

**Professional Approach**  
**Ann M. Callahan, PhD, LCSW**

**TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

It is such a privilege to work in higher education. I have taught a range of undergraduate and graduate courses in a variety of modalities including face-to-face, hybrid, and online coursework. In the process, I have discovered that it is my deepest desire to motivate students to achieve excellence through social work education. I help students succeed in the classroom by providing individualized attention and clear assignment guidelines. I further seek to cultivate an inclusive learning environment that allows students the space to employ critical thinking skills to complete course assignments. Our classroom is a collaborative learning environment where students exchange ideas through small group exercises and seminar style class discussions. Therefore, assignments are often collaborative, project-based for experiential learning. New information is presented in a common-sense way with social work practice examples. I utilize technology to supplement lectures with audio podcasts, video clips, and web resources. I also seek to inspire excellence by example, so I push myself to consistently provide a high quality educational experience. I model the importance of continuing education and research on evidence-based practices. Toward this end, I am always interested in feedback on how to be a better professor.

**RESEARCH AGENDA**

My research agenda is to clarify how spirituality informs social work practice in hospice, palliative, and long-term care settings. My preliminary research question has been to define spiritual sensitivity and the processes involved in the delivery of spiritually sensitive hospice social work. I drew from my own research to inform a model of spiritually sensitive hospice social work. This model is outlined in my book *Spirituality and Hospice Social Work*, published by Columbia University Press. It proposes that a social worker's expression of spiritual sensitivity can lead to the experience of enhanced life meaning, known as relational spirituality. The next phase is to move toward expanding my proposed model for application in palliative and long-term care settings. I am currently researching how micro, mezzo, and macro level relationships have the potential to inform relational spirituality. I have also been conducting educational research to further develop evidence-based modules for training social workers in the delivery of spiritually sensitive care. I would like to publish another book to disseminate this collective work. Toward this end, I am always interested in building research collaborations and opportunities to share my research.

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