

## **Ethical and Legal Issues in Professional Counseling**

**CPSY 510-01**

**Summer Semester, 2012**

### **Instructors:**

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### **We meet:**

Mondays, 5:30 to 8:30 pm

### **Catalogue Description:**

“Consideration of the applicable ethical and legal issues for mental health settings. Students develop skills in writing reports, assignments, and treatment plans.”

### **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 that will 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. This class will hopefully instill both desire and diligence on your part as practicing counselors and to develop a high degree of personal and professional ethics to enhance your clinical work in the years ahead.

### **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 be drawn from readings in your textbook. Your text 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 arena, recognizing and understanding the ethical dimensions of your work is critically important to help you provide competent counseling services. This class will help develop your professional ethics and thereby enhance your competency and 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 of each class period, and will come from your assigned chapters. Your questions and their answers will be the foundation of our class discussions and the Final exam. 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 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 counts! Students may earn **1 point** per class and a semester total of **10 points**.

**Informed Consent Forms:** You will create your own Informed Consent forms. The expectations for these documents will be discussed in detail before your assignment. You will be evaluated on their completeness, readability, and informative content. They are expected to be **original** creations, not a copy of an existing form, and be developed as if you were going to present them to your counseling clients. These forms are due two weeks from assignment and will be eligible for a maximum of **25 points**.

**Ethical Genograms:** Each student will be asked to construct and present your own “ethical genogram.” Each student can earn up to **10 points** for the construction and presentation of these genograms. Your in-class presentation will be limited to a maximum of 10 minutes.

**ORS information:** Each student will be a member of a small group responsible for updating the class on the Oregon Revised Statutes information on selected topics, earning up to **10 points** each.

**Final examination:** The Final examination for this class will be composed of selected questions from students from throughout the semester. The Final will be worth **13 points**.

**Grading:** These assignments will offer you the chance for a possible total of **100 points** toward your final grade. Class grading 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  
A grade of C minus (69 points or below) is considered failure 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 at the discretion of the instructors. 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 courtesy to your classmates and instructors, please minimize 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, or if you require an educational accommodation based on ADA standards and you provide evidence of written approval by the Counseling Psychology Department.

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Assignments Points (up to #)</b>
<b>May 7, 2012</b>	Class Introductions	Chapters 1 and 2	pages 3 to 56	<b>Attendance</b>
<b>May 14, 2012</b>	Ethical Practice in a Multicultural Society	Chapter 3	pages 57 to 77	<b>Discussion cards (4)</b>
<b>May 21, 2012</b>	Confidentiality	Chapter 5	pages 107 to 156	<b>Discussion cards (4)</b>
<b>May 28, 2012</b>	No Class			
<b>June 4, 2012</b>	Informed Consent	Chapter 6	pages 157 to 180	<b>Informed consent forms assigned Discussion cards (4)</b>
<b>June 11, 2012</b>	Power and Trust	Chapter 7	Pages 181 to 213	<b>Discussion cards (4)</b>
<b>June 18, 2012</b>	Multiple relationships and Boundary Issues	Chapter 8	pages 215 to 245	<b>Discussion cards (4) Informed consent forms due (25)</b>
<b>June 25, 2012</b>	Responsibilities for Self and Colleagues	Chapter 15	pages 433 to 452	<b>Discussion cards (4)</b>
<b>July 2, 2012</b>	Group and Family Interventions	Chapter 9	pages 247 to 274	<b>Discussion cards (4) Presentations for group one (10)</b>
<b>July 9, 2012</b>	The Ethics of Supervision	Chapter 13	pages 379 to 400	<b>Discussion cards (4) Presentations for group two (10)</b>
<b>July 16, 2012</b>	Conclusions			<b>Final Exam (15) Presentations for group three (10)</b>

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