

Ethical and Legal Issues in Professional Counseling

CPSY 510-01

Fall, 2013

Instructors:

James Gurule, MA, LPC
(503) 645-3581, ex. 2310
jamesg@lifeworksnw.org

Sally Rasmussen, MA, LPC
(503) 645-3581, ex. 2314
sallyr@lifeworksnw.org

We meet:

Mondays, 5:30 to 8:30 pm

Catalogue Description:

“The consideration of the applicable ethical and legal issues for mental health settings.”

Course credit:

2 semester hours

Textbook required:

Ethics in Counseling and Psychotherapy: Standards, Research, and Emerging Issues, 4th Edition,
Elizabeth Reynolds Welfel
(2010)

Overview:

This course is designed to develop a wide knowledge base, critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills for your professional counseling practice. In our class, you will learn about specific ethical and legal issues and ways of thinking to enhance your professional development. You will be challenged to increase awareness, sensitivity, and understanding of the ethical principles of counseling, and to developing skills in ethical decision-making. The goals for this class are to instill both a desire and diligence on your part as practicing counselors and to develop a high level of personal and professional ethics for your professional counseling work.

Course Objectives:

- Knowledge of state, federal, and provincial laws and regulations that apply to the practice of counseling and marriage & family therapy.
- Knowledge of professional ethics and standards of practice that apply to counseling and the practice of marriage & family therapy.

- Knowledge of policies and procedures of the practice setting.
- Understanding of the process of making ethical decisions.
- Ability to recognize ethical dilemmas in practice settings.
- Ability to recognize when a legal consultation is necessary.
- Ability to recognize when clinical supervision or legal consultation is necessary.
- Ability to recognize when and how to effectively utilize consultation.
- Ability to recognize issues related to ethics, laws, regulations, and professional standards.
- Understand the limitations to confidentiality and parameters of mandatory reporting.
- Understanding the need for and how to create a safety plan for clients who present with potential self-harm, suicide, abuse, or violence.
- Understand how to take action when ethical and legal dilemmas emerge.
- Know how to report information to appropriate authorities as required by law.
- Understand how to practice within your defined scope of practice and competence and how to obtain knowledge of advances and theory regarding effective clinical practice.
- How to obtain license(s) and specialty credentials.
- Understand the necessity of self-care, and monitoring personal issues and problems to insure they do not impact the therapy process adversely or create vulnerability for misconduct.
- Understand how to maintain client records with timely and accurate notes.
- When (and how) to consult with peers and/or supervisors if personal issues threaten to adversely impact clinical work.
- The importance of pursuing professional development through self-supervision, collegial consultation, professional reading, and continuing educational activities.

Readings:

Our class discussions and assignments will mainly come from readings in our textbook. This book offers a wide scope and broad understanding of ethical thinking as illustrated in the assigned chapters. As soon-to-be professionals entering a complex, highly ambiguous field, recognizing and understanding the ethical dimensions of your work is critically important. Strong ethics are the foundation for competent counseling services. This class will help develop your professional ethics and thereby enhance your competence and help insure the safety of your future clients. In this course, you are expected to keep up with the assigned readings and to actively contribute to our class discussions each evening.

Class assignments:

Discussion Questions: Each week, you will write two (2) discussion questions. These questions, written on 3 X 5 inch index cards (provided by your instructors), are due at the beginning the next class period, and will come from your assigned chapters. Your questions and their answers will be the foundation of our class discussions. You may (or may not) receive credit for late cards at the discretion of the instructors. The cards will be worth up to 2 points each (maximum of 4 points per class), for a total of **16 cards (up to 32 points)** in the semester.

Participation in weekly class discussions: Learning Ethics is participatory in nature. It is our expectation that every student will discuss a question or idea in each class session. Since there are only **10** class meetings, every class session counts! We want you to find your voice! Students may earn **1** point per class and a semester total of **10 points**.

Roleplays: Each student in the class will provide a “client write up” which is due on Sept. 16. This “client” will be role played by you on 3 different occasions throughout the semester, giving a student in the class the opportunity to practice implementing the ethical concepts we read about and discuss in class. In addition, each “therapist” will have the opportunity to participate in a case presentation and also a brief class presentation related to your client. Role plays, case presentation and the class presentation will earn up to **5 points** each for a total of **25 points**. There will be more information to come.

“Important Others” exercise: Everyone is inspired and influenced by ‘important others’ in our lives. You will create a presentation, from a variety of formats, showing some of your most important influences. Students can earn up to **10 points** for the construction and presentation of this exercise. Your class presentations will be limited to a maximum of 10 minutes per student.

Final examination: The Final examination for this class will be composed of selected questions from students on topics from throughout the semester. The questions will be written in true-or-false, fill-in-the-blank, or multiple-choice styles. The Final will be worth **23 points**.

Grading: For a total of up to **100 points** on your final grade, scoring will proceed as follows:

A = 100 to 93 points	A - = 92 to 90 points	
B + = 89 to 87 points	B = 86 to 83 points	B - = 82 to 80 points
C + = 79 to 77 points	C = 76 to 73 points	C - = 72 to 70 points

Please note: A score of 69 points or below is registered as a failing grade for this class.

Attendance and courtesy: Class attendance is expected and required. If you are going to miss a class, you will be given a make-up assignment. Please inform us as soon as possible if you anticipate missing any classes. More than one missed class (3.5 hours) will be considered by the Counseling Psychology Department as a failure to complete our class.

Of course, as a professional courtesy to your classmates and instructors, please restrict the use of computers and other electronic devices in our class. We can make exceptions if you have informed us of a pending critical incoming communication. If you require any educational accommodation based on ADA standards, please provide your instructors with evidence of written approval by the Counseling Psychology Department as early in the semester as possible.

Date	Topic	Readings	Pages	Assignments & expectations
Sept. 9, 2013	Class Introductions	Chapters 1 and 2	pages 3 to 56	Attendance (every class)
Sept. 16, 2013	Ethical Practice in a Multicultural Society	Chapter 3	pages 57 to 77	Discussion cards Cultural Symbols Ct. write up
Sept. 23, 2013	Confidentiality	Chapter 5	pages 107 to 156	Discussion cards Ct. Role play #1
Sept. 30, 2013	Informed Consent	Chapter 6	pages 157 to 180	Discussion cards Ct. Role play #2
Oct. 7, 2013	Multiple Relationships and Boundary Issues	Chapters 7 & 8	Pages 181 to 245	Discussion cards Ct. Role play #3
Oct. 14, 2013	Group and Family Interventions	Chapters 9	pages 247 to 274	Discussion cards Ct. Roleplay #4
Oct. 21, 2013	Ethics of Supervision	Chapter 13	pages 379 to 400	Discussion cards Ct. Roleplay #5
Oct. 28, 2013	Responsibilities for Self and Colleagues	Chapter 15	pages 433 to 452	Discussion cards Presentations for Group One (10 pts) Presentation of ct. to class.
Nov. 4, 2013	Special Topics	As Assigned	TBD	Discussion cards Presentations for Group Two (10 pts)
Nov. 11, 2013	Conclusions			Final Exam (23pts) Presentations for Group Three (10 pts)

Textbook: Ethics in Counseling and Psychotherapy: Standards, Research and Emerging Issues, 4th Edition, Welfel, 2010.

While the chapter topics are the same, there may be a difference in chapter number depending on which edition of the Welfel book you have. Pay close attention to the title of the chapter to be read.