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**SOCIAL WORK AND DIVINITY DUAL-DEGREE PROGRAMS:  
PLANNED INTEGRATION OF TWO DISCIPLINES**

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*Social Work and Divinity Dual-Degree Programs: Planned Integration of Two Disciplines*



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# Learning Objectives

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- At the end of this seminar, participants will be able to:
- Discuss two benefits for students that result from having integrative classes and integrative opportunities for students enrolled in a dual program;
- Discuss the challenges of developing class schedules and other miscellaneous issues related to collaboration between the two universities.
- Discuss reading resources that may be useful if other dual programs decide to establish integrative classes or seminar for students enrolled in a dual MSW / MDIV program.



# Background

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- There are approximately 21 dual degree programs in the country that graduate students with a Masters of Social Work and Masters of Divinity degrees (Muehlhausen,2009).
- Other research indicate that there may be as many as 35 dual MSW & MDIV programs;
- Literature from the field and anecdotal reports from students who are enrolled in MSW and MDIV dual degree program indicate that there are usually limited, if any opportunities at all for any integration of the two disciplines.



# Background

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- In most programs, there are no planned opportunities via classes, seminars, or joint meetings between students and/or faculty where discussion and critical thinking about integration of the two disciplines occur.
- This is a critical lack, for social workers employed in churches or faith based organizations must become bi-cultural and bi-lingual in order to effectively assist the church and apply evidenced based and best practices in a culturally responsive and culturally sensitive manner.



# Background

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- In 2002, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Social Work and the Duke Divinity School at Duke University developed a dual degree program (MSW/MDIV).
- The integration of the two disciplines was a primary focus of this program.



# The Importance of Integration

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- Forms students in identity of each role
- Teaches students how to think critically about challenges and opportunities in each field
- Equips students with real-time conceptualization of integrative issues
- Provides an aerial view of the convergence of clinical, ethical, educational, and research perspectives



# Integration

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- Occurs at three levels
  - Two Pastoral Care Courses
    - PASTCARE 101- "The Ministry of Social Work"
    - PASTCARE 301- "Moving the Church to Social Action"
  - Field Education Placements
  - "Sharing the Journey" Meetings





# Class #1: The Ministry of Social Work

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- *The Ministry of Social Work* - enables students to integrate the two perspectives and provides opportunities to discuss similarities, and/or perceived or felt differences, identity, practices, and ethical issues that may rise as one critically examines the two disciplines.
- This course includes three dual-degree speakers and one student panel.



# Class #2: Moving the Church to Social Action!

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- The second class, is a Capstone Course – *Moving the Church to Social Action*- and is an applied course designed to deepen students' critical thinking and integration of the two disciplines.
- Students must implement an intervention that will assist the church in addressing difficult and often ignored social problems.



# Topics Selected by Our Graduates

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- HIV in the Body of Christ
- Alzheimer's Disease
- The Spirituality of Women in the Church
- Homelessness
- Domestic Violence
- Poverty
- Cyberpornography
- Race Relations in the Church
- Aging and Spirituality



# Integrative Opportunity: Sharing the Journey

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- Primary foci
  - Community Building
  - Expanding Leadership Capacity
- Format
  - Third Fridays from 5:00 to 6:30 pm
  - Informal Sharing over Light Dinner
  - Community Presenters
- Venue
  - Duke Divinity School Conference Room
  - UNCSSW Orientation every January
  - Home Fellowships



# Integrative Field Placements

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- Placement examples:
  - Urban Ministries
  - Catholic Social Services
  - Jewish Family Services
  - Christian Counseling Center
  - Hospital Settings
- These placements generally have a supervisor who has both an MSW and MDIV degree.
- Provides opportunity to critically think and address spirituality and practice.



# Challenges in Two Universities Working Together For Integration

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- Inter-Institutional Challenges with Monies
- Curricular Requirements
  - Differences in School Approaches to Course Calendars
  - Denominational/Conference Requirements for Ordination
- Geographical Barriers
- Class Scheduling/Time
- Philosophical Differences
- Students adjusting to two different foci and style (e.g., citation of resources, grading differences, etc.)



# Ethical Dilemmas

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- Identity Issues: Minister or Social Worker?
- Boundary Issues
  - Interpersonal
  - Self-Determination vs. Evangelism




# Helpful Resources For Use In Integration

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- Anderson, R. S. (2003). *Spiritual care-giving as secular sacrament: A practical theology for professional caregivers*. Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Ellor, J. W., Netting, F. E., & Thibault, J. M. (1999). *Religious and spiritual aspects of human service practice: Social problems and social issues*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press.
- Huguen, B. & Scales, T.L., Eds. (2008). *Christianity and Social Work: Readings on the Integration of Christian Faith and Social Work Practice, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed*. North American Association of Christians in Social Work: Philadelphia, PA.
- Muehlhausen, B. L. (2009). *Dual degrees in social work and divinity: Graduates' experiences*. Paper presented at NACSW Convention 2009, October 2009 in Indianapolis, IN.





# Helpful Resources For Use In Integration, cont.

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- Roberts-Lewis, A. & Armstrong, T. (2010) Introduction to the Special Issue: Moving the Church to Social Action. *Social Work & Christianity*, 37 (2).
- Shuman, J. J. & Meador, K. (2003). *Heal Thyself: Spirituality, Medicine, and the Distortion of Christianity*. Oxford Press.
- Sulmasy, D. P. (1997). *The Healer's Calling: A Spirituality for Physicians and Other Health Care Professionals*. Paulist Press.
- Swinton, J. (2000). *Resurrecting the person: Friendship and the care of people with mental health problems*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press.



# Questions and/or Comments

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