

Preconvention Institute—Thursday, November 12, 2015 (3.0 CEUs)—Half-day Session
1:00pm-4:00pm

Dr. Terry Wolfer and Dr. Mackenzi Huyser

"Grappling with Faith: Teaching with Decision Cases"

Abstract: This workshop will introduce the case method of teaching using didactic and experiential methods. Essentially, the case method involves in-depth class discussions of open-ended accounts of actual practice situations that are themselves ambiguous and complex. These accounts require participants to first formulate the problem and then decide on a course of action. The case discussions help participants to acquire and refine important critical thinking and decision-making skills. The workshop will provide a rationale and guidance for using case method in Christian higher education, in part through a live case discussion and debriefing. It will also provide tips for using cases from NACSW's *Grappling with Faith*, additional resources for learning to use the case method, and suggestions for evaluating student learning outcomes.

Outline: Topics to be addressed and timeline.

- Introductions (5 minutes)
- PPT: Introducing case method of teaching (55 minutes)
- Live case discussion (75 minutes)
- Break (15 minutes)
- Debriefing and Q & A (45 minutes)
- Information of using *Grappling with Faith* and the accompanying teaching notes (20 minutes)
- Additional resources for learning to use the case method (5 minutes)
- Evaluating learning outcomes of decision case learning (15 minutes)
- Conclusion (5 minutes)

Learning Objectives: *As a result of this presentation participants will be able to:*

- Define 'decision case' and of the case method of teaching, and distinguish these from traditional cases and discussion methods, respectively.
- Articulate a pedagogical rationale for the case method of teaching, especially for use in Christian social work education.
- Explain what case method requires of participants (e.g., advance preparation, active involvement) and how best to participate in case discussions (e.g., analyzing concrete situations, applying theory to practice, generating and evaluating solutions)

Primary Audience: Instructors only

Content Level: Instructors only

Number of Continuing Education Contact Hours: 3.0

Bio Information:

Terry A. Wolfer, MSW (1984, Ohio State), PhD (1995, Chicago), is a Professor in the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina. For the past decade, he has taught a case-based capstone course for graduate social work students. Dr. Wolfer has co-authored or co-edited six collections of decision cases, including *Grappling with Faith* (NACSW, 2010). He has also conducted research and published articles on case method teaching. With Michael Welsh, he was awarded the “C. R. Christensen Award for the Outstanding Teaching Case” in 2004 by the North American Case Research Association. For his work on case method teaching and case writing, he was awarded the “CSWE Distinguished Recent Contributions in Social Work Education Award” in 2009 by the Council on Social Work Education.

Mackenzi Huyser, PhD, MSW, is Executive Director of Chicago Semester and Professor of Social Work at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL. Dr. Huyser has authored and co-authored several decision cases, as well as co-edited *Grappling with Faith* with Dr. Terry Wolfer.