

PRACTICAL SKILLS FOR COUNSELORS

Department of Counseling Psychology
Lewis & Clark College

CPSY 509

Spring, 2014

“Before graduation, counseling students must develop skills to deal effectively with clients' relational and emotional difficulties. The concerns of their clients can also trigger discomfort and stress for student counselors. The skills that we, as counselor educators, are teaching can be developed neither directly from information in books nor in the absence of a counselor trainee's personal growth” (Yagar & Tovar-Blank, 2007, p 143).

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COURSE INFORMATION

Time: Wednesday, 8:30-11:45am
Location: York 107
Credits: 3 credit hours
Pre-requisites: CPSY 503, CPSY 513

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Overview of basic counseling concepts and skills, including skill development through role-playing and simulated counseling experiences.

COURSE MATERIALS

Required Textbooks:

Young, M. (2012). *Learning the Art of Helping: Building blocks and techniques* (5th Edition).

Additional recommended textbooks that may support your skill development:

What Therapists Say and Why They Say It (2007) Bill & William McHenry
Negotiating the Therapeutic Alliance by Safran & Muran
On Becoming a Better Therapist by Barry L. Duncan
The Gift of Therapy by Irvin D. Yalom
Clinical Pearls of Wisdom by Michael Kerman
What Therapists Say and When They Say It by McHenry & McHenry.
Trauma Stewardship (2009) Laura van Dernoot Lipsky

Other necessary equipment:

1. Encrypted flash drive

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will establish a foundation for their professional role as effective counselors through the practice of counseling micro skills, development of awareness and intentionality in conceptualization of clients and their issues, along with increased awareness of self as an essential component in effective therapeutic interactions. Awareness and articulation of a personal worldview creates a foundation of accountability when considering the worldview of their clients and the impact of issues of social justice as they contribute to a client's well-being and quality of life.

The following program objectives as well as objectives defined by the CACREP are the standards for "helping relationships" These broad objectives will be pragmatically and experientially integrated into the classroom experience.

- 5 a. An orientation to wellness and prevention as desired counseling goals,
- 5 b. Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes,
- 5 c. An understanding of essential interviewing and counseling skills,

COURSE POLICIES

Format and Outcomes

Students will demonstrate the understanding and use of counseling skills, which includes their relationship to social and cultural contexts. Emphasis will be placed on developing an empathetic and therapeutic relationship within the counseling context. Ethical principles, self-awareness, personal counseling style and honoring of diversity will be examined through textbook reading, class discussions, reflective assignments, as well as various classroom activities. Discussions of social justice, position of power and privilege, as well as ethical considerations of marginalization and discrimination in counseling interactions will be employed.

Throughout the class, students will be practicing counseling skills and will provide videotapes demonstrating their understanding and acquisition of counseling skills. The class will be developed as a community of collaborative learners where each will be an active in agent in their own learning experiences. **Students will participate in generating a classroom environment where students support each other in a respectful, productive and resourceful manner as might be paralleled in the world of clinical work.**

Confidentiality and Ethical Guidelines

It is expected that students will follow the ethical guidelines as defined by the American Counselors Associations. The class activities and assignments require utilizing classmates for counseling sessions for the purpose of demonstrating micro skills. Although guidelines, parameters and boundaries are implemented into the topics utilized for the tapings it is expected that anything presented by students during tapings and in class discussions will remain absolutely confidential. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in failure of the class.

Email Policy

I maintain a 48-hour response policy for all email communications not including weekends. If you do not receive an email response within 48 hours of your email being sent, assume that I did not received your email

unless I respond noting otherwise. **In very rare circumstances (i.e., emergencies) will an email receive a response between 5pm Friday and 8am Monday.** Note: Questions regarding assignments are not typically considered emergencies.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance: You are expected to attend every class. Because this course only meets once a week, missing one class can be detrimental to your overall success in the course as a whole. **More than two absences (excused or not) will result in you failing the course.** Additionally, it is important that you be on time for class.

Absences and Tardiness: Excused absences, in which prior arrangements are not possible, (i.e. accident requiring hospitalization, death of an immediate family member, sudden illness, etc.) will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Please notify me in the event of an absence. Additionally, it is important that you be on time for class. This is a professional program, and the expectation is that you treat it as such. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated.

Late assignments

All assignments will be due at the start of class on the dates outlined in the syllabus. Late assignments will be penalized 10% of the points available for each 24-hour interval that they are late. Assignments > 1 week late will not be accepted unless you have medical or other valid documented reasons for the delay. In short, all assignments are outlined in the syllabus, are not subject to change, thus providing you with all the information and ample time to plan your schedules accordingly to ensure that all assignments are completed thoroughly and in a timely fashion.

Student with Disabilities Policy

Lewis & Clark College is committed to serving the needs of its students with disabilities. Professional staff in the office of Student Support Services ensure that disabled students receive all of the benefits of a comprehensive selection of services, and a formal Student Disability Grievance Procedure provides prompt and equitable resolution of any complaints arising out the College's responsibilities under the ADA Amendments Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other pertinent federal, state, and local disability anti-discrimination laws. Please see the Student Support Services website for more information: http://www.lclark.edu/offices/student_support_services/rights/disability_policy/

Evaluation

Each student will be evaluated in the areas of demonstration of micro skills, self-awareness, empathetic presence, integration and application of skills, ethical considerations, effectiveness of oral and written communication, and openness to feedback. Factored into the possible points earned for each assignment will be a final evaluation of skill demonstration/attainment as well as professional qualities and ethical demeanor. Judgments about what constitutes satisfactory performance will be made by the class instructor which if not satisfactory might result in failure of the class. Final decisions will be made by the class instructor about successful completion of the class as well as readiness to move forward to practicum and clinical work. If there are concerns about a student's work a meeting with the instructor will be scheduled to discuss the dynamics and potential outcomes.

It is normal to experience occasional discomfort as you go through your training program. Learning can be challenging! Receiving feedback from your peers along with your instructor can be difficult at times, too. While

this is a normal developmental process, should you have emotional difficulty throughout the course that is consistent and interferes with your participation, the following measures are available to support you:

- 1) Please feel free to contact me as soon as possible to discuss your concerns or thoughts. We can meet outside of class time. I'm available via email, phone and to meet up in person. You can expect fair, direct and open communication from me as your instructor.
- 2) Feel free to contact your advisor or another administrative ally in the counseling program to discuss your concerns or needs.
- 3) You may also work on these concerns in the context of private counseling.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Counseling and Micro skills Videotaping

During weeks 5 through 13, you will be paired up with a classmate and you will alternate in the counseling role for a 50-minute session in the clinic (Person A will counsel person B on week 5 and you will switch: person B will counsel person A, for week 6). The therapist will gather for the last 45 minutes to debrief and link the sessions to the course material.

1. Please see the assignments below for the specific expectation for both the skills you will demonstrate and the additional assignments that are required in conjunction with the videotaped counseling session.
2. Complete the assignment that accompanies your tape and submit via Dropbox to Dr. Pittman

- 1) Assessment/Intake skills
- 2) Listening/Presence/Non-Verbals/Invitational Skills
- 3) Minimal Encouragers & Open-ended questions
- 4) Alliance Building/Goals Setting/Treatment Negotiation Skills
- 5) Reflecting Feeling
- 6) Reflecting Content
- 7) Reflecting Meaning
- 8) Challenging Skills/Acknowledging a Discrepancy/Immediacy Skills

See attached schedule for corresponding dates.

Therapist self-evaluation (15 points):

For every therapist session where you are not actively involved in the debrief, you are to complete the *Counseling Skill Scale Session Self-Evaluation*.

Sessions are to be recorded in their entirety. The therapists NOT being focused on in the debrief, will need to request to have their sessions exported. These video should be deposited into the course folder and saved as THERAPIST LAST NAME_SESSION #

Client Session Ratings (3 points each):

You will complete a client rating form after each session about your therapist. These forms are given to the instructor and NOT shared with your peer therapist.

Tape #1 (25 points): Focus on informed consent delivery, intake skills, non-verbal attending, presence, data-gathering, listening, building rapport & emotional bond component of therapeutic alliance. Begin to formulate

clarity on what the client wants to work on: goal-negotiation/task negotiation. ALL intake tapes should be exported.

Additional Written Assignment Tape #1: Submit a written intake form (this will be handed out) based on the data you gathered from your first session with your client. This document is to be typed. No handwritten intakes will be accepted.

Tape #2: Pick two skills that we've gone over to date to focus on in your second session.

You will write a case note for this session that is to be submitted electronically by **Thursday at midnight**.

Tape #3: Pick an additional two skills (ones you haven't focused on to date) that we've gone over to focus on in your third session.

Additional assignment for Tape #3 (30 points):

a) Find a skill that you were using and transcribe the 3 minutes before, during and after your skill (for a total or 9-10 minutes).

Instructions for your transcription: Label your classmates comments, then label your responses. Underneath your response identify the micro skill you are using as well as your conceptualization (why did you use that skill at that time? Was the intervention effective? What are you noticing about the process?). Send your transcription to your assignment classmate by the beginning of class on the Wednesday following the taping of the session. In other words, you have one week to complete the transcription.

b) Peer feedback on transcription: Using track changes in Microsoft Word, give the counselor feedback on their transcription particularly focused on their conceptualization of the micro skill. Do you agree with their assessment of the effectiveness of the intervention? Is there something they missed? Could have done differently? Your feedback is due at class on Wednesday. *Email your feedback to the counselor and the instructor by the beginning of class.*

Additionally, you will write a case note for this session that is to be submitted electronically by **Thursday at midnight**.

Tape #4: Pick two additional skills you have not focused on in a prior tape and begin to discuss and develop a plan for termination. Write a case note for this session that is to be submitted electronically by **Thursday at midnight**.

Tape #5 (30 points): **Find a time to meet with your partner outside of class for your final tape.** This tape will serve as an integration of all the skills learned to date. Demonstrate to the best of your ability all the skills you've learned to this point with specific attention to termination skills. This tape should be completed anytime after tape #4 and prior to your presentation. ALL tapes to be exported.

Write a termination summary for this session that is to be submitted via Dropbox by **Thursday at midnight**.

In Class Presentation (30 points): Choose 5 min of one of your first four tapes and 10 minutes of your final tape to compare and contrast your skill development over the course of the semester. You will show these in class and present them within the frame of acknowledging your strengths and areas you'd like to continue to grow. ***Obtain verbal permission from your client to show these sections of the video to the class.*** This is a 30-minute in class presentation.

Class Participation (45 points; up to 3 points per class)

You are expected to actively participate in class discussions, as this is a community of learners in which we all contribute. Participation not only adds to the quality of discussions, but also demonstrates that the class is completing assigned readings and understanding the material. When you do not participate, other students are forced to pick up your slack. **You can't participate if you are not present.** Active participation is essential and will be evaluated in the following way:

Excellent (3 points) - Proactive participation through leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration. This does not mean dominating the discussion or using a lot of words to say little. This means that there is evidence that you have prepared for class by reading the required material, having the necessary equipment, and have turning in any assignments.

Satisfactory (2 points) - Reactive participation with supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion rather than study, thought, and contemplation.

Minimal acceptability (1 points) - Passive participation including being present, awake, alert, attentive, but not actively involved.

Unsatisfactory (0 points) - Uninvolved including being absent, late, present but not attentive, sleeping, reading the newspaper, making irrelevant contributions that inhibit the progress of the discussion.

Assignment	Possible Points	Your Points
Tape 1 Assignments	25	
Tape 3 Assignments	30	
Therapist Self Evaluations	15	
Client Session Ratings	15	
Presentation	30	
Participation	42	

Grading Scale

A = 157-141 B = 140-125 C = 124-109

Special Notice: Please delete all videotapes at the end of the semester. This includes originals as well as any clips that are stored on your video recording devices or computers.
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COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings	Tape Assignments
Week 1			
8-Jan	Introduction, creating safe space and confidentiality	Chapter 1	
Week 2			
15-Jan	Therapeutic Alliance, common factors and counseling diverse clients	Chapters 2,3	
Week 3			
22-Jan	Assessment and the Initial Interview and goal setting	Chapters 9, 10	
Week 4			
29-Jan	Invitational Skills and Paraphrasing	Chapters 4, 5	
Week 5			Tape 1A
			Debrief Therapist A
5-Feb	Clinical documentation, Assessing Risk, Mandated Reporting	supplemental readings	
Week 6			Tape 1B
			Debrief Therapist B
12-Feb	Reflecting Feeling and Reflecting Meaning and Summarizing	Chapters 6, 7	A group intake due
Week 7			Tape 2A
			Debrief Therapists 1A-3A
19-Feb	Challenging Skills and Motivational Interviewing	Chapter 8	B group intake due
		Supplemental Readings	
Week 8			Tape 2B
			Debrief Therapists 1B-3B
26-Feb	Change Techniques and Stages of Change	Chapter 11	
		Supplemental Readings	
Week 9			Tape 3A
			Debrief Therapists 4A-6A
5-Mar	Outcome Evaluation and termination skills	Chapter 12	
Week 10			Tape 3B
			Debrief Therapists 4B-6B

12-Mar	Curative Factors and Advanced Change Techniques Part I	Chapter 13	
Week 11			Tape 4A
			Debrief Therapists A
19-Mar	Curative Factors and Advanced Change Techniques Part II	Chapter 14	A group transcription due
Week 12			
26-Mar	SPRING BREAK- NO CLASSES		B group transcription due
Week 13			Tape 4B
			Debrief Therapists B
2-Apr			
	Presentations		
Week 14			
9-Apr	Presentations		
Week 15			
16-Apr	Presentations		