

Practical Skills for Counselors MHC 509-1
Professional Mental Health Counseling
Lewis and Clark College Spring 2015

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Date 1/12/2015 – 4/27/15
5:30pm -8:45pm
Rogers Hall 220

Welcome to our class. I am grateful to be on this learning journey with you. This class is designed to introduce you to basic counseling skills. We will be highly engaged in learning and practicing skills while also exploring our thoughts, beliefs and reflections in response to the counseling process. I invite you to bring your experiences and ideas to our class and stay open to opportunities for deep learning, self-reflection, collaboration and discourse. Together, I am hoping we build an authentic learning community by creating an atmosphere that fosters open and respectful communication and feedback. I hope to cultivate a curious and dynamic examination of counseling skills and process as we courageously address the strengths and limitations of our course content.

Required Textbook:

Learning the Art of Helping Fifth Edition (2012) Mark E. Young.

Second required book:

You will choose to read and participate in a peer-facilitated small learning community. You will choose one of the following books. Do not purchase this book until you have confirmed and signed up for the learning community associated with this book on Moodle as group sizes are limited. (Please understand you may not be able to read your first choice). Go to moodle and self select your group of choice, based on the following list of books:

- The Gift of Therapy: An Open Letter to a New Generation of Therapists and Their Patients, 2009 by [Irvin Yalom](#)
- Becoming a Therapist: What Do I Say, and Why?, 2003 by [Suzanne Bender MD](#), [Edward Messner MD](#)
- The Making of a Therapist, 2004 by [Louis Cozolino](#)
- Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others, 2009 by [Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky](#), [Connie Burk](#)
- We've Had a Hundred Years of Psychotherapy--And the World's Getting Worse, 1993 by [James Hillman](#), [Michael Ventura](#)

Other necessary equipment:

1. Flip DVR cameras are available for purchase at the Lewis and Clark Bookstore or can be loaned out. The graduate school has a camcorder loaner pool for students. They have 25 Flip camcorders for use by graduate students. Students must email gradloaner@lclark.edu to reserve a camcorder for up to 5 business days. They can pick up the equipment Monday through Friday from 2pm to 4pm in Rogers 214. *Check with grad loaner for current hours of operation*

A digital camera or flip camera must be utilized for the video tapings. Phones or computers are not acceptable devices.

Essential Goals

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 CACREP are the standards for "helping relationships" These broad objectives will be pragmatically and experientially integrated into the classroom experience.

1. An orientation to wellness and prevention as desired counseling goals
2. Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes
3. An understanding of essential interviewing and counseling skills

Catalogue Description CPSY 509 - Practical Skills for Counselors

Overview of basic counseling concepts and skills, including skill development through tapings and simulated counseling experiences.

Prerequisite: Consent of advisor.

Credit: 3 semester hours.

Prerequisite: CPSY 503, 513.

"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, 200, p 143)."

COURSE POLICIES

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 agent in their own learning experiences. Students will participate in creating 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.

CPSY Departmental Attendance Policy

Class attendance and participation is a critical factor to your success in the course. As you develop your professional identity as a counselor, I encourage you to subsume professional behaviors such as timeliness, attentiveness and engagement in the class. You are adult learners, making professional and personal decisions. I encourage you to be involved in this course participating to the best of your ability, use effective communication skills, and directly express your ideas, needs, desires, conflicts, and/or relevant learning.

We will have initial and ongoing discussions around acceptable class norms, breaks, etc. I appreciate your honest input and continued engagement in this process.

Class attendance is expected and required. ***It is important to note that although you will be expected to make up missed course content, any missed class time will lower your ability to earn full professional participation points.*** 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. There are no excused absences accepted for the first night of class, taping nights, presentation days and the final night of class. You will be required to arrange a time and space to do any make up tapings with your classmate. Joanie O'Brien in the Registrar's office is in charge of scheduling space on campus: jobrien@lclark.edu; Phone: (503)768-6031

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 my in the event of an absence.

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.

Assessments 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 schedule to discuss and address concerns and identify potential outcomes.

It is normal to experience occasional discomfort as you go through your training program. Learning can be challenging, and 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

Counseling and Micro skills Videotaping

During weeks 4 through 12, you will be paired up with a classmate and you will alternate in the counseling role for a 50-minute session from approximately 7pm-8pm in an assigned location for your first three tapes. The whole class may gather at 8pm-8:45pm to debrief and link the sessions to the course material.

Instructions and Requirements:

1. Videotape the sessions in their entirety.
2. Submit the session via Dropbox (<https://www.dropbox.com/>) to your instructor. (I will send you a link to the shared folder and you will need to sign up for dropbox).
3. 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.
4. Complete any assignment that may accompany your tape and submit via Moodle per assignment.

List of (Micro) skills utilized in videotapes:

1. Assessment/Intake skills
2. Listening/Presence/Non-Verbals/Invitational Skills
3. Reflecting Content
4. Reflecting Feeling
5. Reflecting Meaning and summarizing
6. Challenging Skills/Acknowledging a Discrepancy/Immediacy Skills
7. Goal setting Skills
8. Change techniques
9. Evaluation/Assessment/Termination skills
10. Curative Factors

With each tape, you will submit a completed self and observer assessment (see appendix __). Additionally, there may be assignments associated with specific tapes. And finally, the journal reflections will be tied into specific taping assignments.

Week 4 & 5: Tape #1 – focus on assessment, intake, listening, presence, non-verbals and invitational skills. Assignment:

Week 6 & 7: Tape #2 – focus on reflections. Assignment:

Week 8 & 9: Tape #3 – focus on change techniques, challenging skills, discrepancy, immediacy skills, goals setting. Assignment:

Week 10 & 11: Tape #4 – focus on all skills learned. Assignment:

Small Learning Communities: Book Choice

Choose a book from the list at the beginning of this syllabus. Sign up for your learning community (centered around each book) through Moodle. There will be 4 students per community and each group member will take turns coming prepared to class with questions to guide their group in a discussion about the weekly assigned reading. Each student will be responsible for 3 different group discussions and will record their questions and the group discussion, uploading to moodle, on their assigned week.

Journal:

Weekly journal assignments. There will be weekly journal assignments for students to complete. Journals will be collected at random, read and provided feedback. Journals can be completed in electronic or journal/paper format, and *must* be completed weekly.

Skills presentation:

You will work in dyads to provide an (approximate) 15-20 minute demonstration of the identified skills listed above. This demonstration is your creative effort in helping to make this skill 'stick' in the minds of your classmates. ***The more creative demonstration, the better.*** Please use the content and information in your text and support resources to guide your creative representation of the skill. Examples of demonstrations might include; creating a game, a skit, a song, creating an interactive theater, interactive art, etc.

Summative reflection:

Watch all four video-tapes. Attempt to identify when you demonstrate the various skills taught throughout this course, as you reflect on your skill development. Consider the other assignments in this class (guided book group, skills presentation and journal writings). Review the in-class lessons that focus on the hard and soft skills of counseling.

Write a 2-3 page, single spaced reflection describing your process and progress, your salient learning moments throughout the course. Identify your overall strengths, areas for growth and create goals for your professional development.

Evaluation:

Total possible 200 points

Grading scale:

186 - 200 = A	154 - 159 = C+
180 - 185 = A-	146 - 153 = C
174 - 179 = B+	140 - 145 = C-
166 - 173 = B	139 and below = F
160 - 165 = B-	

Assignment	Point Value	Date(s) Due
Tape #1	15	
Tape #2	25	
Tape #3	20	
Tape #4	25	
Small Learning Book – guided questions (4)	20	
Journal	25	
Skills presentations	20	
Summative reflection	20	
Professional participation	30	

Week	Date	Class content	Next week/class
Week 1	January 12		
Holiday	January 19	Class not in session	
Week 2	January 26		
Week 3	February 2		
Week 4	February 9		
Week 5	February 16		
Week 6	February 23		
Week 7	March 2		
Week 8	March 9		
Week 9	March 16		
Spring Break	March 23	Class not in session	
Week 10	March 30		
Week 11	April 6		
Week 12	April 13		
Week 13	April 20		
Week 14	April 27		

Appendix A: Counseling Skills Evaluation Form

Pre-Practicum/Practical Skills

Instructions: Rate your self/ the student on the items listed below by circling or filling in a letter for each category. The “no information” category should be reserved for those rare times where there really is no information at all. Remember to take into account the trainee’s (your) developmental level when considering expectations. Identify strengths, areas of growth and a plan to addressing growth areas.

Use the following scale to rate yourself / the trainee according to expectations for his/her developmental level.

N = No Information; **U** = Unacceptable Performance; **P** = Progressing; **M** = Meets Expectations

Skills

1. Therapeutic Relationship: Appropriate pacing. Ability to communicate to the client unconditional positive regard, genuineness, congruence. Accurately communicates an empathic emotional response. Ability to establish and maintain a relationship of trust, which will facilitate the counseling process.

Student				
N	U	P	M	
Observer				
N	U	P	M	
Supervisor				
N	U	P	M	

2. Session Management: Puts clients at ease. New clients; establishes rapport, introduces the process of counseling, explain/obtain informed consent, set up the counseling session. Maintain appropriate focus on client concerns during the session.

Student				
N	U	P	M	
Observer				
N	U	P	M	
Supervisor				
N	U	P	M	

3. Intake skills: Ability to conduct an intake interview, complete a mental health history, a mental status evaluation, a bio-psychosocial history. Screens for addiction, aggression, and danger to self and/or others, as well as co-occurring mental disorders.

Student				
N	U	P	M	
Observer				
N	U	P	M	
Supervisor				
N	U	P	M	

4. Communication Skills: (fill in) St O Su

Ability to paraphrase	—	—	—
Ability to reflect content	—	—	—
Ability to reflect feeling	—	—	—
Ability to reflect meaning	—	—	—
Ability to summarize, identify patterns	—	—	—
Ability to use verbal encouragers	—	—	—
Ability to use non-verbal encouragers	—	—	—
Ability to use questions to elicit content	—	—	—

Student				
N	U	P	M	
Observer				
N	U	P	M	
Supervisor				
N	U	P	M	

5. Use of self skills: Able to elicit client strengths and resources. Able to use immediacy (in-vivo discussion with client about the therapeutic relationship, the counselor's feelings and reactions to the client). Willingness and ability to address challenging issues in the session.

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

6. Challenging skills: Appropriately and effectively challenges clients. Ability to clarify the presenting problems (scope, dynamics, intensity, attempted solutions, client's view of etiology). Identifies inconsistencies and discrepancies.

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

7. Goal setting skills: Recognition of the unique eco-systemic factors that may impact client's presenting problems. Sets realistic, objective therapeutic goals. Uses appropriate interventions. Demonstrates the ability to modify counseling systems, theories, techniques and interventions to make them culturally relevant for diverse populations.

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

8. Change techniques: Has adequate understanding of counseling techniques, general client dynamics, potential interventions. Demonstrates sufficient flexibility to meet clients differing needs. Demonstrates consistency between theoretical orientation and counseling style.

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

9. Ongoing assessment and termination: Regularly evaluates client progress and appropriately adjusts goals and interventions. Is able to accurately conceptualize client symptoms and presenting problems. Uses the principals and practices of ongoing assessment, intervention and termination.

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

10. Curative factors: Draws on knowledge base to understand clients. Can develop and articulate a plan for addressing client concerns based on sound counseling principles, and which is consistent with the client's worldview and the counselor's theoretical orientation. Applies cultural competencies to cases

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

11. Professional skills: professional dress, starts and ends sessions on time, follows policies and procedures, presents professionally. Thoughtfully gives and receives feedback. Resolves differences and conflicts with colleagues in professional, respectful ways.

Student
N U P M
Observer
N U P M
Supervisor
N U P M

12. Identify notable counselor strengths_____

13. Identify areas of growth_____

14. Identify plan for progressing in growth areas_____

Student signature_____

Observer signature_____

Supervisor signature_____