

CPSY 513: Theory and Philosophy of Counseling

Fall, 2010

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Catalog description: Overview of counseling theories such as psychoanalytic, Adlerian, client-centered, cognitive-behavioral, multi-modal, Gestalt, feminist, existential, solution-focused, and brief therapy, as well as integrative approaches. Examines a wide range of theoretical perspectives and advocates professional knowledge of best practices. Students acquire knowledge of various counseling theories and critique their relevance to diverse populations and clinical situations. Students clarify their personal assumptions and learn how to explain their own theoretical stance. Issues of diversity and client matching are addressed throughout.

Prerequisite: None.

Objectives: Students will...

- Develop a strong foundation and awareness of diverse theoretical perspectives.
- Demonstrate knowledge of different theoretical counseling interventions.
- Demonstrate the ability to conceptualize a client within a systematically derived theoretical model (s) .
- Demonstrate an understanding of issues and considerations associated with human diversity as applied to theory
- Understand one's own value systems and the impact on therapeutic work.
- Begin to formulate one's own theoretical orientation and apply it to client issues.

Purpose

This class is designed to be an introduction and overview of the dominant theories and practices in the practice of counseling and psychotherapy . While most of the major theories of counseling will be covered, particular emphasis will be given to contemporary approaches. Selected topics, controversies and philosophical issues in the field of counseling will be explored and discussed. Students will be encouraged to view theories and the treatment process in its cultural context, not only as a counselor, but from the point of view of the client, as well.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to employ a collaborative, integrative, and contextual approach to understanding and alleviating persistent difficulties of children, adolescents and adults. Students will be able to describe and apply a variety of theoretical frameworks while understanding the necessity of theoretical integration and the need to fit our theories to each client rather than try to fit clients into our theories. Students will come to appreciate the socially constructed nature of theory, to understand the impact of a particular theoretical orientation in determining and

limiting how we view and respond to the problems of clients, and to discern the differing worldviews that are implicit in competing theories. Modes of integration will be discussed including common factors, technical eclecticism and theoretical integration.

Secondary goals are to stimulate critical thinking and discussion, promote self-exploration, and to have fun.

Related Authorizations

Successful completion of this course is necessary for fulfillment of degree requirements for any of the specialty areas in the Counseling Psychology Department. This course is also necessary for gaining access to licensure as a professional counselor, as a school psychologist, or as a school counselor.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Each student will be permitted one excused absence. Any absence beyond one will result in a half letter grade reduction.

Instructional Methods

Each class period will consist of a variety of instructional activities including lecture, student presentations, demonstrations, discussion, and experiential exercises.

Required Texts

Prochaska, J.O. & Norcross, J.C. (2010). *Systems of psychotherapy: A transtheoretical model* (7th ed.) Thomson: Brooks/Cole. P&N

Additional Readings are available on Moodle

Evaluation:

Grading will be based on the combined scores of all assignments and class participation. Grading will be weighted as follows:

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|------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Theory presentation | 100 points |
| 2. Class participation | 50 points |
| 3. Term Paper | 100 points |
| 4. Final exam | 50 points |
| Total possible | 300 points |
| Grading scale: | 280-300 = A |
| | 270-279 = A- |
| | 260-269 = B+ |
| | 240-259 = B |

1. Theory Presentation. Each student will make an in-class presentation of about 60 - 75 minutes on one of the theories we will be discussing. If there are more students than theories, students may need to form teams for their presentations. The grade for the team will serve as each individual's grade. The scheduling of presentations and the matching of students and theories will occur in the first class. The presentation must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Discussion of the origin and history of the theory.
2. The basic framework and concepts underlying the theory.
3. The therapeutic practices and techniques that arise from the theory.
4. The explanation of how change occurs within this framework.
5. The role of the counselor within the theory.
6. The developmental scheme and etiological assumptions implicit in the theory (if any).
7. A discussion of the theory's applicability with members of non-dominant social and cultural groups.
8. A discussion of how the theory is differentially applied with children, adolescents and adults.
9. A critical discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of this approach.
10. Question and answer period.
11. A demonstration of the theory in practice. (Video, role play, etc.)

The presentation should include visuals, handouts or other illustrative materials. If you use slides or Power Point, make enough copies for each student in class to have a set. You are expected to do substantial outside research in preparation of your presentation including the use of primary sources. If your presentation covers only material that is covered in the text you will not receive a passing grade. Please include a bibliography, citing your references, with the material you distribute at your presentation.

Your grade will be partially based on how well you are able to engage and hold the interest of your audience. Creativity, humor, multi-media, and food are all encouraged.

2. Class Participation

Each student will be scored on the degree to which s/he participates in class discussions, exercises and role plays. In-class questions and comments should reflect a critical consideration of the readings.

3. Term Paper

The term paper will be due on **December 7**. The paper should be 10 to 12 pages, double-spaced, 12 point font. Include a cover page and bibliography but do not use a report cover. A late paper will receive a 10% grade reduction for each day it is late. Papers over three days late will receive a failing grade. See instructions below regarding the topic.

4. Final exam

The final exam will be given during the last class period on **December 14** . It will consist of short answer essay questions and case examples that will require you to display your understanding of the theories and their application. The final will be open note, not open book. You will be allowed to consult class notes and materials you prepare for the exam but you will not be permitted to consult the text.

Term Paper: Personal Theory (due December 7):

This paper is an exercise in reflection and self-examination. There are no right or wrong responses.

Theory is not value neutral. Every theory contains embedded assumptions about human nature and the process of change. Some theories assume people are born primitive, driven by dark forces, until civilized through socialization (psychoanalytic), while other theories assume that we are born in a state of purity until corrupted by society's dictates (Gestalt). Some theories assume that change occurs when feelings shift (person centered), some when thinking is altered (cognitive), and some when external contingencies are changed (behavioral). Some theories see reality as fixed and observable (family systems) while other see reality as shifting, socially constructed, and context dependent (narrative, solution focused). Some theories include developmental assumptions and see history as essential (psychoanalytic) and some contain no developmental assumptions and stay focused in the present (behavioral, solution focused). Within some theories, the therapist is very non-directive while others call for the therapist to be very active and directive.

Think about the theories we have studied so far and think about your personal beliefs, values and assumptions. Which theory or theories fit for you and which don't. Write a paper that discusses the theories you embrace, those you reject, and why. Use this assignment as an exercise in self exploration. The following questions are intended to stimulate your thinking. **Do not** use them as an outline and do not be limited by them. If you simply answer these questions you will receive a failing grade.

1. Which theory or theories most closely fits your view of human nature? Are people essentially born pure or born savage, and what role does socialization play? How do the various theories fit with your personal values?
2. Which theory or theories provides the most accurate map of reality as you perceive it? Which seems to most closely capture your own worldview?
3. Which theory or theories most closely matches your own belief about how change occurs in peoples' lives? Which is most important: changing emotion, cognition, or behavior?
4. What life experiences shaped the beliefs and values that lead you to prefer one theory over another? Which theory fits best with your personality and style of interaction?
5. Which theory most closely fits your view of development and history. How necessary is it to understand the past when trying to bring about change?
6. Do some theories fit better for work with children? Adolescents? Adults? Why?

7. Is there one theory that you feel captures “the truth”? Why?
8. Which theory or theories do you see as having the broadest cultural applicability?
9. How has your worldview shifted as a result of studying these theories?
10. What are the pros and cons of theoretical integration vs. theoretical purity?
11. What have you learned about yourself through your reaction to the theories?
12. Are there theories, philosophies or worldviews that have not been covered in this class that more accurately define you?

CLASS SCHEDULE

- September 14:** Introductions
 Overview of the class
 Overview of themes in counseling
- September 21:** Readings: P&N, Chapter 1
 Kottler, Theory in a Clinician’s Life
 Smoller, The Etiology and Treatment of Childhood
 Hubble & O’Hanlon, Theory Countertransference
- September 28:** **Theory Presentation: Psychoanalytic/Freudian**
 Readings: P&N, Chapter 2
 Acocella, The Politics of Hysteria
 Duncan, Miller, and Sparks, Exposing the Mythmakers
 Badenoch, Reconsidering Trauma
- October 5:** **Theory Presentation: Person-Centered**
 Readings: P&N, Chapter 5
 Butler, The Anatomy of Resilience
 Johnson, Love – A Revolutionary New View
- October 12 :** **Theory Presentation: Jungian Analysis**
 Douglas, Analytical Psychotherapy
 Zweig and Abraham, Introduction: The Shadow Side of Everyday Life
- October 19:** **Theory Presentation: Play Therapy**
 Readings:
 Buser, Play Therapy
 Axline, Play Therapy, Chapters 7 to 11
 Landreth, Typical Problems in Play Therapy

- October 26:** **Theory Presentation: Narrative Therapy**
 Readings: P&N, Chapters 13 & 14
 White, Deconstruction and Therapy
 Freeman, Epston, and Lobovitz, Playful Communication
 In Family Therapy
- November 2:** **Theory Presentation: Existential**
 Readings:
 P&N, Chapter 3 & Chapter 4
 Asay and Lambert, The Empirical Case for Common Factors
 In Therapy
- November 9 :** **Theory Presentation: Gestalt**
 Readings: P&N, Chapter 6
 Oaklander, My Working Model
 Anderson, Enlightenment Reframed
- November 16:** **Theory Presentation: Cognitive: REBT and CBT**
 Readings: P&N, Chapter 10
 Lebow, Therapy by the Numbers?
 Thyer, What is Evidence-Based Practice
 Gambrill, The Need for Critical Thinking in Clinical Practice
- November 23:** **Theory Presentation: Behavioral**
 Readings: P&N, Chapters 8 & 9
 Shedler, The Efficacy of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy
- November 30:** Readings: P&N, Chapter 12
- December 7:** **Theory Presentation: Your Choice**
 Readings: P&N, Chapters 15, 16 & 17
 Schwartz, The Larger Self
Term Paper Due
- December 14:** **Final Exam**