

**COUN 8910**  
**Advanced Practicum in**  
**Counseling Psychology**

*Fall 2014*

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**Department of Special**  
**Education, Rehabilitation,**  
**and Counseling**

**College of Education**

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:  
**Marilyn A. Cornish, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Professor**  
**2052 Haley Center**  
**mac0084@auburn.edu**

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**OFFICE HOURS:**

**by appointment**

**This course is reserved**  
**for students enrolled in**  
**the Counseling Psychology**  
**doctoral program at Auburn**  
**University. All others**  
**require permission.**

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**



*Competent*

equipped with the knowledge, skills  
and technological expertise to help  
all individuals learn and develop

*Committed*

dedicated to the ethical practices and collaboration  
that serve as the foundation of a diverse  
and intellectually vibrant society

*Reflective*

devoted to analyzing their own past practices  
in ways that fuel ongoing learning  
and improve future practices

*A Keystone in Building a Better Future for All*



**AUBURN**  
**UNIVERSITY**

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## SYLLABUS

### 1. Course Number: COUN 8910

**Course Title:** Advanced Practicum in Counseling Psychology—Auburn University

**Credits:** 3 semester hours

**Prerequisites:** COUN 7910 (two semesters)

**Instructor:** Marilyn A. Cornish, PhD

**Contact Info:** 2052 Haley (mail: 2084); mac0084@auburn.edu

**Class Meeting:** Tuesdays 1:00-3:50pm in 2011 Haley Center

### 2. Date Syllabus Prepared: 8/2014

### 3. Text or Major Resources (Required):

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct*. Retrieved from <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/principles.pdf>

Duncan, B. L. (2014). *On becoming a better therapist: Evidence-based practice one client at a time* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

*Counseling psychology program practicum guidelines* (2014). Retrieved from [http://www.education.auburn.edu/files/dept\\_ser/cop\\_practicum\\_guide.pdf](http://www.education.auburn.edu/files/dept_ser/cop_practicum_guide.pdf)

### 4. Course Description:

Advanced experience in providing psychotherapy and in designing psychological interventions following assessment.

### 5. Course Objectives:

The assumption in this course is that all students in the College of Education are working to be competent, committed, and reflective professionals. The objective of this course is to continue students' development as a psychotherapist. Subsets of this overall objective include continued improvement in students' ability to:

- 1) Maintain awareness of client factors and their influence on the therapy process
- 2) Be aware of reactions to clients and how those reactions may affect the therapy provided
- 3) Establish rapport and a good working relationship with clients
- 4) Identify appropriate clinical diagnoses for clients
- 5) Conceptualize clients and use that conceptualization to guide treatment in a way that fits clients' goals and preferences

- 6) Identify and respond to situations that involve risk of harm to clients or others
- 7) Articulate a theoretical orientation used to guide treatment with clients
- 8) Be flexible in the provision of therapy such that different skills and approaches are tailored to client needs and preferences
- 9) Keep clients engaged in treatment such that premature termination is unlikely and client improvement is regularly achieved
- 10) Use evidence-based practice methods to monitor the process and outcome of work with clients
- 11) Integrate multicultural theory and awareness of cultural factors into clinical practice
- 12) Manage ethical issues in a professional and appropriate manner
- 13) Document clinical work in a way that meets the standards of the work setting, insurance companies (if applicable), and state laws
- 14) Work cooperatively and effectively within the agency setting and develop appropriate professional relationships with other agency staff
- 15) Effectively engage in the supervision process to benefit clients and enhance professional development
- 16) Request consultation from peers and provide helpful, tactful feedback to peers

## 6. Course Content and Schedule:

An overview of the course content and schedule is included below (see Course Requirements for details on each assignment). This schedule may change based upon the learning needs of the class. As a group, we will make decisions about which students and/or issues to focus on during informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues time.

Wk	Date	Class Agenda
1	8/19	Introductions; review syllabus and class objectives; choose presentation dates; discuss any clinical concerns; answer questions about APA ethics code and practicum manual
2	8/26	DUE: Learning Goals and Self-Reflection Paper; discuss papers Discuss Duncan Chapter 1 (So You Want to Be a Better Therapist) Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues
3	9/2	Discuss Duncan Chapter 2 (Becoming a Better Therapist With PCOMS) and Chapter 3 (How Being Bad Can Make You Better) Overview of how to use the PCOMS with clients Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues
4	9/9	Discuss Duncan Chapter 4 (Getting Better with Couples, Families, and Youth) Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues
5	9/16	Discuss Duncan Chapter 5 (Using PCOMS to Accelerate Your Development) Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues

Wk	Date	Class Agenda
6	9/23	Two case presentations: _____ Other students check in regarding clinical issues
7	9/30	Two case presentations: _____ Other students check in regarding clinical issues
8	10/7	Two case presentations: _____ Other students check in regarding clinical issues
9	10/14	Discuss Duncan Chapter 6 (The Heart and Soul of Change) Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues
10	10/21	Discuss Duncan Chapter 7 (Wizards, Humbugs, or Witches) Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues
11	10/28	Discuss Duncan Chapter 9 (For the Love of the Work) Informal case discussion/discussion of clinical issues
12	11/4	Two case presentations: _____ Other students check in regarding clinical issues
13	11/11	Two case presentations: _____ Other students check in regarding clinical issues
14	11/18	Two case presentations: _____ Other students check in regarding clinical issues
	11/25	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
15	12/2	DUE: Alliance and Outcome assignment Students present alliance and outcome assignments in class End-of-the semester processing
16	12/9	NO CLASS: FINALS WEEK Submit statement of clinical hours and final evaluation from supervisor no later than Thursday, December 11th at 5:00pm

## 7. Course Requirements/Evaluation:

### Course Requirements:

1. Re-read the practicum guidelines if you have not done so within the past 30 days, as that document serves as an addendum to the course syllabus. Also, you should review the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*. In addition to following the practicum guidelines and ethical code, you are required to carry out the responsibilities to which you are assigned at your practicum site.

2. You will write a short paper (approximately 2 pages single spaced) on your learning goals for the semester. The paper should address the following questions: a) what are your learning goals for this class (consider both your practicum placement and the practicum class itself), b) what can you do to make progress toward those goals, c) what can your peers and instructors do to be helpful in reaching your learning goals, d) what do you want from your peers and instructor in this practicum class, and e) what do you plan to do to contribute to this practicum class? A hard copy of this paper is due during the second class period. Be prepared to discuss your answers to these questions during that class period.

3. You are required to attend and participate in a 3-hour weekly class. Class will consist primarily of case presentations (see requirement 4), discussion of the assigned book (see requirement 5), and more informal discussion of the clinical work students are conducting at practicum sites. During informal discussion time (i.e., time not devoted to formal case presentations), the highest priority will go to individuals who have a concern about a therapeutic issue. Students and the instructor will work together to determine how that time is best used in a given class period. Over the course of the semester, each student is expected to bring a consultation question/clinical issue for discussion several times. You should bring recordings to each class period that includes “informal case discussion” so you are prepared in the event the discussion would benefit from seeing/hearing your work with a particular client. If you are not actively bringing questions or issues to the informal discussion time, you may be asked to do so at specific times in the semester. This informal discussion and consultation time will also serve as a forum for discussing various topics relevant to the clinical situations, such as risk of harm, ethics, multicultural issues, case conceptualization, boundary issues, transference, countertransference, self-care, etc. When discussing clients and their problems, you will be expected to know (or be willing to commit to finding out) what the literature (research and more general scholarly writings) says about the issue under discussion.

4. You will present two formal case presentations during the term. The first case presentation is an opportunity to demonstrate your theoretical orientation in the context of your work with one client. The second case presentation is an opportunity to more deeply explore how you incorporate multiculturalism into your clinical work, again in the context of your work with one client. For each case presentation, you are expected to bring a) a copy of your de-identified written case conceptualization for each person in the class, b) a pre-identified recording (approximately 15 minutes) from a session, and c) consultation questions for discussion. The first case presentation should include the following sections in the written document: a) demographic data for the client, b) presenting concerns, c) relevant historical information, d) your conceptualization of the client's problem, e) diagnosis, f) treatment goals, g) interventions implemented and/or planned, h) client progress to date, and i) questions for the class. In your conceptualization, you should draw from one or more theoretical orientations (with appropriate references). Treatment goals and interventions should flow from the chosen theory and conceptualization. The second case presentation should include the following sections in the written document: a) demographic data for the client, b) presenting concerns, c) relevant historical/cultural information and the ways that information influences your approach with this client, d) similarities and differences in value systems or worldviews between you and your client, e) a conceptualization of the client's problem that incorporates multicultural knowledge of this client, f) treatment goals, g) strengths you have in

working with this client, h) struggles you have (or expect to have) in working with this client and how you plan to work through them, and i) a summary of clinical work (including interventions and progress) with this client thus far. In both case presentations, you are expected to provide a brief verbal presentation of the information included in the written document. The recording (audio or video depending on your practicum site) you use must be clearly audible (understandable) or you must provide a transcript of the recording for each member of the class.

5. The syllabus identifies days during which chapters from the required text will be discussed. It is expected that you will have read the chapter(s) prior to class and reflected on the implications of the reading for your own clinical work. You are encouraged to bring questions and discussion items relevant to the reading.

6. In addition to the time in class, you will have two 1-hour individual supervision sessions with me during the semester. These meetings will occur on a rotating basis starting several weeks into the semester. The date and time of the first supervision meeting will be determined by the second week of class. The date and time of the second meeting will be determined at your first supervision meeting (so bring your schedule). These individual supervision sessions are designed to give you the opportunity to receive focused supervision on a particular client session, (although these meetings do not replace the supervision you receive at your practicum site) and to give me a more in-depth look at your clinical work than is possible in the practicum class. For each of these supervision meetings, you need to bring a recording of a client session you would like supervision on. Specifically, prior to the meeting you should identify 20 minutes of the tape to watch together. If you are unable to bring tape to the meeting (this should be a rare circumstance and one you need to address with me prior to your scheduled week), you need to provide me a transcript of the 20-minutes you would have shown at least 24 hours in advance of our meeting. You are expected to come prepared with your supervision needs. General issues and other clients may also be discussed in the supervision meeting, but a significant portion of the time will be spent watching/listening to the client session together and addressing questions/issues regarding that client session. If in-class group supervision, individual supervision with me, and supervision with your on-site supervisor are not enough to meet your needs, you may request or I may require additional meetings.

7. You are required to monitor working alliance and outcome with at least one client during the semester. Given that the Partners for Change Outcome Management System (PCOMS) is emphasized in the required reading, it is highly encouraged that you try this system during the semester. If, however, you have rationale for using alternative alliance and/or outcome measures you can do so. You are encouraged, however, to speak with me about this decision ahead of time. It is also possible for you to use additional measures with a given client even if you use the PCOMS. Subjective reports from you or your client are not sufficient for this assignment. At the end of the semester, you will be asked to present your alliance and outcome data to the class. In addition to presenting the data, you should address the following questions: a) how did having the alliance data influence your work with this client, b) how did having (or not having) outcome data available for every session influence your approach with this client, c) what was your experience of collecting and utilizing the alliance and outcome data with this client, and d) how (and why) do you plan to use these or similar measures in your future work with clients? You can use PowerPoint (or similar program) or handouts to present this assignment to the class.

8. You are required to submit to me an accurate and detailed record of your clinical hours at the end of the semester. You are also required to submit to me a copy of your final evaluation from your primary supervisor at your practicum site.

#### Evaluation:

This course uses satisfactory/unsatisfactory grading. Your evaluation will depend on your performance as a therapist (including related issues such as ethics, behavior with on-site colleagues, etc.), particularly as evidenced in the recordings you share and in your descriptions of the actions you have been taking with your clients. Also considered will be your comments and behavior in class (e.g., frequency and quality of the tapes you bring to class, abilities in role play situations, comments in class, quality of your presentation, etc). A key ingredient in your course grade will be the evaluation completed by your on-site supervisor near the end of the semester.

A grade of satisfactory in the course requires all of the following:

- Satisfactory completion of the learning goals paper
- Satisfactory performance on the two case presentations
- Satisfactory demonstration of clinical skill
- Satisfactory use of individual supervision meetings
- Active and open involvement in class discussions
- Satisfactory performance on the alliance and outcome presentation
- Evaluation from your training site that indicates satisfactory performance
- Accurate submission of semester clinical hours with a minimum of 30 direct contact hours

If it becomes evident that you are not meeting expectations for a satisfactory grade, I will meet with you to discuss this matter. You can expect feedback from me about your progress during your individual supervision sessions. If you do not receive a satisfactory evaluation from your training site, you may be required to take steps toward remediation as allowed in the training manual, training site policies, ethical guidelines, and professional judgment of counseling psychology program faculty. Please note that program policies specify minimally acceptable scores on the site evaluation. Failure to achieve these benchmarks means you cannot pass and will need to undergo remediation. You are encouraged to become familiar with program policies that bear upon the grade of satisfactory for practicum and the ability to progress in the program. This is specified in the program requirements and this information is available on the counseling psychology website.

#### **8. Class Policy Statements:**

Late Work Policy: It is expected that you have completed all assignments by the start of class on the day assignments are due. Failure to turn an assignment in on time or missing a presentation will result in unsatisfactory completion of that course requirement, and in many instances would mean an inability to pass the class. It is therefore imperative that students complete all course requirements on time. I reserve the right to allow exceptions to this policy, for example, in the event of an emergency.

Attendance Policy: You are expected to be in class and be prepared. The primary method of instruction in this course is through experiential learning and thus no assigned reading can replace a missed class or hour of supervision. You are expected to communicate in advance if you need to be absent from class. You are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work due to excused absences. Missing more than one class period requires instructor approval. Attendance also applies to your individual supervision meetings. Any missed individual supervision sessions with me must be made up.

Respect: When providing feedback and consultation to other students, it is expected that you will be respectful of one another. You will be encouraged to challenge your colleagues and provide constructive feedback. This feedback from individuals who know you well is extremely valuable in improving your skills as a therapist. Your feedback should be provided in a way that communicates respect, facilitates your peers' learning, and conveys your interest in learning from your peers. Should it be determined that your feedback is provided in a way that undermines the experiential learning in this course, you will be asked to remediate your behavior and you may be referred to the counseling psychology faculty for formal remediation.

Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting with me during the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

Honesty Code: All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the Student Policy eHandbook ([http://www.auburn.edu/student\\_info/student\\_policies/](http://www.auburn.edu/student_info/student_policies/)) will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

Professionalism: As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College's conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

- Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
- Contribute to collaborative learning communities
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
- Model and nurture intellectual vitality

As students enrolled in a training program accredited by the American Psychological Association, you are bound by the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct* adopted by that organization. The Student Policy eHandbook contains information on procedures to follow in the event you have an academic grievance. It also contains information about the student code of conduct. It is your responsibility to be familiar with and to follow the code of conduct in the eHandbook.



Confidentiality/Privacy: Obviously, material describing clients, particularly any information which might later help identify a client in an environment outside class, must be kept confidential, consistent with the APA ethics code. Specifics that you discuss in class about yourself and your behavior as a therapist are considered private within the scope of training, and confidential as pertains to your peers. That is to say, no member of the class is to repeat outside of class private information disclosed in class. To do so would violate the privacy rights of your peers who are disclosing in pursuit of becoming a better psychotherapist. As your supervisor (class instructor) there are certain conditions that demand information I obtain about your clients' behaviors and your own behavior with your clients be disclosed or otherwise discussed with others. These include the usual ones of court order, child or elder abuse, and serious threats of violence, including threatened suicide or homicide, by the client. I may also disclose to others behaviors you have engaged in or appear to be engaging in which in my opinion put your client's welfare at risk. Routine mistakes made by students in training do not demand that I disclose personal information. Should I have serious concerns about your ability to pass the class, I may discuss these concerns with colleagues to arrive at an appropriate decision for future training requirements. I also reserve the right to consult with a colleague to appropriately address clinical issues that arise (ranging from a particular clinical policy to a situation in which I have concerns about yours or a client's safety). Finally, during faculty meetings and/or on-site evaluations of your performance, illustrative problem areas may be discussed. As a general rule, I will use common sense and sensitivity to your needs as important variables in deciding whether it is necessary to discuss with others what has transpired in class or individual supervision.

In line with confidentiality, you will need to retrieve and shred documents that you share with peers for your case presentation. Similarly, you should appropriately store transcripts and tapes and destroy such materials as soon as possible (typically immediately after class/supervision, though you may need to review tape a few times or retain documents for training evaluation).

Office Hours: I am available by appointment. Campus email is the best way to reach me to schedule an appointment, but you can also see me after class or call my office phone. I encourage you to make an appointment with me if you have any questions or concerns about the course or your performance in it. I also offer the caveat that I may ask another supervisor to serve in my absence if I am away and cannot be reached. Please follow your site requirements and the ethical guidelines, along with Alabama (or Georgia, if applicable) state law, when dealing with client emergencies.

## **9. Justification for Graduate Credit:**

Graduate courses "should be progressively more advanced in academic content than undergraduate programs" and should "foster independent learning" (SACS guidelines 3.6.1 and 3.6.2). Further, the guidelines presented in the Statement of Clarification of the Definition and Use of 6000-level courses as approved by the Graduate Council, May 21 1997 apply.