

**Lewis & Clark College**  
**Professional Mental Health Counseling & Professional Mental Health Counseling –**  
**Specialization in Addictions**  
**MHC 509**  
**Practical Skills for Counselors**  
**Syllabus Cover Sheet**

Required Objectives:

Professional Counseling Identity (CACREP 2016 Standards)

- 1k. strategies for personal and professional self-evaluation and implications for practice
- 5f. counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process
- 5g. essential interviewing and counseling skills
- 7b. methods for effectively preparing for and conducting initial assessment meetings

Entry-Level Specialty: Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CACREP 2016 Standards)

- C2l. legal and ethical considerations specific to clinical mental health counseling

Additional Objectives:

Students will establish a foundation for their professional role as effective counselors through the practice of counseling skills and development of intentionality in conceptualization of clients and their issues.

Students will develop an increased awareness of self as an essential component in effective therapeutic interactions.

Students will begin to articulate a of a personal worldview that creates a foundation of accountability when considering the worldview of their clients and the impact of issues of social justice as they contribute or hinder to a client's quality of life.

Students will learn how to use empathy to understand and communicate understanding of client worldviews.

## The Ever Evolving Syllabus of MHC 509 Practical Skills for Counselors Spring 2018

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**Office Hours:** Please arrange in advance by email or phone

### **Catalog Description:**

This course serves as an introduction to the basic counseling skills and techniques utilized in professional mental health and addictions counseling. Special focus is given to basic counseling concepts and skills. The various concepts, skills, and techniques presented in the course will be satisfactorily developed through demonstration and simulated videotaped counseling experiences.

**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.

The following program objectives are in accordance with the CACREP 2016 standards for “Counseling and Helping Relationships” and will be experientially integrated into the classroom experience.

- 5 f. Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process.
- 5 g. Essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills.
- 5 j. evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention.

### **Required Text:**

Young, M.E. (2017). Learning the Art of Helping 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

*Additional articles will also be assigned throughout the course*

### **Course Expectations:**

#### **CPSY Departmental Attendance Policy**

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove the incomplete must be documented appropriately and

stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

**PLEASE NOTE** (Americans with Disabilities Act): Students with specific learning needs and/or disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any medical emergency information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of an evacuation, should inform the instructor as soon as possible, no later than the first week of term.

### **Small Groups**

Students will work in groups of three to practice the specific skills covered in class. These groups will meet in the second half of each class and each triad will switch between roles of counselor, client, and observer. These role plays should feel as genuine as possible, thus for students in the client role, reflect on things that have happened or is currently happening in your life, that is safe to disclose. This content is protected by the same limits of confidentiality within our profession (i.e disclosing abuse of children/elderly or plan and intent to harm self and others). For students in the role of the counselor, focus on practicing skills covered in class, while still attending to the client. Try not to “force” the process. For observers, keep an eye on time and be ready to provide constructive feedback to student in counselor role and any details related to the therapeutic process as a whole.

### **Evaluation**

Each student will be evaluated in the areas of demonstrating microskills, 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.

For your reference, the Professional Qualities Evaluation (PQE) and the Counselor Readiness Scale are included in the back of the syllabus. These rubrics are used by the instructor to determine the professional dispositions and skills expected of students before progressing to practicum. The professional dispositions of Social and Self-Awareness and Openness, will be a focus of this course.

### Course Requirements:

1. Attend and participate in class. Attendance is mandatory. (See Course Expectations)
2. Complete weekly readings prior to class meetings
3. Guided Reflections (10% of grade)  
Students are responsible for writing weekly journal entries reflecting on their experiences of the counseling process. Journal prompts may be provided to direct reflective process and will be posted on Moodle for that week. Rather than summarizing the particulars of each class, students will focus on their internal responses to engaging in the experiential activities, demonstrating their reflection on the many issues involved in building strong helping relationships while incorporating personal style in a professional, authentic, and caring manner. Each journal entry will be a minimum of 2 pages in length. Handouts will be provided with examples for student use in developing a style of reflection. Reflections will be sent via e-mail to me and are due by noon on the Friday immediately following class.
4. Transcriptions (60% of grade)  
Three (3) interview transcripts – i.e., verbatim records of counseling interviews – are required of each student: (1) a baseline against which progress can be measured (10 minutes); (2) a mid-term transcription (12-15 minutes) in which all specific skills covered to date are demonstrated; (3) a final transcription (15-20 minutes) in which all specific skills covered during the semester are demonstrated. This assignment will provide students with an opportunity to self-assess their interviewing skills. Detailed instructions and an example will be provided. Students who do not initially demonstrate each skill set to the satisfaction of the course instructors can be asked to engage in a session to demonstrate required skills.
5. Self-Assessment Reflection (20% of grade)  
Students will fill complete a self-assessment of the PQE on themselves within the first and second last week of class and will write a reflection detailing;
  - Overall processes around self-assessment
  - Areas of growth since the start of the semester
  - Areas that need to be improved upon
  - Plan on how to improve upon those areas.
  - Strategies to get others (faculty, students, other supports) involved in your development.

This assignment is designed to be reflective and provide space for you to explore your own processing as an emerging counselor. Go deep! If you were to write on anxiety, try and explain some of the reasons for and source of anxiety. I will provide feedback on each reflection and will be looking for that deeper process. This reflection should be between 3-4 pages. You will be expected to turn-in both self-assessments with this paper.

6. In-class group project (10% of your grade)  
In your small group, you will demonstrate an (approximate) 15-20 minute demonstration of the identified skills covered in class. This demonstration is your creative effort in helping make that skill “stick. ***The more creative the demonstration, the better.*** Please use the content and information in your text and support resources to guide your creative representation of the skill. Examples include; creating a game, skit, song, an interactive theater, interactive art etc.

## Weekly Readings and Agenda\*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic/Class Activity</b>	<b>Assigned Reading/</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
Jan. 8	Introductions, Class Overview, Syllabus	Course Syllabus	
Jan. 15	<b>MLK Day (no classes)</b>		
Jan. 22	Counseling foundations, therapeutic relationship, invitational skills <i>Small Group Introductions/Goals</i>	Young, Chapters 1-2 Herman, 1993	PQE Self-Assessment Reflection #1
Jan. 29	Therapeutic relationship and basic attending skills <i>Invitational Skills</i>	Young, Chapter 3	Transcription 1
Feb. 5	Reflecting Skills: Paraphrasing Process vs Content Ego Development <i>Paraphrasing</i>	Young, Chapter 4 "Sex Education" "Counselor as Pacer"	Reflection #2
Feb. 12	Reflecting Skills: Paraphrasing (review), Feelings <i>Reflecting Feelings</i>	Young, Chapter 5	Reflection #3
Feb. 19	Reflecting Skills: Feelings (review), Meaning <i>Reflecting Meaning</i>	Young, Chapter 6	Reflection #4
Feb. 26	Challenging Skills <i>Identifying Discrepancies, Giving Feedback</i>	Young, Chapter 7	Reflection #5
Mar. 5	Assessment and Goal Setting <i>Initial Interview/Identifying and Collaboration</i>	Young, Chapter 8	Transcription 2
Mar. 12	Outcome Evaluation Termination <i>Termination Session</i>	Young, Chapter 11	Reflection #6
Mar. 19	Multicultural Competence Skills <i>Broaching Working with Children</i>	Young, Chapter 12	Reflection #7
Mar. 26	<b>Spring Break</b>	Self-Care	
Apr. 2	Advanced Change Techniques 1 <i>TBD by Class</i>	Young, Chapters 9-10	Reflection #8
Apr. 9	Advanced Change Techniques 2 <i>TBD by Class</i>	Young, Chapters 9-10	2 <sup>nd</sup> PQE Self-Assessment Transcription 3
Apr. 16	Putting it all together		Self-Assessment Reflection
Apr. 23	Group Presentations, Potluck!!!		Group Presentation

**\*Please Note: The weekly schedule is offered as a guideline only and is subject to revision by the instructor based on the needs of the class.**