

**COURSE TITLE:** TRAUMA: Students & Teachers

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 3 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 2.00 credits]

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 30  
**OREGON PDUs:** 30  
**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 30

**INSTRUCTOR:** Koleen McGuire  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Educators go into teaching because they love children, but do they really know how to handle and teach all children? According to Dr. Sadin 1 in 4 children have been through trauma. This statistic alone should be a wake-up call to all educators, as children who have been through trauma require large amounts of patience, empathy, and love. Their brains have developed differently due to either neglect, abuse, poverty, and living in a house with domestic abuse. Did you know that many educators have been through trauma and may not realize how it impacts the way they teach? In fact, some research shows that almost half of all educators have experienced some form of trauma in their lives. Do you know your own Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) score? This class will allow you to find out what your score is and how those experiences in your life may help you have more empathy toward your students who have been impacted by trauma. This class will also teach you how trauma can affect the brain of our young learners, and they may need more from us.

This course is appropriate for teachers K-12.

Text: Teachers' Guide to Trauma: 20 things kids with trauma wish their teachers knew.  
Dr. Melissa Sadin and Nathan Levy.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

- Gained an understanding of how trauma affects the brain of children.
- Understood the importance of asking students, "What happened to you?" versus, what's wrong with you"?
- Discovered what your personal ACES score is and how it affects your teaching.
- Understood the importance of creating connections for students.
- Gained an understanding of how to keep your composure as an educator.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%

2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%
  3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%
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### **CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

### **ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

#### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Teachers' Guide to Trauma: 20 things kids with trauma wish their teachers knew.  
Dr. Melissa Sadin and Nathan Levy. Approximately \$25 from Amazon.

- ***Dr. Melissa Sadin and Nathan Levy's Teachers' Guide to Trauma: 20 things kids with trauma wish their teachers knew***  
ISBN# 0999790811  
by Dr. Melissa Sadin; Nathan Levy, Dallin Orr

[Buy from Amazon](#)

#### **MATERIALS FEE**

None

### **ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

#### **A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

#### **Assignment #1: Introduce Yourself**

Introduce yourself and write about your current position. Include what challenges you're currently facing with your students and what your experience is on dealing with children who've experienced trauma. (A minimum of 1-2 pages)

#### **Assignment #2: Trauma and Survival Mode**

Read Chapters 1-2 in "Teachers Guide to Trauma." Be prepared to discuss why children of trauma are in survival mode and how should teachers handle this. Why is it important that we don't yell at these students?

View the following videos to further your knowledge of students of trauma by Michele Lee Nieves

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/HgUH1qrJgE4>

Understanding Trauma: Stuck in Survival

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/KoqaUANGvpA>

Understanding Trauma: Learning Brain vs Survival Brain

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/E1EiLxo1WM>

An Introduction to Trauma and its Impact on Students

In 400-500 words, write about what brain state students of trauma are in. From the videos and chapters 1-2 of your book, take into consideration the following:

- The difference between the learning brain and the survival brain.
- What can teachers do for students in the survival brain state?
- What strategies can they implement in their classroom for students in the survival state?

### **Assignment #3: Children of Trauma and Negativity**

Read chapters 3-6 in "Teachers Guide to Trauma." Be prepared to discuss why children of trauma view the world so negatively. Is there something educators can do to help them become more positive?

Read the following articles to further your understanding of the effects of trauma on our students and what teachers can do to help them.

- [How Trauma Affects Kids in School](#)
- [The How and Why of Trauma-Informed Teaching](#)

In 400-500 words, write about how students of trauma have a negative outlook on themselves and the world they live in. Discuss how educators can support these students and touch on why teachers should never get into a power struggle with these students.

### **Assignment #4: Teachers and Trauma**

Read chapter 7 in "Teachers Guide to Trauma." Teachers need to know that teaching a child who has been through trauma may stir up some of their own childhood experiences. Adverse Childhood Experiences, (ACE) is what is used to see how much trauma a person may have gone through in their childhood. This could be abuse, neglect, and other indicators of a troubled childhood. Do teachers know their own ACE's score?

- Read the following article to further your knowledge on this topic.  
[When Students Are Traumatized, Teachers Are Too | Edutopia](#)
- Take the [ACE survey](#) on this website:  
<https://acestoohigh.com/got-your-ace-score/>

After taking the survey, in 400-500 words, describe your score and if it surprised you.

- How will your experiences shape your teaching to students with high ACE scores?
- What are your experiences with teaching students who've been through trauma?

### **Assignment #5: Self-Regulation & A Safe Place**

Read chapters 8-12 in "Teachers Guide to Trauma." Students who have been through trauma need to learn how to self-regulate, as they don't have the tools to calm their body. Teachers also need a safe place for students to go when they need to calm their bodies down.

Watch the following videos to further your knowledge: Emotion Regulation in Children with Complex Trauma

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/7hfn0CEm2J0>

Trauma Module 6: Self-Regulation

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/GwMrDDHdZIA>

Trauma Module 4: Relationships

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/XKImZobbG1w>

In 400-500 words, describe how you can teach students who have been through trauma to self-regulate. Think of your classroom and describe an area that could be a safe place for a student trying to calm their body down. Describe a time when you had to work with an escalated student. Consider the prompts below.

- What are the differences between a child who's been through trauma and one that hasn't when it comes to regulation?
- As a teacher, how can you teach them to self-regulate?
- What kind of safe place can you create in your classroom for these students?

### **Assignment #6: Trauma and Executive Functions**

Read chapters 13-15 of "Teachers Guide to Trauma," Students of trauma may have short-term memory and may benefit from certain

accommodations.

From your text and the articles below, in 400-500 words, describe what you can do to help your students with their executive function skills. Include how you would assign homework to a student who may not have the comforts of home to complete it.

- Supporting Students Affected by Trauma  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/supporting-students-affected-trauma/>
- School Strategies for Helping Students of Trauma  
<https://www.verywellfamily.com/ptsd-trauma-4685816>
- Helping Students Develop Executive Function Skills - Edutopia  
<https://www.edutopia.org/article/helping-students-develop-executive-function-skills>

### **Assignment #7: Recognizing students of Trauma and Keeping our Composure**

Read chapters 15-16 in “Teachers Guide to Trauma” Students of trauma need routine and to feel safe. As educators, how can we identify students with trauma, and what can we do to help them? Do we need to speak differently to them so as not to set them off? How do we remain calm with them?

Watch the videos below to learn more about this topic:

Recognizing Signs of Trauma in Students; Helping Them Adapt & Build Resilience

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/f06ksH8KXcg>

Stress, Trauma, and the Brain: Insights for Educators--The Power of Connection

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/oEIS6AGwuxU>

- Read the article:  
[How Teachers Can Recognize Signs of Trauma in Students](#)

From your text and the videos on recognizing trauma, write a 400-500 word essay about signs of trauma in our students. Discuss how we can connect with students of trauma and how we can help them be successful.

### **Assignment #8: Disciplining Students of Trauma**

Read chapters 17-20 in “Teachers Guide to Trauma.” In 400-500 words, use your text and the articles below to discuss how you would discipline students who have been through trauma.

1. Discuss if this is different than what you currently do in the classroom and how is it different than traditional discipline.
  2. Discuss how the current use of discipline could be causing more harm to students who have been through trauma.
- Traditional Discipline vs. Trauma-Responsive Practices  
[http://Traditional Discipline vs. Trauma-Responsive Practices - Strobel Education](http://Traditional-Discipline-vs.-Trauma-Responsive-Practices-Strobel-Education)
  - School Discipline Is Trauma-Insensitive and Trauma-Uninformed  
[http://School Discipline Is Trauma-Insensitive and Trauma-Uninformed | Psychology Today](http://School-Discipline-Is-Trauma-Insensitive-and-Trauma-Uninformed-Psychology-Today)

### **Assignment #9: What I Wish My Teacher Knew**

Understanding why students misbehave is a question all teachers wish they had the answer too. In 400-500 words, describe why trauma causes students to misbehave. Include the importance of this writing prompt, “I wish my teacher knew\_\_\_\_\_.” Have you done this writing prompt before? If so, what surprised you about what some of the students said? Watch the videos and read the article below to improve your knowledge about why this strategy can be powerful yet create some problems.

What kids wish their teachers knew

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/8pcKbf\\_vpHg](https://www.youtube.com/embed/8pcKbf_vpHg)

Pros and Cons of “I Wish My Teacher Knew...”

[http://Pros and Cons of “I Wish My Teacher Knew...” “I Wish My Teacher Knew...” – Teacher Power](http://Pros-and-Cons-of-I-Wish-My-Teacher-Knew...-I-Wish-My-Teacher-Knew...-Teacher-Power)

How Trauma Affects Kids in School

<https://childmind.org/article/how-trauma-affects-kids-school/>

## ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT

### B. LEARNING APPLICATION

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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#### Assignment #10: (400 & 500 Level) Lesson Plan

Complete **one (1)** of the following options:

##### Option A)

- Adapt or create a lesson plan reflecting on what you've learned in this course.
- Any lesson plan template will work.
- Implement your lessons with students in your classroom.
- Write a 400-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback or noteworthy student products.
- Submit your lesson units to your instructor.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box when you submit your lesson.
- As you submit your lesson, consider sharing it with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box.

**OR**

##### Option B)

Use this option if you do not have a classroom available.

- Adapt/create 2-3 lesson units reflecting on what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Write a 500+ word article concerning any noteworthy success you've had as a teacher with one or more students who may have suffered trauma.
- Please refer to the guidelines for our blog What Works: Teaching at its Best prior to writing your article.
- When you submit your article to your instructor, please also email a copy to Yvonne Hall, yvonne@hol.edu, THI blog curator.
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Submit your article to your instructor

#### Assignment #11: Creating a Poster or Bibliography

Complete one of the following options:

##### Option A)

Create a poster displaying the brain of a student who has developmental trauma, which we know is in the survival state. In a 3-4 page paper, explain how you will implement a classroom environment that will build connections that these students so desperately need. Also, students of trauma need to learn how to self-regulate. What type of self-regulation strategies will you be teaching your class?

**OR**

##### Option B)

Create an annotated bibliography of five books minimum or articles related to the subject of teaching students of trauma or any of the topics in the book. The annotation should include the title, author, publisher (or URL), length of the book or article, the new information you found there, if any, your opinion of the value, or your criticism of the contents of each book or article, and rate the importance of the material in relation to the subject of this course.

#### Assignment #12: (500 Level ONLY)

In addition to the 400-level assignments, complete two (2) of the following

Choose **two (2)** of the following assignments and post responses.

##### Option A)

Children that come from trauma brains may not be ready for some of the SEL programs that schools provide. Before they can begin to

learn, they need to feel connected and safe. Being aware of that, what social-emotional programs do you currently use, and how can you make sure all students will be impacted by this?

In a 2-3 page paper, write about your current social-emotional program your school uses and what important factors you need to consider with a student in your class that has been through trauma. Use videos from the bibliography or from your own internet searches.

**AND/OR**

**Option B)**

Create a lesson plan that you can implement in your classroom, which helps students understand the power of community.

1. For guidance, please download THI's lesson template.  
<https://www.hol.edu/about/lesson-template>
2. Implement your lessons with students in your classroom.
3. Write a 400-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
4. Include any student feedback or noteworthy student products.
5. Submit your lesson units to your instructor. 6. Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by checking the lesson library box when you submit your lesson.

**AND/OR**

**Option C)**

According to Theo Sadin, the author of the text, along with having a sense of community in the classroom, students of trauma may need a "chill out" space. In 400-500 words, describe different ideas you can find through your own internet research of what this might look like in your classroom and why is this so important to provide.

**AND/OR**

**Option D)**

Create another assignment of your own design with the instructor's prior approval.

**C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #13: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

**SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?

**INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

Koleen McGuire graduated with a master's degree from City University in 2009, and for the past 14 years has been working in the Puyallup School District as a school counselor. Five of those years she was the McKinney Vento Liaison for the Puyallup District and is very experienced with students who have experienced poverty, which most of the time can involve trauma as well. Before earning her master's, she worked in the Puyallup district as a paraeducator and is experienced in all areas of serving children. Having raised four boys and working in the district for many years, Koleen feels like it's her mission to create a safe, supportive learning environment for all students.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**TRAUMA: Students & Teachers**

## Book:

Sadien, Dr. Melissa, 2019. Teachers' Guide to Trauma. ISBN: 978-0-9997908-1-6. In Teachers' Guide to Trauma you will learn about how trauma can effect the brain of our students and how this can impede learning. Dr. Sadin openly discusses her own experience of raising a child who has been through trauma, which makes this book that much more powerful. Educators will also learn some strategies that could be a game changer when teaching students who have been through trauma.

## VIDEOS:

- Ham, Jacob, 2018. Understanding Trauma: Learning Brain vs Survival Brain. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KoqaUANGvpA>
- Nieves, Michelle, 2021. Understanding Trauma: Stuck In Survival Mode | Will I Ever Be Normal? <https://www.youtu.be/HgUH1qrJgE4>
- Ohel, 2021. Recognizing Signs of Trauma in Students; Helping Them Adapt & Build Resilience <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f06ksH8KXcg&t=840s>
- Schwartz, Kyle. 2017. What kids wish their teachers knew. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pcKbf\\_vpHg&t=20s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8pcKbf_vpHg&t=20s)
- TEA Project Restore, 2021. Understanding Trauma and Its Impact. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1EiLxo1WM>
- ThinkTVPBS, 2021. Stress, Trauma, and the Brain: Insights for Educators--The Power of Connection <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEIS6AGwuxU&t=253s>

## Articles:

- Ablon, J. Stuart PHD. 2020. School Discipline Is Trauma-Insensitive and Trauma-Uninformed <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/changeable/202001/school-discipline-is-trauma-insensitive-and-trauma-uninformed?scrlbrkr=fd122b81>
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- DiTullio, Gina, 2018. Helping Students Develop Executive Function Skills <https://www.edutopia.org/article/helping-students-develop-executive-function-skills>
- Teacher Power, 2022 Pros and Cons of "I Wish My Teacher Knew...". <https://teacherpower.org/blogs/blog/pros-and-cons-of-i-wish-my-teacher-knew>
- Roisleen, Todd .2021. Recognizing the Signs of Trauma. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/recognizing-signs-trauma>
- Gordon, Shari, 2019. School Strategies for Students Experiencing PTSD or Trauma <https://www.verywellfamily.com/ptsd-trauma-4685816>
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- Miller, Caroline, 2023. The How and Why of Trauma-Informed Teaching. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-and-why-trauma-informed-teaching>
- Miller, Caroline, 2023. How Trauma Affects Kids in School <https://childmind.org/article/how-trauma-affects-kids-school/>
- Strobel Education, 2020. Traditional Discipline vs. Trauma-Responsive Practices. <https://strobeeducation.com/traditional-discipline-vs-trauma-responsive-practices/>