

# 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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**503 475 5996 (texts okay!)**

## **Dates/Time:**

**1/9/14 to 1/31/14** York 115

**2/6/14 to 4/17/13:** Lewis & Clark Community Counseling Clinic- Class held in the Annex  
4445 SW Barbur Blvd, 97239

Credits: 3 credit hours

Pre-requisites: CPSY 503, CPSY 513

**My philosophy of teaching & supervision:** I believe it is my professional responsibility to provide a respectful, supportive and challenging learning environment. Practical activities, dialogue, collaborative learning and personal reflection guide my teaching based on the beliefs that learning is constructed in community and is an active process that allows for new insights, connections and meaning to emerge. I am intentionally relational in my approach with students. Relationships provide the core of the learning experience rather than mere information exchange and recitation. According to Merriam et al., “The central role of experience in adult learning is another point of connection (2007, p. 293).” This emphasis on relationships is also supported by my understanding of Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) which posits that mutual, authentic relationships foster healthy human development (Miller and Stiver, 1998). RCT includes the concept of the Five Good Things of growth fostering relationships:

1. Each person feels a greater sense of “zest” or vitality, energy.
2. Each person feels more able to act and does act.
3. Each person has a more accurate picture of her/himself and the other person(s).
4. Each person feels a greater sense of worth.
5. Each person feels more connected to the other person(s) and feels a greater motivation for connections with other people beyond those in the specific relationship (Miller and Stiver, 1998).

I see these Five Good Things as a strong foundation for learning. An environment that invites connection, and therefore healthy human development, invites learning. I utilize various supervision models in my work with students as I support and guide them on the journey of seeing clients in their graduate training program.

## **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 books that may support your skill development at this stage:**

*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* by 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.

### 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 my 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/](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. **The course will result in a final practical skills/ counseling skills evaluation that will be completed by your instructor and placed in your academic file. You will receive a copy of this evaluation.**

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 Demonstrations at Lewis & Clark Clinic**

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 your instructor.
  - 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 debriefing, 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 debriefing, 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.

Should it be difficult to find the time to tape at the clinic for whatever reason, the graduate school has a flip camera loaner pool for students. They have 25 Flip camcorders for use by graduate students. *Students must email [gradloaner@lclark.edu](mailto:gradloaner@lclark.edu) to reserve a camcorder for up to 5 business days.* **\*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.

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 video recordings at the end of the semester. This includes any clips that are stored on your video recording devices, computers or flash drives.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings	Tape Assignments
Week 1: 9-Jan	Introduction, creating safe space and confidentiality	Chapter 1: Helping as a Personal Journey	
Week 2: 16-Jan	Therapeutic Alliance, common factors and counseling diverse clients	Chapters 2,3: Nuts/Bolts & Therapeutic Relationship	
Week 3: 23-Jan	Assessment and the Initial Interview and goal setting	Chapters 9, 10: Assessment/Initial Interview & Goal Setting Skills	
Week 4: 30-Jan	Invitational Skills and Paraphrasing	Chapters 4, 5: Invitational Skills & Paraphrasing	
Week 5: 6-Feb	Clinical documentation, Assessing Risk, Mandated Reporting	<i>Supplemental readings</i>	Tape 1A Debrief Therapist Group #1
Week 6: 13-Feb	Reflecting Feeling and Reflecting Meaning and Summarizing	Chapters 6, 7: Reflecting Feelings & Meaning/ Summarization	Tape 1B Debrief Therapist Group #2 <b>A group intake due</b>
Week 7: 20-Feb	Challenging Skills and Motivational Interviewing	Chapter 8: Challenging Skills <i>Supplemental Readings</i>	Tape 2A Debrief Therapists Group #1 <b>B group intake due</b>

Week 8: 27-Feb	Change Techniques and Stages of Change	Chapter 11: Change Techniques <i>Supplemental Readings</i>	Tape 2B Debrief Therapists Group #2
Week 9: 6-Mar	Outcome Evaluation and termination skills	Chapter 12: Outcome Eval/Termination	Tape 3A Debrief Therapists Group #1
Week 10: 13-Mar	Therapeutic Factors and Advanced Change Techniques Part I	Chapter 13: Therapeutic Factors Pt 1	Tape 3B Debrief Therapists Group #2
Week 11: 20-Mar	Therapeutic Factors and Advanced Change Techniques Part II	Chapter 14: Therapeutic Factors Pt 2	Tape 4A Debrief Therapists Group #1 <b>A group transcription due</b>
Week 12: 27-Mar	<b>SPRING BREAK- NO CLASSES</b>		
Week 13: 3-Apr	<b>Open topic</b>		Tape 4B Debrief Therapists Group #2 <b>B group transcription due</b>
Week 14: 10-Apr	<b>Final Presentations</b>		Termination Summary & Self Evaluation for Tape #5 Group A
Week 15: 17-Apr	<b>Final Presentations</b>		Termination Summary & Self Evaluation for Tape #5 Group B