EDCP 310: Peer Counseling Theory and Skills (Section 0401)
Fall 2013

Instructor: Lynsey Weston
lweston1@umd.edu

Meeting Times and Location: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00 – 12:15
Benjamin Building, Room 3233

Office: Cole Field House B100K (Mailbox in 3214 Benjamin Building)
Office Hours: Thursdays, 12:30-1:30pm, or by appointment
The instructor will make virtual office hours available occasionally throughout the semester, via the Conferences feature in ELMS. More details on how to use this feature are forthcoming.

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 and course reading list below). These readings are all 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 so that you can 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 or cell phone to record, as long as the quality of the sound is adequate.

These sessions will be scheduled for 9/19 and 11/14. Sessions will be held during class time in the Biology/Psychology building, suite 2150, and students will sign up for available time slots prior to the session weeks.

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. Theories and skills will be taught at a level appropriate for students seeking basic-level training 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

This course is designed with active student engagement, collaboration, and participation in mind. Classes have been structured to include small-group and large-group discussions, interactive exercises, lectures, in-class videos, case study examples, and clinical vignettes. In this class, you are expected to:

- Come to class regularly and on time, ready to participate (see attendance policy below).
- Complete assigned readings and accompanying discussion questions 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 respond to emails within 24 hours, Mon-Thurs, and within 48 hours, Fri-Sun.

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. Do not allow yourself to become intimidated. 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 5 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.

Statement on religious observances: The University System of Maryland provides that students should not be penalized because of the observance of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time, any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please notify the instructor in writing within the first 3 weeks of the semester (by 9/20) regarding any anticipated absences for religious observances.

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, an attempt will be made to send an email to students ahead of time and to post information on the classroom door.

CourseEvalUM for Fall 2013

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 something that is of personal concern related to development and fulfillment of their long-term goals. 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 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 should 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*

*See p. 10 for a breakdown of each assignment’s weight toward students’ overall percentage grade for the course.

Participation
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.

Students are required to turn in two discussion questions on days noted on the syllabus, based on the readings for that class session, and are encouraged to bring up these questions during group discussions. Questions should demonstrate that the student has read the assigned readings and given them thought. Discussion questions should be typed up and printed out, or submitted to the instructor via ELMS, by the start of class at 11am. Hand-written questions will not be accepted. Discussion questions will not be required if the student has an excused absence. For unexcused absences, students must turn in discussion questions in person or via ELMS by the start of class at 11am.

Case Analyses

Case Analysis #1: Person-centered Theory - Due 10/3
Case Analysis #2: Psychodynamic Theory - Due 10/24
Case Analysis #3: Cognitive Behavioral Theory - Due 11/19

The instructor will provide a fictional description of an individual’s background and current personal difficulties. For each case analysis, apply the appropriate theory listed above. Each case will be graded on a scale of 0-100 points. Your case must include the sections described below. These section names should be used as headings to label each section of your analysis. You may turn in your analyses in person or via ELMS at the start of class on the days that they are due.

• **Origins of client personality/problems/symptoms (20 pts).** Describe this theory’s view of human nature. From this theoretical perspective, how does one develop symptoms and problems? Ask yourself how this theoretical approach helps you to understand the client presented in the case (e.g., client’s personality, patterns of behavior). All the theories we cover in the course have their own perspective on the nature, meaning, and origins of psychological problems and symptoms.

• **Focus and course of counseling (20 pts).** According to this theoretical perspective, what are the goals of counseling? What kinds of things would you focus on with this client? What techniques or strategies would you use?

• **Role of the counselor and the counseling relationship (20 pts).** When working from this theoretical orientation, what would your relationship with your client look like? What is your role as the counselor? The client’s role? Your responsibilities? The client’s responsibilities?

• **Cultural factors (15 pts).** Please discuss how any cultural or social issue within the case might be relevant to the concerns that the individual in the case has presented (based on your own thoughts/opinions, and readings on multicultural therapy) AND whether/how
the theory under analysis might conceive these issues. (Overlap with the other sections is permissible as long as this issue is covered adequately.) Include the adequacy of the theory in dealing with social/cultural issues in your discussion of the theory’s strengths and limitations.

- **Strengths and limitations (20 pts).** What are the benefits of using this particular approach with this specific client? Discuss several strengths and multiple limitations. Note: this section is not your critique of this theory in general, but rather your critique of its utility with the specified case.

- **Quality of writing (5 pts).**
  - Demonstrate good writing skills. Write in standard English and use academic writing. Use complete sentences, develop your paragraphs, and check your spelling. Develop your thoughts fully, concretely, and logically. Do not ramble, be vague, or be unnecessarily wordy.
  - In terms of form and organization, your paper should flow well, and your points should relate to one another. The reader should not have to struggle to understand your intended meaning.
  - Please include transitions between the sections of the paper and conclude with an overall summary/conclusion, not simply with the last section described above. Paper writing offers an opportunity to work on writing skills, as well as to focus on the content.
  - Please format your paper in accordance with APA guidelines.

Some general guidelines:

- Make your case analyses brief and succinct. They should be approximately 4-5 double-spaced pages.
- All discussion should be rooted in the case AND the assigned theory. Show knowledge of the theory you are using. Your task is to identify concepts from the therapeutic approach and to apply them. Show an understanding of the case and how that approach might be used beneficially.
- Remember to cite information from the case when making a claim. Each time you use a concept from a theory, you must specify what details from the case support your drawing such a conclusion. If you simply say something from the theory is true without saying what information from the case supports your claim, then you are not writing the case properly, and you will not get credit for your use of that part of the theory.
  - BAD EXAMPLE: “Maggie is having problems because many conditions of worth have been placed on her.”
  - GOOD EXAMPLE: “Problems arise when individuals believe they must fulfill certain conditions to be valued by others in their lives. Maggie feels she has to do well in college because her family depends on her to do well. This is a condition of worth. She was probably taught when she was younger that failure was negative and unacceptable. This is the source of Maggie’s problems.”
Audio-Taped Session #1: Transcript and Tables
Students will sign up for Session #1 during class on 9/10. Students will be assigned to groups of three students based on availability. During class on 9/19, students will complete three audio-taped peer counseling sessions: one where they will act as the counselor, one where they will act as the client, and one where they will act as the observer. Students will act in each role for 15 minutes.

Students must practice using their audio recorder prior to the session and use a quality recorder to tape only their session acting as counselor. Upon completing the sessions, students will then listen back to their session as counselor and transcribe the first 20 speaking turns of the session verbatim – a turn includes both a client statement and a helper response. Students will also be required to complete tables analyzing the skills they used as counselor. A template to use for this assignment will be sent to students prior to the first session, and we will review the format in class together beforehand. Additionally, detailed instructions about this assignment can be found under the Assignments tab in ELMS. This assignment will be graded on a scale of 0-100 points. The Audio-Taped Session #1 Transcript and Tables will be due in both hard copy and via ELMS at the start of class on 10/15.

Audio-Taped Sessions #2: Transcript and Tables
Students will sign up for Session #2 during class on 11/5. Students will be assigned to groups of three students based on availability. During class on 11/14, students will complete three audio-taped peer counseling sessions: one where they will act as the counselor, one where they will act as the client, and one where they will act as the observer. Students will act in each role for 15 minutes.

Students must practice using their audio recorder prior to the session and use a quality recorder to tape only their session acting as counselor. Upon completing the sessions, students will then listen back to their session as counselor and transcribe the first 20 speaking turns of the session verbatim – a turn includes both a client statement and a helper response. Students will also be required to complete tables analyzing the skills they used as counselor. This assignment will be graded on a scale of 0-100 points and follow the same requirements as the Session #1 Transcript and Tables. The Audio-Taped Session #2 Transcript and Tables will be due in both hard copy and via ELMS at the start of class on 12/5.

Reflection Paper on Audio-Taped Session #2
Students will complete a reflection paper based on Audio-Taped Session #2. The reflection paper should be between 5-7 double-spaced pages and will be graded on a scale of 0-150. To protect your helpee’s confidentiality, please use only his/her initials (do not use names). There are two separate components to the paper: (1) reflections on your audio-taped sessions as both client and helper, and (2) overall reflections on you as a peer counselor (not tied to a specific session). Your paper should include discussion of the following topics:
• (1) Your session (60 pts):
  o Your experience as the client. How did it feel? Was the session helpful? What made it helpful? What did your peer counselor do (or not do) that was not helpful?
  o Your experience of being a peer counselor. How did it feel? How did the role fit for you? What did you do that was helpful? What did you do that was not helpful?
  o What personal strengths did you encounter, generally or with regard to specific skills?
  o What personal difficulties did you encounter, generally or with regard to specific skills? Any personal challenges/weaknesses related to being a peer counselor?
  o What feelings/reactions did you have that may have influenced your use of the skills?
  o Any biases evident in the sessions?
  o What did you learn about yourself?

  
  Note: when discussing the peer counseling sessions, the focus is not on the content of the sessions, but rather on the process. Instead of focusing on your client’s presenting issue, discuss what you did as a peer counselor and how you felt in the role. It is a chance for you to reflect on the experience and critique yourself as a peer counselor.

• You as a peer counselor (not specific to session) (80 pts)
  o Your personal definition of peer counseling. How did you develop this definition? How does it fit for you?
  o Your view of human nature, your values and personality.
  o How have your skills improved, and your knowledge as a peer counselor grown, from your first to your second audio-taped session?
  o What have you learned about yourself this semester?
  o If you plan to further develop your peer counseling skills after this course, what are your goals for improvement, and how do you plan to work on them?

The last 10 points will be awarded based on the overall written quality of the paper. The Audio-Taped Session #2 Reflection Paper will be due in person or via ELMS submission at the start of class on 12/12.

Final Exam

There will be a final exam covering all course material on 12/12. The exam will be held during class.

Requirements Regarding Course Assignments

• Assignments are due in hard copy or via ELMS at the beginning of class (11 AM) on the dates they are due.
• Absences are not a valid excuse for late or incomplete work. If you know in advance that you will not be able to attend class, it is your responsibility to turn assignments in to the instructor before the class time during which they are due.
• Late assignments will be penalized by 5% per business day. You may place late papers in the instructor’s mailbox if you have someone in the CHSE department (Benjamin Building, Suite 3214) sign, date, and time-stamp your paper. Without this verification of the time/date, the instructor will assume it was turned in on the day that it is picked up and make deductions accordingly.

• 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, including but not limited to assignments, change in due dates, content of discussion and/or lecture, and handouts.

• 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/ as it has a good overview of APA style rules and formatting (with examples).

• Assignments will be evaluated using the grading rubrics available on ELMS. Students are encouraged to communicate with the instructor regarding grading policy if they have any questions.

NOTE: The grade students earn on written work will be based on the quality of the material; they do not earn points simply by turning something in. Students will continue to be judged by their ability to communicate both orally and in writing at every stage of their future educational/career lives, and thus are encouraged to improve their writing skills through use of the 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/

**Evaluation**

• In accordance with the undergraduate catalog, a grade of I (Incomplete) is assigned only for work which has been of passing quality through the academic term but which, for good reason and with approval of the instructor, cannot be completed within the time frame of the semester. Students for whom special circumstances may warrant an Incomplete must discuss this matter with the instructor before the last day of class (12/12). Awarding a grade of Incomplete requires that the student and the instructor sign and file with the University a written contract that indicates (a) what needs to be
completed to fulfill the contract, (b) the deadline for completion, and (c) what grade will result automatically if the deadline is not met.

- Grading disputes: After the instructor returns an assignment, students have two weeks to review or check over their grade with the instructor. No concerns about grades will be discussed after this two-week time period.
- Academic integrity is the foundation of learning. The university has approved a Code of Academic Integrity available on the web: [http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html](http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/code.html). The code outlines prohibitions on cheating on exams, plagiarizing papers, submitting the same paper for credit in two courses without authorization, buying papers, submitting fraudulent documents, and forging signatures. Students who engage in academic dishonesty on an assignment for this class will receive an F (0 points) for that assignment and may receive an F in the course. There will be no warnings. All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Council of the Office of Judicial Programs for further action. The standard sanction for such a violation is an XF on your transcript, which stands for failure due to academic dishonesty.

### Overall Grade Weighting Breakdown

- Attendance & Participation (15%)
- Case Analysis #1 (10%)
- Case Analysis #2 (10%)
- Case Analysis #3 (10%)
- Audio Taped Session #1: Transcript and Tables (10%)
- Audio Taped Session #2: Transcript and Tables (10%)
- Audio-Taped Session #2: Reflection Paper (15%)
- Final Exam (20%)

TOTAL: 100% of final course grade

### Grading Scale (Percentage Points)

A+ 100 – 98  
A  97 – 93  
A- 92 – 90  
B+ 89 – 87  
B  86 – 83  
B- 82 – 80  
C+ 79 – 77  
C  76 – 73  
C- 72 – 70  
D  70 – 60  
F  < 60
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
<th>DUE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Overview of course, introductions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9/5</td>
<td>Counseling vignettes activity 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>Counselor values and ethics Sign up for Helping Session #1 time slot</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 3</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>9/12</td>
<td>Intro to counseling and the 3-stage model</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>9/17</td>
<td>Person-centered/humanistic counseling Video: Carl Rogers</td>
<td>Rogers, 1992</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>9/19</td>
<td><strong>Helping Session day, held in BioPsych 2150</strong></td>
<td>Complete Helping Session 1</td>
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<td>9/24</td>
<td>In-class practice case analysis</td>
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<td>9/26</td>
<td>Overview of exploration stage / Transcript &amp; Tables Review</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 4</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>10/1</td>
<td>Attending and Listening</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 5</td>
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<td>10/3</td>
<td>Exploring thoughts</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 6</td>
<td>Case Analysis #1</td>
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<td>10/8</td>
<td>Exploring feelings</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 7</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>10/10</td>
<td>Integrating the exploration skills</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 8</td>
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<td>10/15</td>
<td>Video: Clara Hill, exploration</td>
<td>Audio #1 Transcript and Tables</td>
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<td>10/17</td>
<td>Psychodynamic counseling and video</td>
<td>Shedler, 2010</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>10/22</td>
<td>Overview of insight stage</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 9 &amp; 10</td>
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<td>10/24</td>
<td>Insight and immediacy</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>10/29</td>
<td>Video: Clara Hill &amp; integrating the insight skills</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 13</td>
<td>Case Analysis #2</td>
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<td>11/5</td>
<td>Overview of the action stage &amp; Albert Ellis video</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 14</td>
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<td>*Sign up for Helping Session #2 time slot</td>
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<td>11/7</td>
<td>Action skills and steps for action</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 15 &amp; 16</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<td>11/12</td>
<td>Integrating the skills of the action stage; Video: Clara Hill, action</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 17</td>
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<td>11/14</td>
<td><strong>Helping Session day, held in BioPsych 2150</strong></td>
<td>Complete Helping Session 2</td>
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<td>11/19</td>
<td>Integrating the three stages</td>
<td>Hill, Ch. 18</td>
<td>Case Analysis #3</td>
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<td>11/21</td>
<td>Multicultural counseling &amp; review of reflection paper</td>
<td>Nystul, 2011</td>
<td>Discussion Qs</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/26</td>
<td>Multicultural counseling (continued)</td>
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<td>11/28</td>
<td>NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK</td>
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<td>12/3</td>
<td>Termination</td>
<td>Ch. 18 (pp. 373-376)</td>
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<td>12/5</td>
<td>Counseling vignettes activity 2</td>
<td>Audio #2 Transcript and Tables</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>Review, wrap up</td>
<td>Audio #2 Reflection Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/12</td>
<td><strong>Final Exam (in class)</strong></td>
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*Note: Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed.
Course Reference List


