

MELISSA ESSMAN, MSW, LCSW

(949) 682-8438

melissaessmanlcsw@gmail.com

therapywithoutwallsca.com

EDUCATION

DSW DEGREE CANDIDATE (anticipated completion May 2024)

Doctorate in Clinical Social Work – University of Pennsylvania – Philadelphia, PA

MSW DEGREE (2001)

Master of Social Work – Mental Health Concentration -- University of Southern California – Los Angeles, CA

BA DEGREE (1999)

Bachelor of Arts -- Psychology (Major), Health Promotion (Minor) -- Cal State University, Fullerton – Fullerton, CA

ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

ADJUNCT FACULTY – University of Southern California – 2022 to present

Serve as an adjunct lecturer in the Masters of Social Work program and specifically for the coursework pertaining to the Visual Social Work Graduate Certificate Program. Participation in the curriculum and program development team for the VSW coursework from its inception. Provide instruction, collaborate with faculty team on course topics and actively establish outreach for this as a new branch of clinical and research practice in the field of social work. These courses introduce the use of visual methodologies in social work including engagement, assessment and implementation incorporating a multicultural and social justice context.

- The following courses are part of this program development involvement:
 - SOWK 628: Visual Social Work
 - SOWK 630: Diversity, Social Justice, Culturally Humble Social Work Practice

FACULTY EMERITUS - California State University, Fullerton – 2002 to 2022

Received emeritus status from university upon retirement, following 20 years of teaching. Served as an adjunct lecturer in the Child and Adolescent Studies Department for human development coursework. The curriculum for these course topics cover a variety of theoretical perspectives, biopsychosocial domains and relevant ecological and cultural contexts.

- Provided instruction in all areas of human development, child development, parenting and related areas.
- Curriculum development, syllabus preparation and changes in standards in collaboration with faculty team.
- Developed OER curriculum and resources for practicum seminar course.
- Formulated new topic curriculum for senior seminar coursework.
- Staff meetings and ongoing trainings on departmental standards and classroom techniques.
- Utilized knowledge of articulation, academic policies, requirements and procedures to offer guidance and mentorship to students.
- Field Instructor and faculty representative for CAS students on Study Abroad trip to Thailand in 2019
- In 20 years of teaching experience at CSUF, the following are the courses in my repertoire:
 - CAS 490T: Senior Seminar in Child and Adolescent Development - Concept of Self; CAS 394: Practicum Seminar in Child and Adolescent Development Settings; CAS 340: Parenting in the 21st Century; CAS 325: Conception through Age 8 and Age 9 Through Adolescence; CAS 312: Human Development through the Lifespan; CAS 365: Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting; CAS 310: Assessment and Observation of Children; CAS 360: Adolescence and the Media; CAS 315: Child, Family and Community

POST GRADUATE CERTIFICATES AND COURSEWORK

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH (BASIC COURSE) (2021)

CITI Program - Interprofessional Continuing Education Credit

MICROCREDENTIAL IN PROMOTING ACTIVE LEARNING ONLINE (2020)

Association of College and University Educators (ACUE)

TEACHING ONLINE PROGRAM (2018 to 2020)

TOP Certificate Program – Cal State University, Fullerton – Fullerton, CA

STUDY ABROAD FACULTY ORIENTATON TRAINING (2018)

Study Abroad Office – Cal State University, Fullerton – Fullerton, CA

OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES AMBASSADOR (2018)

OER Online Training – Cal State University, Fullerton, CA

DOCUMENTARY FILMMAKING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE (2018 to 2019)

Alumni and Career Development Course – University of Southern California – Los Angeles, CA

CERTIFIED GOTTMAN EDUCATOR (2005)

Certificate Program for *Bringing Baby Home Workshop* – (John Gottman) Relationship Research Institute

CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

PSYCHOTHERAPIST/LCSW – Private Practice – Therapy Without Walls California – 2011 to present

- Responsible for individual, couples and family therapy utilizing complete therapeutic skills from initial intake to termination.
- Clinical intake and assessment, treatment planning and diagnosis, interventions utilizing theoretical perspectives.
- Specializations include Millennial population, college age issues and emerging adulthood, couples during pivotal phases (new couples, premarital, expectant and new parents, parents of teens, stepfamily adjustment), aging adults and lifespan transitions.
- Resource, referral and case management.

GROUP THERAPIST/WORKSHOP FACILITATOR – Private Practice, Orange County, CA – 2006 to 2018

- Facilitate psychoeducational workshops for expectant parents, parents of newborns and parents with toddlers.
- Facilitate interactive workshops for parents of all developmental stages.

PSYCHOTHERAPIST/WORKSHOP FACILITATOR – Private Practice (Paulette Clark, LMFT), Irvine, CA – 2010 to 2011

- Individual, couples, families and groups - utilizing therapeutic skills from initial intake to termination.

COUNSELOR – Concordia University, Irvine, CA – 2006 to 2008

- Individual counseling to students (including aspects of personal, career, academic and group counseling) from intake to termination.
- Utilized knowledge of academic policies, standards and procedures to offer guidance in personal decisions and college course.
- Offered topical trainings and events to students on campus, collaborating with university student services and professors.
- Created a sensitive environment for diversity of students including academic level, ethnic background, cultural and sociocultural backgrounds. Specific attention to transferring and freshman level students entering into adjustment phases.

COUNSELOR – Community Service Programs, Inc. – Irvine, CA -- 2002 to 2003

- Individual and family short-term counseling services – through diversion services.
- Referred from the Irvine Police Department and Orange County Sheriff's Department.
- Facilitated court-mandated Parent, Youth and Law workshops in a required curriculum format to offending adolescents and families.
- Facilitated parent education groups (FOCUS Parenting Program) for parents of adolescents in the City of Irvine.
- Curriculum included: substance abuse, behavioral challenges, adolescent development education, relationship skills, communication skills and conflict resolution skills.

PROGRAM ASSISTANT – University of Southern California, MBA.PM Program – 1998 to 2002

- Acted as a representative for the Masters in Business Administration Program for Professionals and Managers at the USC, Orange County Campus.
- Program coordination, student services and advisement, office management, dissemination of program information and administrative support to the Program Advisor.
- Involved in organizing recruitment sessions for prospective students in addition to new student orientations.
- Liaison between staff, students and faculty members.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR – Child Abuse Prevention Council of O.C. – Tustin, CA – 1996 to 1998

- Coordination and administrative support for of all child abuse prevention programs for the agency and collaborating partners.
- Program development, statistical outcomes, representation at meetings, and liaison to on-site professional staff.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

CO-FOUNDER – SEE Associates – CA – 2023 to present – see-associates.com

- Curriculum development for documentary films from a social work perspective for educational settings, community activism and facilitated public discussion events. Specializing in the translation of visual media messages into strategic social action.

SEMINARS/CONFERENCES/IN-SERVICE TRAININGS

Relationship Styles and Interventions (Laguna Hills) – 2017/Pre-Marital Counseling Training - 2006

Brain Development and Addictions Training (Long Beach) 2016/ Substance Abuse Seminar (Dr. Henry Cloud) -- 2006

Disordered Eating and Nutrition Interventions Training (Online Training) – 2015/ Eating Disorders In-Service (Concordia University) -- 2007

Suicide Assessment Training (Anaheim) - 2008

Adoption Option Training (Santa Ana) – 2008/ Play Therapy In-Service (Catholic Charities) -- 2000

FACES Counseling Skills Conference (San Diego) – 2003

Child Abuse Training (CSP) – 2002/Domestic Violence Training (USC) – 2001/Annual Child Abuse Prevention Conference – 1997/1998/1999