EDCP 310: Peer Counseling Theory and Skills (Section 0401)  
Spring 2014

Instructor: Jessica Albrecht  
jalbrech@terpmail.umd.edu

Meeting Times and Location: Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:30 – 10:45  
Benjamin Building (EDU), Room 3233

Office: Cole Field House B100K (Mailbox in 3214 Benjamin Building)  
Office Hours: Office hours Mondays 10:45-11:45, or by appointment

Required Text:  
ISBN #: 978-1-4-3380451-9

Other Required Readings:  
A small number of articles are also assigned to help students better understand theories in this class (see class schedule below). These readings will be available electronically via ELMS.

Required Equipment:  
One of the main objectives of this course is to give students hands-on practice in developing helping skills. You will be responsible for obtaining a functional audio recorder to record helping sessions with a classmate; any type of digital or other audio recorder that allows you to transfer recordings to portable devices (such as USB, CD, cassette, etc.) is acceptable. Alternatively, you may use your laptop to record, as long as the quality of the sound is adequate. If sessions are recorded on your laptop, you must password protect all recording files. These sessions will be scheduled for Monday, 2/10 and Monday, 4/14. Sessions will be held during class time in the Biology/Psychology building, suite 2150.

You will be listening back to your recording and transcribing what you and your classmate discuss during the sessions, so please test your recorder before your sessions to ensure that voices are audible and play back at normal speed. If the recording is inaudible and you cannot transcribe the session, the session recording will have to be repeated outside of the designated session day. Keep recordings in a secure location to safeguard confidentiality! Audio files saved on your computers must be stored in a password-protected folder.

Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to the core skills of peer helping relationships, and explores the basic tenets of the three predominant theoretical frameworks used in the counseling field. Students will receive basic level training on theories and skills for use in peer counseling settings. Students will work toward the following learning outcomes:

• Identify and define the specific skills of the Clara Hill three-stage helping model, and apply these skills to diverse client populations and settings.
- Understand the humanistic/person-centered, psychodynamic, and cognitive-behavioral theoretical frameworks of counseling.
- Evaluate the strengths and limitations of each counseling theory as applied to diverse client populations and settings.
- Reflect on your unique identity as a helper (including your biases, beliefs, opinions, and preferences).
- Further develop your ability to communicate effectively through writing.

Please note that, while counseling theories and strategies will be reviewed in this course, completion of this course does not qualify students to practice as counselors or therapists without additional training and supervision from a qualified professional.

**Course Structure and Student Responsibilities**

In this course, you will be expected to actively engage, collaborate and participate in both small and large-group discussions, interactive exercises, lectures, in-class videos, case examples, and clinical vignettes. In this class, you are expected to:

- Come to class regularly, on time, and ready to participate (see attendance policy below).
- Complete assigned readings BEFORE class.
- Turn in all assignments by the beginning of class on the specified due date.
- Raise questions, offer comments, and respond with openness, respect, and intellectual curiosity.
- Pose all questions, concerns, and comments about the course to the instructor directly, either during office hours, scheduled appointments, or through written communication. The instructor will generally respond to emails within 24 hours.

Ultimately, come to class with an open mind and a willingness to take risks. This course is designed as a beginning level course in peer counseling. You are not expected to have prior counseling experience. Hopefully you will challenge your fears and push yourself to become an active and involved participant.

**Course Expectations and Policies**

**Attendance Policy**

For more than two unexcused absences, you will lose 2 percentage points towards your final grade per unexcused absence. Arriving late to class 3 times or more in the semester will also count as an additional unexcused absence. If you feel unable to attend class regularly and/or feel that you cannot be on time for class, please drop the course.

In accordance with University policy, absences will be considered “excused” for the following reasons: illness of the student, or illness of a dependent as defined by Board of Regents policy on family and medical leave; religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents the student from being present during the class period); participation in university activities at the request of University authorities; and compelling circumstances beyond the student’s control. Additionally, students claiming excused absence must apply in writing and furnish documentary support for their assertion that absence resulted from one of these causes.
Excused absence documentation must be submitted to the instructor no more than one (1) week after you return to class. For a single absence due to illness or injury, the instructor will accept a self-signed note from the student, detailing the medical reason for missing the class. All subsequent absences after the first self-excused absence will require official documentation from a health care provider.

Class Cancellations
Official delays and/or closures are announced on www.umd.edu and 301-405-SNOW. If a personal emergency forces the instructor to cancel class, the instructor will make every attempt to email students ahead of time and to post information on the classroom door.

CourseEvalUM for Spring 2014
Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of the academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University. CourseEvalUM will be open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses towards the end of the semester. Please go directly to the website (www.courseevalum.umd.edu) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

Class Participatory Activities
_Participation in role plays:_ In order to have realistic helping sessions in which students can practice peer helping skills, all students are expected to participate as helpers, clients, and/or observers in groups of two or three students.

Students will be asked to speak about (a) an interpersonal issue of their choice (examples include roommate problems, romantic relationship troubles, etc.), OR (b) about their future goals and aspirations in life. Students should be prepared to disclose personal information that they feel comfortable sharing. Students will never be required to disclose personal information if they are not comfortable doing so, nor will they be evaluated on this dimension. However, students often do choose to disclose personal concerns during participation in the practice of peer counseling skills.

_Feedback exercise:_ Evidence suggests that obtaining peer feedback is a crucial component of acquiring and developing helping skills. Therefore, you will be asked to participate in feedback exercises every time you practice in your two- or three-person groups.

_Confidentiality & respect:_ Students are expected to respect their classmates at all times, particularly when practicing peer counseling skills. Acting professionally includes keeping everything you hear confidential, treating others with respect, and paying attention to your classmates. **Confidentiality with regard to peer disclosures heard in class is an absolute requirement. Disregard of this confidentiality will result in failure of this course.**
Differences in opinion, values, and attitudes are to be expected, and the expression of these differences is encouraged. Any student who experiences difficulty in participating for any reason is encouraged to speak with the instructor immediately.

For the sake of students’ safety, there are two circumstances in which students should inform the instructor about peers’ personal disclosures and under which the instructor must break student confidentiality:

- Student report of intent to harm self or other(s)
- Student report of having been abused as a child, or abuse of children, the elderly, or the disabled (past or present)

Handling of personal concerns: Practice sessions in this course should not be used as a substitute for therapy. The purpose of self-disclosure is to offer learning opportunities to your peers. Students who are experiencing personal distress may consult with the instructor and/or contact the University of Maryland Counseling Center at 301-314-7651 (x47651). Another resource is the Health Center at UMD, which can be reached at 301-314-8180 (x48180) or health@umd.edu.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: Students with documented disabilities should inform the instructor within the first 3 weeks of the semester (by 9/20) of any needed accommodations. The instructor will consult with Disability Support Services (x47682), and arrangements will be made to determine and implement appropriate academic accommodations.

Course Assignments

Participation (15% of final grade)
Active involvement in class discussions, activities, and assignments is essential for maximizing learning and is therefore given appropriate consideration in the grading of this course.

There will be six (6) group discussion days throughout the course – see schedule of classes below. Each of these days will include 30 minutes of class discussion on the topics and readings for the day. Each student will sign up in a group of 4 or 5 to lead discussion for one of these six days. On the day of the group discussion, each member of the discussion group will be responsible for doing the required readings and coming up with 3-4 thoughtful questions (based on the readings) that can spur discussion in the class. Discussion questions should be typed and submitted to the instructor via email or Canvas, 24 hours prior to the start of class. Hand-written questions will NOT be accepted. This will count as 10% toward your final grade.

All students not leading the discussion on these days are still expected to contribute to the conversation with at least one thoughtful question or comment during the class discussion. Students are strongly encouraged to prepare questions ahead of time while doing the class readings. Active participation in all of the six class discussions will count as 5% toward your final grade.

Counseling Theory Papers (30% of final grade; 10% each)
Throughout the course, you will complete three short papers on the three main counseling theories that relate to the Helping Skills model. These papers are an opportunity for you to reflect
on the goals of the counseling theory, the skills that are used for the theory, and how the theory applies to the Helping Skills model. Papers should be 3 pages in length, and can be turned in via ELMS at the start of class on the days that they are due:

- Paper #1: Person-centered Theory - Due 3/5
- Paper #2: Psychoanalytic Theory - Due 4/7
- Paper #3: Cognitive Behavioral Theory - Due 4/28

Each paper will be graded on a scale of 0-100 points, based on the rubric below.

- **Theory Description (30 pts)**. Describe the historical background of this theory. Explain how one develops symptoms and problems, according to this theoretical perspective. Describe the main goals of counseling, according to this theory.

- **Application to Helping Skills Model (40 pts)**. Apply the theory to a corresponding stage in the Helping Skills model. Relate the goals of this theory to the goals of the Helping Skills model. Describe the helping skills that are used in this stage and how they are related to the counseling theory.

- **Theory Evaluation (20 pts)**. Evaluate the theory in terms of strengths and limitations. Present and explain 2-3 key strengths and 2-3 key limitations of using this theory in counseling.

- **Quality of writing (10 pts)**. Demonstrate good writing skills. Write in standard English and use academic writing. Use complete sentences, develop your paragraphs, and check your spelling. Your paper should flow well, include transitions between sections of the paper, and conclude with a summary/conclusion. Please format your paper in accordance with APA guidelines.

Audio-Taped Session #1 and #2: Transcript and Tables (30% of final grade; 15% each)
We will meet in BPS Rm. 2150 on **Monday, 2/10** for the first peer counseling session, and on **Monday, 4/14** for the second peer counseling session. Make sure to practice using your audio recorder prior to class. You will complete three sessions: one as the counselor, one as the client, and one as the observer. You will act in each role for 15 minutes. You only need to and tape the session when you are **acting as counselor**.

Upon completing the sessions, you will listen to your session as counselor and transcribe the session verbatim. You will then be required to complete tables analyzing the skills you used as a counselor and identifying a different or better intervention. **The Session #1 Transcript and Tables will be due via ELMS at the start of class on 3/12. The Session #2 Transcript and Tables will be due via ELMS at the start of class on 5/7.**

Final Exam (25% of final grade)
**There will be a final exam covering all course material on the last day of class (5/12).** On class on 4/30, you will receive the Take-Home Essay for the Final Exam. This essay will be due with the exam.
Requirements Regarding Course Assignments

• Assignments are due in hard copy or via ELMS at the beginning of class (9:30 AM) on the dates they are due.
• Late assignments will be penalized by 5% per business day.
• List only your UID on the assignments that you hand in. Please do not put your name on them.
• When a student is absent (excused or unexcused), he/she is responsible for the information missed in class.
• All assignments should be typed and double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and Times New Roman 12 pt font. Cover pages are not necessary.
• Papers should be written according to APA style. You may consult http://psychology.vanguard.edu/faculty/douglas-degelman/apa-style/.
• Assignments will be evaluated using the grading rubrics on ELMS. Students are encouraged to communicate with the instructor regarding grading policy if they have any questions.
• Students are encouraged to take advantage of the following excellent and free resources available on campus:

The Writing Center: 1205 Tawes Hall
301-405-3785
http://www.english.umd.edu/academics/writingcenter

Learning Assistance Service: 2202 Shoemaker Building
301-314-7693
http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS/

Disability Support Service: 0106 Shoemaker Building
301-314-7682
http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/

Overall Grade Breakdown

Participation and Discussion Leadership (15%)
Paper #1: Person-centered theory (10%)
Paper #2: Psychodynamic theory (10%)
Paper #3: Cognitive-behavioral theory (10%)
Session #1: Transcript and Tables (15%)
Session #2: Transcript and Tables (15%)
Final Exam (25%)

Grading Scale (Percentage Points)

A+ 100 – 98       A+ 100 – 98
A  97 – 93         A  97 – 93
A-  92 – 90        A- 92 – 90
B+  89 – 87        B+ 89 – 87
B  86 – 83         B  86 – 83
B-  82 – 80        B- 82 – 80
C+ 79 – 77         C  76 – 73
C  76 – 73         C- 72 – 70
C- 72 – 70         D  70 – 60
D  69 – 60         F  < 60
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/27</td>
<td>Overview of course, introductions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>Introduction to counseling</td>
<td>Hill, Ch.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Counselor values and ethics</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Sign up for Helping Session #1 groups</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/10</td>
<td><strong>Helping Session Day in Biopsychology Building 2150</strong></td>
<td>Complete Helping Session 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>Review Transcript and Tables assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/17</td>
<td>Person-centered/humanistic counseling</td>
<td>Rogers (1992)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>Carl Rogers Video and Discussion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/24</td>
<td>Overview of exploration stage</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 4</td>
<td><strong>Group 1 leads discussion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/26</td>
<td>Attending and listening skills; skill practice</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/3</td>
<td>Exploring thoughts and exploring feelings</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 6 and 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Integrating the exploration skills; skill practice</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 8</td>
<td><strong>Paper #1: Person-centered theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/10</td>
<td>Video: Clara Hill, exploration</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 8</td>
<td><strong>Group 2 leads discussion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Psychodynamic counseling and video</td>
<td>Shedler (2010)</td>
<td><strong>Session #1 Transcript and Tables</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/17</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/19</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/24</td>
<td>Overview of insight stage</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 9 &amp; 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/26</td>
<td>Insight skills</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/31</td>
<td>Immediatecy; skill practice</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/2</td>
<td>Integrating the insight skills, Video: Clara Hill</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 13</td>
<td><strong>Group 3 leads discussion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/9</td>
<td>Overview of action stage, Video: Albert Ellis</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/14</td>
<td><strong>Helping Session Day in Biopsychology Building 2150</strong></td>
<td>Complete Helping Session 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/16</td>
<td>Action skills</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/21</td>
<td>Steps for action; skill practice</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/23</td>
<td>Integrating the action skills, Video: Clara Hill, action</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 17</td>
<td><strong>Group 4 leads discussion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/28</td>
<td>Integrating the three stages; skill practice</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 18</td>
<td><strong>Paper #3: Cognitive-behavioral theory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/30</td>
<td>Multicultural counseling, Take-Home Final Essay distributed</td>
<td>Reading TBA</td>
<td><strong>Group 5 leads discussion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/5</td>
<td>Termination</td>
<td>Hill, pg. 373-376</td>
<td><strong>Group 6 leads discussion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/7</td>
<td>Review, wrap-up</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Session #2 Transcript and Tables</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/12</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam (in class)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Take-Home Final Essay Due</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed.*
Course Reference List


