

Syllabus Cover Sheet: Lewis & Clark College Professional Mental Health Counseling & PMHC – Specialization in Addictions--MHC 509--Practical Skills for Counselors--Spring 2024

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.

Methods of Instruction for this Course

Instruction Method	Mark All That Apply
Lecture	X
Small Group Discussion	X
Large Group Discussion	X
Course Readings	X
Group Presentation	
Individual Presentation	X
DVD/Video Presentation	X
Supervised Small Group Work	X
Individual/Triadic Supervision	X
Group Supervision	X
Case Study	
Debate	
Class Visitor / Guest Lecturer	
Off-Campus / Field Visit	
Other:	X
Role (“real”)-play, self-assessment, transcription	X

MHC 509 – Practical Skills for Counselors – Spring 2024
Mondays 9:00-12:15, 3 semester hours, Prerequisite: MHC 503, 513

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Office hours:
Mon 4-5, Tues 8-10, Thurs 1-2
and/or other times when
arranged in advance

Please email me to make appointments for office hours and make sure I have confirmed the appointment through Google Calendar. Appointment times often fill up quickly, especially nearing the end of the semester. Appointments can be in-person or over the phone. Thank you!

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

Required Readings: see Moodle, updated weekly

Textbook: Course readings and resources will be posted to the course Moodle page.

Optional text: Young, M.E. (2017). *The art of helping: Building blocks and techniques* (6th ed.). Hoboken: Pearson.

This text is the one being used in the other sections of this course. It gives more information about each of the skills that we will be practicing in this course. It might be very helpful to some of you, but I will also be posting other readings and videos about the skills, as well as talking about them during class. It is up to you if you decide that you'd like to also read the info from this text.

Essential Outcome Goals: Students will establish a foundation for their professional role as effective counselors through the practice of counseling 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. Most of all, we will focus on maintaining empathy at all levels and being able to use empathy and connection with “clients” toward therapeutic goals.

Boundaries are extremely important in this course. Since class members will be participating both as counselors and as “clients” in their authentic selves (i.e., “real” plays rather than role-plays), it is essential that each member of the course be aware of what they are willing to disclose as “client” and what they are not. Counselors will be following the emotional openings and providing an empathic environment that encourages disclosure, so it is up to the “clients” to be aware of when to say “stop” or “I don’t want to go there right now” or other ways of putting up a boundary. We will discuss this issue at length in class, but please contact me with specific questions and concerns if they are not answered in class.

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 readings, 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 video recordings 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.

Non-discrimination, professional student conduct, sexual misconduct and academic integrity:

This course adheres to the general policies outlined in the catalog and student handbook of the Lewis & Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling. This includes full adherence to the following policies:

- Nondiscrimination: go.lclark.edu/gsec-nondiscrimination;
- Standards for professional student conduct and academic integrity: go.lclark.edu/gsec-conduct;
- Sexual misconduct: go.lclark.edu/titleIX.

If you have any questions regarding these policies, please speak to your instructor for clarification.

Disability services statement: *If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.*

Student Support Services is available via email (access@lclark.edu) or by phone (503-768-7192). If you call and leave a message, they will call you back. You can also make an appointment on line via their website: (www.lclark.edu/offices/student_support_services/). Appointments will be conducted either by phone or Zoom.

Technical requirements students need to be aware of as we begin a new semester:

The main learning platforms for this class will include Moodle and (if needed) Zoom. Moodle will be used as the primary course site and is where students will access weekly learning modules and all course materials. Please let me know ASAP if you do not see our course in your Moodle dashboard. Zoom will be used for class sessions when we can't meet in person due to weather or instructor illness. We will also use Zoom to practice telehealth during part of our time together.

If you have questions about accessing and using Moodle, visit [Lewis & Clark's Moodle Resources page](#). Moodle and tech support is also available by email at ITservice@lclark.edu or by phone at 503-768-7225. IT's summer hours are 9-5, Monday to Friday. If you call, leave a message and they will call you back.

For help and troubleshooting with Zoom, visit the Zoom Help Center: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

If you face Internet access challenges: Some companies are offering free or discounted access during this time. To learn more about options visit Information Technology's [Learning Remotely website](#).

Evaluation: This class uses proficiency grading in order to individualize the goals for each student. All students will be evaluated on relational counseling skills (see Skills Rubric). Additionally, asynchronous learning activities will be assigned each week in order to approach the content in a variety of ways.

Assessments about what constitutes satisfactory performance according to the skills rubric will be

made by the class instructor. If these skills are not satisfactory by the end of the semester, students may need to re-enroll in the course. 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 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 outside of class time. You can expect fair, direct and open communication from me as your instructor.
- 2) Feel free to contact your advisor to discuss your concerns or needs.
- 3) You may also work on these concerns in the context of private counseling.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Ten (10) weeks activities on Moodle; 3% each week — 30%

Tape #1 transcript and reflection — **20%**

Transcribe your favorite 5 minutes and your least favorite 5 minutes of your tape today, write a 2 page reflection of your experience responding to these questions:

1. What did you do well in this session?
2. What are some places that you got stuck?
3. What are some things that you need to work on more in your skills practice in class?
4. (Optional) Questions for my instructor.

Turn in only the transcript and reflection on Moodle in one document (Word or PDF only please).

Tape #2 —25% (transcript, recording, reflection and individual meeting for feedback)

Using all the counseling skills you have learned up to this point, record a “real-play” counseling session during class time. The session must be 15-20 minutes in length. Include a verbatim transcript of your entire recorded session.

Additionally, you will include a short **2-page reflection** section at the end of your transcript to answer the following questions:

1. What went well in this session? What are some places that you got stuck?
2. Did you hear and identify any recurring client themes anywhere? Explain. Did you miss a recurrent theme, but caught it on the recording later? Explain.
3. What have you learned about yourself as a counselor so far from reviewing your recorded sessions and transcribing them?
4. (Optional) Questions for my instructor.

Grading will be based on the earnest attempt to execute advanced reflections skills and challenging skills. Though perfection of these skills is neither required nor desired, students should be able to at least be engaging in adequate risk-taking to be able to make partially successful executions of these skills to receive a passing score on this assignment.

Tape #3 (recording, reflection and individual meeting for feedback; extra recordings as needed to raise outcome scores) — **25%**

Record a final “real play” session with a classmate during class, a 45-50 minute session. The tape will be evaluated for the course counseling skills up until 25:00, so the skills from the rubric need to be demonstrated during this time. The rest of the session will be reviewed for possible future direction, but will not be a formal part of the grade for the course.

Submit final recording to instructor via Google Drive and **make sure instructor has been given access to view the video.**

A Professional Qualities Evaluation will also be completed for each student. This evaluation does not impact the grade unless the evaluation demonstrates a specific cause for concern with regard to Professional Qualities.

List of counseling skills to be utilized and evaluated in video recordings:

Nonverbal Skills	Includes Body Position, Eye Contact, Posture, Distance from Client, Voice Tone, Rate of Speech, etc.
Encouragers	Includes Minimal Encouragers & Door Openers such as “Tell me more about...”
Questions	Use of Appropriate Open & Closed Questioning (e.g., avoidance of double questions)
Reflecting	Basic Reflection of Content – Paraphrasing, Summarizing, etc.
Reflecting	Reflection of Feeling
Advanced Reflection (<i>Depth</i>)	Counselor demonstrates understanding of meaning/themes
Overall: Therapeutic Environment-Empathy	Counselor expresses appropriate empathy & care. Counselor is “present” and open to client.
Overall: Therapeutic Environment— Unconditional Positive Regard	Counselor expresses appropriate respect & unconditional positive regard

The selected skills below will only be evaluated if the individual student has mastered the previous skills

Confrontation (Selected skill)	Counselor challenges client to recognize & evaluate inconsistencies.
Goal Setting (Selected skill)	Counselor collaborates with client to establish realistic, appropriate, & attainable therapeutic goals
Focus of Counseling (Selected skill)	Counselor focuses (or refocuses) client on his/her therapeutic goals

Grading:

This course is organized with proficiency-based objectives in mind, in that students are expected to master all of the skills in the rubric. All students will receive an A (3.71 to 4.0) if they master the skills proficiencies described in the rubric and if they have completed ALL of the asynchronous weekly activities. Students may receive less than an A if, by the end of the course, they are still not at a Level 4 from the rubric on the skill in question or if they do not complete all of the asynchronous activities.

This course is graded using a 4.0 GPA in accordance with the grading policy of the Graduate School of Education and Counseling, available for viewing in the Navigator Student Handbook (http://www.lclark.edu/graduate/student_life/handbook/registration_policies/index.php#system). Assignments will be points from 1 to 4 that are weighted by percentage and then tallied to a final GPA. The final GPA is translated into a letter grade (A = 4.0 A- = 3.7 B+ = 3.3 B = 3.0 B- = 2.7 C+ = 2.3 C = 2.0 C- = 1.7 D+ = 1.3 D = 1.0 F = 0.0). Total grade points that fall in-between grades will be assigned to the closest available final grade, e.g., 3.49 would be a B+. Assignments turned in late will have .5 grade points each day subtracted from the grade of the assignment unless the student has spoken with the instructor about alternative arrangements.