareness. Mindfulness practices are associated with reductions in negative experiences (e.g., rumination, stress, and emotional reactivity) and with improvements in positive capabilities (e.g., working memory, focus, and cognitive flexibility). Mindfulness-based stress reduction training is a key component of the course. The course objective is to enable students to develop mindfulness practices and to understand the research on mindfulness.

Course Requirements
1. Attendance
This experiential course will cover the basic practices for developing mindfulness. The only way to learn is to engage in the practices taught in class. Therefore, attendance will be kept. During the first 9 weeks, missing one class will result in the loss of 5 points. If a second class is missed, an additional 10 points will be lost, and if a third class is missed, an additional 15 points will be lost. There will be no make-up classes. If you have extenuating circumstances arise during this period, please speak with the instructor to work out the best option. From week 10 on, the same rules apply, but absences may be excused with instructor permission at least 24 hours prior to the absence. Attendance at the one-day practicum is required. The practicum will take place one Saturday from 8:00am until 4:30pm as noted on the syllabus. You should arrange now to attend the practicum. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor regarding missing class or the practicum. Class and the practicum will start on time. If you arrive late or leave early, it will count as an absence.

2. Class Activities: Participation in Practices, Sharing, & Class Discussions
We will be practicing mindfulness techniques, including mindful movement, in class. You are required to participate in all movement activities only to the extent you feel capable. The mindful movements will be gentle. You are responsible for your body, so please do not do anything that you believe will cause injury or discomfort. You may request alternative variations of movements. You may also substitute a movement you feel more comfortable doing as long as it does not distract other class members. Alternatively, you may choose to sit out particular movements and imagine doing the movements. In any case, observe your own body and do what is best for it.
A large part of the course will be discussing the practices and sharing experiences. You are expected to participate in these discussions. You are also expected to read the assigned readings before each class and to contribute actively and productively to class discussions. The purpose of the discussions is to clarify questions regarding the readings, to explore the relevance of the readings to your experience, and to generate research avenues. You should prepare for class by completing the reading assignments and by being prepared to discuss the readings. Each student is responsible for the quality of the discussions and is expected to contribute productively to class discussions.

3. Practices Reports
In order to support the development of mindfulness, you are expected to complete practice assignments outside of class. These assignments will require approximately one hour per day. To support these outside class practices, you will complete participation reports in which you will report your practices and write about your experiences. Bring a hard copy to class each week to reference during the discussions.

4. Papers & Presentation
You will write three papers. The first paper will be an experiential paper in which you will report your experiences. Detailed instructions are forthcoming. The paper should be 4 - 7 pages in length. This paper is due on the date listed below. The second paper (2-3 pages) will be a short reflection on your experience during and immediately following the practicum. The other paper will be an integrative paper. You will write a conference submission length paper (10-12 pages) in which you will integrate the material from this class with a theory/topic from your field in light of the current state of the research in the field. MS students will work in groups to complete the integrative paper. One grade will be assigned to all members of the group. You will rate your team members’ contributions and these data will be integrated into the participation grade. You may submit this paper any time during the semester. Additional information regarding this requirement is forthcoming. Follow APA format. PhD students will formally present their papers. You will have 10-15 minutes to present your paper. The integrative papers and presentation are designed to mimic typical conference submissions. You must be thorough, but concise. MS student groups will informally, but professionally, present their integrative research on the days their topic is discussed. Guidelines will be distributed in class.

5. Leading Discussion of Readings
PhD students will lead a discussion of topics that includes summarizing the reading for the week.
Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a. Class Attendance</td>
<td>Required (Points are lost</td>
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<td></td>
<td>for missing classes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1b. Practicum</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>2. Participation in Class Activities Including</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Practice Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>4a. Experiential Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>4b. Integrative Paper</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>4c. PhD Formal Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>4d. MS Informal Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. PhD Leading Discussion</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Quiz(izes) Option</td>
<td>(30)</td>
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**Grading Scale:** 90% = A, 80% = B, 70% = C

PhD = 180  MS = 160

*The instructor reserves the right to alter course and grading requirements if necessary.

Quiz Option

The intention of quizzes is to offer you an opportunity to demonstrate that you have reviewed, organized, and integrated the course material. Quizzes may be offered during the semester.

Required Course Materials

1. Readings are listed below and will be made available to you.
2. A mat is required to support activities conducted in class.
3. Wear loose fitting, comfortable, and modest clothing to class to aid mindful movement.

Optional Materials

1. A small blanket.
2. Socks, sweater.

Required Statements & Information

Counseling Center
Student Counseling Center
1800 Volunteer Blvd.
Knoxville, TN 37996-4250
Phone: 865-974-2196
Fax: 865-974-7039
Email: counselingcenter@utk.edu
http://counselingcenter.utk.edu/

Mobile Crisis: 865-539-2409 (available 24 hours)
Suicide Hotline: 1-800-784-2433 or 1-800-SUICIDE
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
**Academic Integrity**
Students are responsible for maintaining academic integrity. Violations of The University of Tennessee's policy on academic honesty will not be tolerated. Offenders will be subject to the disciplinary actions prescribed by the university's policy.

**CCI Diversity Statement**
“CCI recognizes and values diversity. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.”

**UT ODS Disability Statement**
“Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.”
### Schedule of Activities & Discussion Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities &amp; Discussion Topics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 23</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>August 30</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C1</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Bring mat to all future classes</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C2</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C4</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C5</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>October 4</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C6</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>October 11</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Experiential Paper Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 18</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C8</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mindfulness Background &amp; Neurological Research</td>
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<td></td>
<td>October 21</td>
<td><strong>Practicum</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Saturday October 21</td>
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<td>8:30-4:30</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>October 25</td>
<td>Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction C9</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Neurological Research (continued)</td>
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<td><strong>Reflection Paper Due</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 1</td>
<td>Stress</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>November 8</td>
<td>Attention &amp; Self-Regulation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PhD Presentations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Loving Kindness &amp; Compassion</td>
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<td><strong>PhD Presentations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>Empathy/Perspective Taking, and Communication</td>
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<td><strong>MS Presentations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>November 29</td>
<td>Wrap-up and Closing</td>
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<td></td>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Last day to submit integrative papers</td>
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</tbody>
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READINGS**

Mindfulness Background & Neurological Research

*JKZ response to Baer.pdf*

*BaerClinPsy.pdf*

*Read neurological papers for bottom-line results*

*http://dx.doi.org/10.1155/2015/419808 MRI Review.pdf*

*Davidson et al.pdf*

*Holzel mechanisms.pdf*

*Fnhum-06-00015.pdf*

Stress

*http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2016.02.085 Self-esteem.pdf*


**Attention & Self-regulation**


**Loving Kindness & Compassion**


*Adolescent Stress.pdf*


*Hollis Walker Colosimo.pdf*


*Keng et al Mechanisms.pdf*


*LK and MeditationSelfCompassion.pdf*

Optional:


*Mindfulness and compassion Buddha.pdf*

**Empathy/Perspective Taking, and Communication**


*Attachment Empathy.pdf*


*Self Compassion & MBSR.pdf*


*Empathy self compassion.pdf*


** The instructor reserves the right to alter the reading list.