

# Jennifer K. Towns, MSW, PhD

## Summary

I am a PhD-level clinician who has been in the social work field for over 20 years, providing individual, couples, and group therapy in a variety of settings. In addition, I have taught over 375 credit hours in both BSW and MSW programs (online synchronous, online asynchronous, and in-person). I am hoping to continue to work in higher-education.

## EDUCATION

**Walden University:** Minneapolis, Minnesota Dec. 2013-May 2018

- *PhD in Social Work: Concentration on Clinical Expertise*
  - o *Dissertation: LGB Help-Seeking in Rural Northern Michigan*

**University of Michigan:** Ann Arbor, Michigan Sept. 2004-Dec. 2005

- *Master of Social Work (MSW), Concentration: Interpersonal Practice and Health*
  - o Internship at University of Michigan Hospital N.I.C.U.
  - o Summa Cum Laude graduate

**Alma College:** Alma, Michigan Sept. 2000- Dec. 2003

- *Bachelor of Arts (BA), Psychology and Sociology/Anthropology*
  - o Thesis: Sex Roles and Relationship Satisfaction

## PROFESSIONAL LICENSES/ AFFILIATIONS

Licensed Master of Social Work (Michigan): Issued 4/08 License number: 6801087428

Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (Minnesota): Issued 6/19. License number: 28164

National Association of Social Workers (NASW) - Member ID: 886696139

National Association of Professional Women (NAPW)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Adrian College – (Current Employment)** August 2018-current

*BSW Program Director/Associate Professor of Social Work - (176 total credit hours taught to date)*

- SOCW 200: Foundations of Social Work
- SOCW 314: Professional Documentation in Social Work/Grant Writing
- SOCW 309: Self-Care for Helpers and Healers
- SOCW 325: Diversity: Inequality, Privilege and Oppression
- SOCW 333: Social Welfare Policy
- SOCW 382: Trauma Across the Lifespan
- SCCW 383: Clinical Traumatology
- SOCW 390: Social Work Research Methods
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- SOCW 404: Modern Social Work Theory
- SOCW 405: Capstone

- Multiple Internship Supervision, Independent Studies and Individualized Studies (50+ credits)

As Program Director, my primary responsibilities involve providing administrative and programmatic oversight for the new BSW program as well as managing associated CSWE accreditation, student engagement, and marketing initiatives. Consistent efforts to promote recruitment, retention, and graduation rates are paramount to this role. In addition, the Program Director cultivates new and innovative ways to maintain program efficacy, rigor, and competitiveness.

Within my role as an Associate Professor, I: provide lecture, develop curriculum, design and administer tests and assignments that assure mastery and critical analysis of the material. I also develop new courses based on the determined needs and interests of the department. I assist students in routine course study and provide feedback to the students related to their progress. I integrate NASW Code of Ethics in the development of the courses and adhere to CSWE core competencies and practice behaviors to ensure the program and courses fit criteria for continued CSWE accreditation. I also provide ongoing advising to students to assist with their academic planning and career goals. In addition to classroom face-to-face teaching, was able to pivot to provide exclusively virtual/remote instruction in response to COVID-19 protocols and safety procedures.

<b>University of Michigan –</b>	<b>August 2019-Current</b>
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*LEO Lecturer II – (as approved)*

- SW 504: Diversity and Social Justice in Social Work
- SW 506/521: Interpersonal Practice with Individuals, Families, and Groups
- SW 540: Trauma Basics
- SW 590: Introduction to Social Work
- SW 601: Applied Assessment Skills in Integrated Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse
- SW 603: Interpersonal Practice Interventions in Integrated Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse
- SW 698: Macro Capstone
- SW 718: MasterTrack Skills Lab

Within these courses, I: provide lecture, facilitate discussion, organize small group projects and role-plays, and adhere to the course guide set forth by the curriculum department and pathway instructors to assure mastery and critical analysis of the material. I assist students in routine course study and provide feedback to the students related to their progress. I integrate NASW Code of Ethics in the development of the courses and adhere to CSWE core competencies and practice behaviors, as well as demonstrate adherence and integration of PODS (Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice) concepts and practices into each class meeting and assignment. This role uses the CANVAS LMS as an integral component of delivery and instruction.

<b>Chamberlain University – Online (asynchronous)</b>	<b>2017-2018</b>
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*Visiting Faculty – (9 total credits hours taught)*

- *MSW 506: Social Welfare and Social Policy (3 semesters)*

Within these courses I utilized the CANVAS system to provide instructional material to students. Courses were pre-loaded with assignments, weekly readings, and discussion topics, so I was able to facilitate discussion board activities, provide additional resources, and provide substantive feedback to online learners. I was able to successfully navigate the online platform to provide a positive learning environment to scholar-practitioners from a variety of backgrounds and non-traditional student populations.

<b>Capella University- Online (synchronous and asynchronous)</b>	<b>2016-2018</b>
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*Contributing Faculty – (27 total credit hours taught)*

- *SOCW 5012 (several sections): Cultural Competence and Social Work Practice with Diverse Populations*
- *SOCW 5002: Social Welfare Policy and Practice*
- *SOCW 5007: Mezzo Social Work Practice*

Within these courses I utilized the Blackboard system to provide instructional material to students. Synchronous and asynchronous teaching was utilized through Adobe Connect. Courses were pre-loaded with discussion topics, so I was able to facilitate discussion board activities, provide additional resources, and provide substantive feedback to online learners. I was also in constant contact with main campus for on-going training, faculty resources, and faculty meetings. In addition, I was able to successfully navigate the online platform to provide a positive learning environment to scholar-practitioners from a variety of backgrounds and non-traditional student populations.

**Walden University- Online (asynchronous)**

**2017-2018**

*Contributing Faculty – (33 total credit hours taught)*

- SOCW 6111: Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice I (several sections)
- SOCW 6112: Advanced Clinical Social Work Practice II
- SOCW 6364: Social Policy: Analysis and Advocacy (several sections)
- SOCW 6070: Supervision, Leadership, and Administration

Within these courses I utilized the Blackboard system to provide instructional material to students. Courses were pre-loaded with discussion topics, and assignments, so I was able to facilitate discussion board activities, provide additional resources, and provide substantive feedback to online learners. I was also in constant contact with main campus for on-going training, faculty resources, and faculty meetings. In addition, I was able to successfully navigate the online platform to provide a positive learning environment to scholar-practitioners from a variety of backgrounds and non-traditional student populations.

**Grand Valley State University (in-person)**

**2015-2017**

*Adjunct Instructor – (21 total credit hours taught)*

- SW 620: Human Behavior and the Social Environment
- SW: 670: Social Work with Individuals
- SW 674: Children and Families
- SW 678: Social Work Policy and Practice

Within these courses, I provide lecture, administer tests and presentations and develop lesson plans in conjunction with university-provided and approved curriculum. I also assist students in routine course study and provide feedback to the students related to their progress. I effectively use channels of communication to coordinate with the main campus to provide continuity of course work and grading. I also integrated online format and online platforms such as Blackboard and Blackboard Collaborate to provide lecture, feedback, discussion, and assignments.

**Spring Arbor University (in-person)**

**May 2013- April 2015**

*Adjunct Instructor – (36 total credit hours taught)*

- SWK 335: Interviewing
- SWK 340: Practice with Individuals and Families
- SWK 447: Practice with Communities and Organizations
- SWK 442: Social Welfare Policies
- SWK 446: Practice with Groups

Within these courses, I provided routine lecture, assisted with program development and coordinated guest speakers when appropriate. I also provided ongoing feedback and counseling to the students related their progress within the program and specific to the course. I effectively used channels of communication to coordinate with the main campus to provide continuity of course work and grading.

**CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK EXPERIENCE**

**Dreaming Tree Counseling, LLC****May 2016-Present***Owner/Private Practice Therapist*

- Perform intake assessments and create therapeutic plans of service for each client.
- Utilize multiple evidenced-based treatments to provide individual and group therapy to adults, teens, and couples, including EMDR, Internal Family Systems/IFIO, Emotionally Focused Therapy, somatic and sensorimotor work.
- Provide tele-therapy to provide a diverse set of options for accessing therapeutic intervention.
- Specialize in therapy related to trauma treatment, relationships, and/or LGBTQIA+ issues.
- Lead lectures, discussions, and participate in speaking events that educate various groups on the treatment of Individuals with trauma histories, queer folk, and relationship intervention.

**North Country Community Mental Health****May 2015- May 2016***Clinical Services Supervisor*

- Supervision of all clinical services provided to clients within the 6 county Developmental Disabilities program, including physical therapists, occupational therapists, nursing services, speech/language services, dietary services, and psychological services.
- Responsible for developing and supervising positive behavioral support plans, including support plans that involve restrictive elements. These plans are then presented and approved by a Behavior Treatment Committee for assurance of least restrictive elements and promotion of both safety and quality of life.
- Teaching and training of home supervisors and staff in a variety of interventions and evidence-based practices.
- Provide outpatient therapy to clients related to a variety of mental health presentations including depression, anxiety, PTSD and various trauma, grief, and adjustment issues.

**North Country Community Mental Health****November 2008- May 2015***Outpatient Therapist*

- Performed intake assessments and developed person-centered plans of service for each assigned consumer.
- Worked in collaboration with the consumer, parents/guardians, and any other supports needed to assist with the development and implementation of treatment goals.
- Used Evidence-based practices such as DBT, CBT, and TREM to facilitate individual and group therapy to adults, teens, and children.
- Completed referrals for in-home services, hospitalizations, and crisis residential as needed in both routine and emergency situations.
- Participated in emergency on-call, screening clients for safety and needs - and referring them to appropriate services such as inpatient psychiatric hospitalization, substance abuse treatment, or outpatient services.
- Certified PMTO clinician (Parent Management Training- Oregon model) - a program that teaches parents more effective communication skills, encouragement techniques, and limit setting to reduce familial conflict and improve the parent-child relationship.

**North Country Community Mental Health****September 2006-November 2008***Family Support Services Coordinator/Case Manager*

- Provided general case management services to consumers with a wide array of both developmental disabilities and mental illness, including: intake assessments and plans of service for each assigned consumer. This also included working in collaboration with the individual, parents/guardians, and any other individuals needed to assist with the person-centered process.
- Provided advocacy for families within the school system – to ensure that services are delivered and received in the least restrictive and most beneficial manner possible.

- Performed crisis management in terms of emergency referrals, hospital visitations, emergency home visits, and collaboration with other staff to provide necessary assistance to families in crisis situations.

### **Bon Secours Hospital**

*Medical Social Worker – (2005-2006)*

- Assisted patients and families with discharge planning, which included placement in extended care facilities, inpatient rehab facilities, dialysis centers, and home health care.
- Provided psycho-social assessments, counseling, tangible emergency assistance, and crisis management to families in a medical setting.
- Completed intake assessments, assisted in resource attainment, and made referrals.
- Formulated plans and ongoing case management based on patient's needs.

### **INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE**

#### **University of Michigan Hospital and Health System**

*Social Work Graduate Internship: Pediatric and Neonatal ICU*

*Ann Arbor, MI: January 2005- December 2005*

- Completed intake assessments and interviews, assisted in resource attainment, and made referrals to various disciplines.
- Formulated plans and ongoing case management based on patient's needs.
- Collaborated with patients and multi-disciplinary team to develop discharge planning of high-risk patients for linkage to available post-partum services.
- Attended weekly seminars in: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Trauma/Grief/Loss, Child & Family Therapy, Crisis Intervention, Bio-Ethics, DSM diagnoses, Depression, and Cancer & Multidisciplinary Care.

*Social Work Graduate Internship: Child Protection Team*

*Ann Arbor, MI: January 2005- December 2005*

- Attended Child Protective Services Training on child abuse led by CPT physician for new Protective Service Workers. Participated in various CPT meetings with physicians and other members of the multidisciplinary team to discuss suspected child abuse/neglect cases involving patients that were currently inpatient and being treated by the team

### **COLLEGE SERVICE**

- Social Work Program Director – Fall 2023 - present
- Director of Honors Program – Fall 2022-present
- Social Work Department Chair – Fall 2020-present
- MaPPS Mentor – University of Michigan – Fall 2020 -Fall 2022
- Faculty Chair: Gender Issues Advisory Committee – 2019-Present
- Member: Diversity and Inclusion Ad Hoc Committee – 2018-Present
- Faculty Sponsor: Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention (student organization) – 2019-present

### **RESEARCH and SCHOLARSHIP**

- Towns, J. (2020). Insidious trauma, heteronormative steeping, and help-seeking: Exploring the non-heterosexual experience in rural Northern Michigan. *Journal of Social, Behavioral, and Health Sciences*, 14, 221–243. <https://doi.org/10.5590/JSBHS.2020.14.1.16>
- Completed: Dissertation on mental health help-seeking experiences of LGB individuals in rural Northern Michigan. This examined the potential need for an increase in resource development, clinical training, and available services specific to this population in this rural area. Published in ProQuest 2018.

- Current research project being completed related to incidents of past trauma and current perceptions of stress, sense of belonging, and retention rates of first-generation college freshman.
- **Recently published book:**  
Towns, J. (2023). Our Deepest Roots: Navigating Past Trauma to Build Healthier Queer Relationships. Publish Your Purpose Press.

## PRESENTATIONS

- Poster Presentation: “Reframing the Rural Non-Heterosexual Experience – Insidious Trauma and Heteronormative Steeping”. PoleStar of Traverse City.
- Paper Presentation: “LGB Rural Mental Health Needs”. North Country Community Mental Health & Michigan Department of Community Health Annual Conference, 2018.
- Poster Presentation (Submitted): “Increasing Competency for Clinical Treatment of LGB Individuals in Northern Michigan”. Michigan Rural Health Conference, 2019.
- “Resilience” Panel presenter for college – wide forum, March 2020.
- “Is it Safe to Love You?” – Presentation on Neuroception, Trauma, and Adult Relationships – Washtenaw Area Council on Children - 2023.
- “Is It Safe to Love You: Exploring the Connections of Neuroception, Attachment, and Relationships. Washtenaw Area Council on Children - 2023.
- “Impact of Individual & Collective Queer Trauma on Relationships – MOASH Conference October, 2025.
- Holding Space: Queer Adolescence, Sexual Health, and the Politics of Authenticity – Keynote Speaker – MOASH Conference October, 2025.
- “Mind Over Semester: Building Mental Health and Self-Care Skills for College Life” – Bulldog Academy Presentation November, 2025.

## CERTIFICATIONS

- Certified Clinical Trauma Specialist – Individual certification: Trauma Institute International
- Fully trained in EMDR, including 30 hours of training and 10 hours of supervision
- Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) – Core Skills Trained
- Gottman – Level 1 and 2 trained
- IFS – Circle Training and 40 additional hours of training
- TF-CBT Certification
- Motivational Interviewing – Fully trained
- QIDP (Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional) and QMIP (Qualified Mental Illness Professional)
- CAFAS trained (annual renewal)
- Caregiver Wishlist certified
- Certified Family Trauma Professional
- Certified Trainer in Gentle Teaching –Working with People
- Certified in Parent Management Training – Oregon model
- Annual renewal of CPR, First Aid, Recipient Rights, Pain Management and Ethics certifications

## TRAININGS AND ADDITIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Trauma-informed Treatment - 100+ CEU's
- Self-Led Sexuality – 12 CEU's
- Domestic Violence – 36+ CEU's
- Somatic Psychotherapy training – 24 CEUs
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy – 24 CEU's
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy – 48 CEU's
- LGBT issues and Mental Health – 60+ CEU's
- Mental Health in Adolescents
- CASE model for Suicide Screening
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Higher Education
- Dementia and the CMH Population
- Training in Sensory Sensitivity and the ASD population
- Clinical documentation
- Illness Management and Recovery
- Risk management
- Anger management
- Anxiety treatment
- Self-Harming Behaviors and Treatment
- Personality Disorders
- Emergency services and Intervention in the Mental Health Field
- Ethics and Boundaries
- Play Therapy
- Psychotropic Medications
- Self-esteem Development and Social Skills
- Development and Developmental Disorders

## SUPERVISION/FIELD PLACEMENT

- Provide on-going supervision to LLMSW's in accordance with Michigan Regulatory and Licensing Board for assistance in obtaining their full licensure. This is done in both an individual and group format.
- 2021-2022 Field Supervisor for Her World Initiative for University of Michigan School of Social Work Masters of Social Work student.

## PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

- **Christine Dillon, LPC:** Autism Program Director. North Country Community Mental Health. 1 McDonald Blvd. Petoskey, MI 49770. (989) 732-0871 x 3606
- **Carole Merritt-Doherty, LMSW:** Director of Acute Clinical Services. North Country Community Mental Health. 625 Courthouse Dr. Kalkaska, MI 49646. (231) 258-5133
- **Jeanna Jacobsen, PhD, LCSW:** MSW Core Faculty/Assessment Coordinator. Social Work Program. College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Walden University. 100 Washington Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55401  
Email: [jeanna.jacobsen@waldenu.edu](mailto:jeanna.jacobsen@waldenu.edu). Phone: 971-272-1859
- **Carissa Massey, PhD, MA:** Provost. Pennsylvania College of Art and Design, 204 North Prince St., Lancaster, PA, 17608. Email: [cmassey@pcad.edu](mailto:cmassey@pcad.edu). (Previous Dean of Graduate Studies at Adrian College)
- **Stacey Chipman:** Retired Clinical Director. North Country Community Mental Health. 1420 Plaza Dr. Petoskey, MI 49770. 800 Livingston Blvd. (231)347-7890.