AUBURN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION, REHABILITATION, AND COUNSELING SYLLABUS

Spring Semester 2024

Course #: COUN 7350

Course Title: Introduction to Counseling Practice

Credit Hours: 3 credit hours

Co/Prerequisites: COUN 7320

Corequisites: None

Date Syllabus Prepared: Revised January 2025

Course Meeting Times: 4-6:50pm

Course Locations:

Instructor: John R. McCall, Ph.D.

Email: jrm0204@auburn.edu

Office hours: By appointment

**Texts**:

Required:

Cormier, Sherry (2021). *Counseling Strategies and interventions for professional helpers*. 9th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Yalom, I. D. (2017). *The gift of therapy: An open letter to a new generation of therapists and their patients.* New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers.

\*Note: This is required reading at your own pace. A suggested timeline of reading is included in the course schedule. We will discuss the book on the last day of class\*

Recommended:

Erford, B. T., Eaves, S. T., Bryant, E. M., & Young, K. A. (2010). *Thirty-­‐five techniques every counselor should know.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

**Course Description**:

Methods, interventions and skills essential to counseling in community and post-­‐secondary counseling settings. This course is designed to assist you in preparing for your first practicum experience. You will obtain opportunities to practice skills with mock clients, allowing you to increase your comfort in the execution of counseling skills in a safe environment. You will also be able to develop a core set of skills necessary to work with clients before entering into a counselor-­‐client relationship. Given that the techniques you learn in this course help make the set of core skills necessary for counseling, mastery of skills is necessary for passing the course.

Course Goal: Students will acquire and apply the methods, skills, and interventions necessary to provide counseling in a counseling setting.

**Course Objectives**:

Through assigned readings, in-­‐class exercises, videotaped simulated counseling experiences, and satisfactory performance on the mid-­‐term and final examinations, students will demonstrate:

1.   Critical thinking and reasoning in the counseling process (CACREP III.E.2.)

2. Application of technology related to counseling (CACREP III.E.5)

3. Ethical and legal issues relevant to establishing and maintaining counseling relationships across service delivery modalities (CACREP III.E.6)

4. Culturally sustaining and responsive strategies for establishing and maintaining counseling relationships across service delivery modalities (CACREP III.E.7)

5. Counselor characteristics, behaviors, and strategies that facilitate effective counseling relationships (CACREP III.E.8)

6. Interviewing, attending, and listening skills in the counseling process (CACREP III.E.9)

7. Counseling strategies and techniques used to facilitate the client change process (CACREP III.E.10)

8. Strategies for adapting and accommodating the counseling process to client culture, context, abilities, and preferences (CACREP III.E.11)

9. Goal consensus and collaborative decision-making in the counseling process (CACREP III.E.12)

10. Developmentally relevant and culturally sustaining counseling treatment or intervention plans (CACREP III.E.13)

11. Development of measurable outcomes for clients (CACREP III.E.14)

12. Record keeping and documentation skills (CACREP III.E.16)

13. Suicide prevention and response models and strategies (CACREP III.E.19)

Clinical Mental Health Specialty Area

14.  etiology, nomenclature, diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental, behavioral, or neurodevelopmental disorders (CACREP V.C.a)

15. Intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management (CACREP V.C.d)

School Counseling Specialty Area

16.  skills to screen PK-12 students for characteristics, risk factors, and warning signs of mental health and behavioral disorders (CACREP V.H.l)

Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling Specialty Area

17. intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management (CACREP V.D.i)

**Course Requirements**:

1.   **Reading** of text, assigned articles, and handouts.

2.   **Class attendance**. This course is highly experiential and class attendance is very important. You are allotted one excused absence (i.e., you need to notify me before you are gone). Additional absences will result in grade reduction, and students will be held responsible for any content covered in the event of an absence.

3.   Students will **participate in in-­‐class exercises and activities** in order to practice counseling skills and reflect on their learning experiences.

4.   Students will participate in four (4) digitally **recorded mock counseling sessions**. Each session will be graded on the counseling skills identified in Grading Rubrics found on Canvas. Taping will occur outside of class meeting times. Students are expected to be dependable and responsible in regard to attending scheduled recording times with partners and in their treatment of the lab space.

1. For the individual counseling sessions “clients” will be drawn from class membership.
2. For each session, you must demonstrate the required skills. Failure to demonstrate these skills may result in students having to rerecord the session.
3. Please be sure that you are **role-playing** only when you are playing the client. You should be pretending to be someone else (tv or movie character, book character, someone you know). You should NOT be playing yourself and bringing real issues into the role play session, unless they are issues that you have already resolved.
4. Grading for session recordings is pass/fail. To pass, and earn full points, you must earn an overall rating of exemplary or competent based on the rubric (see canvas) designated for each session.
5. Create a Box folder that is shared with the instructor and GA’s of the course. All recordings and corresponding documentation should be uploaded into Box.

5.   Students will be required to complete **written assignments and documentation** for recorded sessions.

**Course Assignments**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Assignment 1 | Due: 2/3 | Points | CACREP Standard |
| Reflection Paper 1 | Students will write a 3-5 page reflection on what challenges they anticipate encountering given their unique history and cultural background. Students will document their reflections and develop strategies for how to manage challenges. | 10 | III.E.2; III.E.6; III.E.7; III.E.7; II.E.11; III.E.13; |
| Assignment 2 | Due: 2/10 |  |  |
| Session A Recording | A 10-minute practice session with the aim of providing informed consent. Upload recording to Box folder. | 10 | III.E.2.; III.E.7.; III.E.8; III.E.9.; III.E.9.; III.E.11; III.E.16; V.C.a; V.C.d; V.D.i. |
| Reflection Paper 2 | Students will view their recorded practice session in full and complete a reflection worksheet (see canvas for worksheet). | 10 | III.E.5.; III.E.8. |
| Assignment 3 | Due: 2/24 |  |  |
| Session B Recording | A 15-20 minute intake session. Focus on narrowing focus and goal setting. Upload recording to Box folder | 20 | III.E.2.; III.E.5.; III.E.6.; III.E.7., III.E.8.; III.E.9.; III.E.10.; III.E.11.; III.E.12; III.E.14.; III.E.16.; V.H.l.; V.D.i |
| Reflection Paper 3 | Students will view their recorded practice session in full and complete a reflection worksheet (see canvas for worksheet). | 10 | III.E.2.; III.E.8. |
| Intake Form | Students will turn in and complete an intake form with their mock client. | 20 | III.E.16; V.C.d.; V.D.i. |
| Assignment 4 | Due: 3/24 |  |  |
| Session C Recording | A 25-35 minute recording of a counseling session. Focus on exploring treatment options and implementing an three micro interventions and one macro intervention. Upload recording to Box folder. | 25 | III.E.2.; III.E.5.; III.E.6.; III.E.7.; III.E.8.; III.E.9; III.E.10; III.E.11; III.E.12.; III.E.13.; III.E.14.; III.E.19; V.H.l |
| Reflection Paper 4 | Students will view their recorded practice session in full and transcription and complete a reflection worksheet (see canvas for worksheet). | 10 | III.E.2.; III.E.8. |
| Transcription | Students will transcribe their recorded counseling session. In a separate column next to the transcribed text, students will state the skill that they were using, and provide an alternative utterance. | 30 | III.E.2.; III.E.7.; III.E.10.; III.E.11.; III.E.13. |
| Assignment 5 | Due: 4/21 |  |  |
| Session D Recording | A 45-50 minute recorded session of a counseling session. Focus on intervention, evaluation, and termination. Upload recording to Box folder. | 35 | III.E.2.; III.E.5.; III.E.6.; III.E.7.; III.E.8.; III.E.9; III.E.10; III.E.11; III.E.12.; III.E.13.; III.E.14.; III.E.19; V.H.l |
| Reflection Paper 5 | Students will view their recorded practice session in full and complete a reflection worksheet (see canvas for worksheet). | 10 | III.E.2.; III.E.8. |
| Progress Note | Students will write a progress note of their recorded session. | 10 | III.E.2.; III.E.16 |

**Grading and Evaluation:**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **#** | **Title** | **Length** | **Required skills** | **Required Documentation** | **Point Value** |
| 1 | Session A | 5-10 minutes | 1.   Informed Consent  2.   Rubric 1 | Reflection Paper | Recording – 10  Reflection Paper – 10 |
| 2 | Session B | 15-20 minutes | 1.   Information gathering  2.   Rubric 2 | Intake form  Reflection Paper | Recording – 20  Intake form – 20  Reflection Paper – 10 |
| 3 | Session C | 25-35 minutes | 1.   Identify  consistent skills  2.  Rubric 3 | Session Transcription  Reflection Paper | Recording – 25  Transcription – 30  Reflection Paper – 10 |
| 4 | Session D | 45-50 minutes | 1. Writing a progress note   2.   Rubric 4 | Progress note  Reflection Paper | Recording – 35  Progress note –10  Reflection Paper – 10 |

Assignments Point value

Participation

5pts each class (x12 class meetings) **50**

Skill Demonstrations

Session A 10

Session B 20

Session C 25

Session D 35

**Skills Demonstrations Total 90**

Written Assignments

Reflection Papers (5 x 10pts each) 50

Completed Intake 20

Transcription 30

Progress Note 10

**Written Assignment Total 110**

**Grand Total: 250 points**

A grade of Satisfactory requires an average of 85% or higher (212 points). All assignments are due at the beginning of class on their due date. Late assignments will be accepted at the discretion of the instructor and will result in a grade reduction. Unexcused absences (as outlined above) will result in a grade reduction. Failure to meet requirements or objectives will result in a grade of U. **NOTE: a grade of S in this course is a prerequisite for enrollment in practicum.**

**Class Policy Statements**:

1.   Attendance: Students may miss up to one class without penalty. Additional absences will result in grade reduction, and students will be held responsible for any content covered in the event of an absence. Students are expected to be on time for class.

2.   Excused Absences: Students are granted excused absences from class for the following reasons: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family, trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for university classes, trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoena for a court appearance, and religious holidays. Students who wish to have excused absences from class for any other reason must contact the instructor in advance of the absence to request permission. The instructor will weigh the merits of the request and render a decision. When feasible, the student must notify the instructor prior to the occurrence of any excused absences, but in no case shall notification occur more than one week after the absence. Appropriate documentation for all excused absences is required. Please see University Policies https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/default.aspx for more information on excused absences.

3.   Make-Up Policy: Arrangement to make up a missed major examination (e.g., hour exams, mid-­‐ term exams) due to properly authorized excused absences must be initiated by the student within one week of the end of the period of the excused absence(s). Except in extraordinary circumstance, no make-up exams will be arranged during the last three days before the final exam period begins.

4. Course Assignments: Course assignments are due on the dates and times specified within the course schedule. If you are concerned about your ability to complete quality work as described in the schedule, make an appointment as soon as possible so we discuss how to support your learning in our course. When assignments are turned in late, without an excused or approved absence, scores for the assignment(s) will be reduced by 10% per day, with no assignments accepted more than 1 week past the due date.

*Tape Submission*: Tapes may be resubmitted if the instructor deems the student did not meet minimum competency areas outlined in the rubric. Resubmissions will be considered for full credit if they are submitted within 1-week of receipt of feedback from the instructor.

5.   Academic Honesty Policy: All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title

XII) found in the University Policies https://sites.auburn.edu/admin/universitypolicies/Policies/Forms/Academic.aspx will apply to university courses. 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.

6.   Students with Disabilities Statement Disability Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours an alternative time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-­‐mail. 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).

7.   Course contingency: If normal class and/or lab activities are disrupted due to illness, emergency, or crisis situation, the syllabus and other course plans and assignments may be modified to allow completion of the course. If this occurs, an addendum to your syllabus and/or course assignments will replace the original materials.

8.   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:

a.   Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices

b.   Contribute to collaborative learning communities

c.   Demonstrate a commitment to diversity

d.   Model and nurture intellectual vitality

9. Learning Community: In this course, we will seek to establish a community of trust and mutual respect. Please be mindful and considerate of yourself, your peers, and your instructor. Though not all people in the class will share your views, the environment requires careful listening and responding to others in a manner in which you wish to be responded to. The course design is based on the assumption that each of you is a resource person and a learner. We have a responsibility to contribute to the learning of the group and our own individual experience.

10. Use of Electronics: Cell phones must be put on silent and stored during class times, unless the instructor is notified of special circumstances (e.g., on-­‐call professional services, family emergencies). Computers and electronic notepads are welcomed but may be used for class purposes only and must not be a distraction.

Policy Related to the Use of AI for Classroom Assignments

The Counselor Education Programs (CED) has a comprehensive policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). As the acceptable use of AI varies, please consult your instructor on how AI can be used within specific courses and/or clinical settings. Please understand that violations of this policy can be considered a form of plagiarism. Please see the CED Programs Handbook for the full AI policy.

Policy Related to the Use of Zoom for Class Meetings

* Zoom participation requires you to keep your video on and your microphone muted when you are not speaking.
  + If you have a need for technology to support your participation in this class or do not have a space conducive for participating - SERC provides private individual counseling spaces (Counseling Lab) that you can reserve and use for class sessions.
  + Please know that you can blur your background if you are not comfortable sharing your space or environment during classes conducted online.
  + Please limit all distractions such as your phone or attending to other work on your computer.  It is often very apparent that a student is distracted and that impacts the class environment for everyone.
  + Students can turn off their cameras briefly if needed (e.g., break).   These pauses should be *short*.  Having students on camera provides a higher level of engagement for all participants.
  + If you have questions during class, you can raise your hand (in real time or via Zoom).
  + Please know that sometimes it is challenging to be teaching and attending to students and reading messages in Chat, especially if I am also sharing content.   If I don’t respond to a comment or discussion in Chat, please let me know.
* Although you may be participating from your domicile, our Zoom meetings are professional interactions.
  + You should dress and behave as you would in a normal F2F classroom.
  + Please minimize distractions in the background as much as possible.
  + Participating in spaces that are not conducive to zoom attendance (e.g., public spaces, vehicles) should be discussed with the instructor prior to the class session and should only be used when there are no other alternatives.
* Recording Sessions: Due to the nature of our classes and the possibility that we may be discussing content that is confidential in nature:
  + Instructors can record sessions and will notify students when the class session is being recorded (e.g., teaching demonstrations, making the session available to other students, speakers)
    - Confidential content (e.g., supervision sessions) will be retained following appropriate ethical and legal practices as well as CED policies (e.g., password protected BOX folders).
    - Students can request that the recording be stopped if they wish to discuss a topic that they do not want recorded.  *In areas such as supervision this may not be possible*.
  + You should participate in spaces that allow for these discussions and do not have others present in the room while you are using it for class or supervision.
  + As per University policies, I reserve the right to dismiss anyone from a Zoom meeting whose environment or behavior is distracting or problematic.
  + If you have any issues with sharing your video feed, adhering to this policy, or anything else related to your use of Zoom please notify me via email in the first week of class so we can discuss if accommodations are possible.

Diversity Statement

A central foundation of the mission of the Counselor Education programs is the preparation of counselors and counselor educators to work in an increasingly diverse society. The program’s understanding of diversity encompasses culture, sexual and gender identity, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, ability, and other aspects of individual identity. The program believes that meeting these goals requires that students and faculty engage in advocacy, equity, inclusion, and culturally sustaining practices. This includes students demonstrating these principles in their academic, clinical practice and professional development engagement.

These principles are in alignment with our professional, ethical, and accreditation standards including: Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (2024 standards) American Counseling Association’s Code of Ethics (ACA, 2016), American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA), the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC), American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMCHA), and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). Overall, we seek to create educational and learning environments that support, sustain, and challenge students to address their development as professionals related to and representative of culturally sustaining practice.

Accommodations Statement

Auburn University and the Counselor Education program are committed to ensuring student success by providing them with the appropriate supportive resources when necessary. We encourage students to exercise their right under the Americans with Disabilities Act to access academic accommodations. Students who need accommodations should submit their approved accommodations through the AIM Student Portal on AU Access and follow up with the instructor about an appointment. It is important for the student to complete these steps as soon as possible; accommodations are not retroactive. Students who have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility but need accommodations should contact the Office of Accessibility at ACCESSIBILITY@auburn.edu or (334) 844-2096 (V/TT). The Office of Accessibility is located in Haley Center 1228. Once a student has begun the process for accommodations, they are responsible for scheduling a meeting with faculty to discuss how these accommodations will be implemented in practice. Faculty are committed to working with students to support their needs in conjunction with the Office of Accessibility.

**Justification for Graduate Credit:**

This course includes advanced content crisis intervention. This includes content as specified by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP, 2009). All academic content approved by CACREP is for advanced Masters and/or Doctoral graduate study. This includes rigorous evaluation standards of students completing the student learning outcomes specified in this syllabus.

**SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER:**

Due to the nature of this course, the instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed due to the developmental needs of the students. In the event that changes are deemed necessary, the instructor will inform students at the earliest date possible in class or via email.

**Course Schedule**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading and Assignments** |
| 1 | 1/13 | Introduction and Overview of Course | None |
| 2 | 1/20 | Martin Luther King Jr. Day – no class meeting | None |
| 3 | 1/27 | Helping as a personal journey and the helping relationship  Ethical considerations | Readings:  Cormier: Ch. 1, 2  Yalom: Ch. 1-7 |
| 4 | 2/03 | Common challenges for beginning helpers  Attending/Invitational skills, encouragers, and questions  Practice Informed Consent  Practice Sessions | Readings:  Cormier: Ch. 10, 3, 4  Yalom: Ch. 8-14  Canvas Chin & Giblin (2008)  **Assignments Due:**  **-Reflection Paper 1** |
| 5 | 2/10 | Reflecting feelings, meaning, and summarizing  Practice Sessions | Readings:  Cormier: 4,5,6  Yalom: Ch. 15-21  **Assignments Due:**  **-Session Recording A**  **-Reflection Paper 2** |
| 6 | 2/17 | Managing the helping session and goal setting   * Intake interview & gathering information * Mental Status Exam introduction * Setting goals   Practice Sessions | Readings:  Cormier: Ch.7  (Canvas) Polanski & Hinkle (2000)  Yalom: Ch. 22-28 |
| 7 | 2/24 | Conceptualizing client issues, goal setting, and treatment planning   * Stages of change | Readings:  Cormier: Ch. 8  Yalom: 29-35  **Assignments Due:**  **-Session B Recording**  **-Reflection Paper 3**  **-Completed Intake Form** |
| 8 | 3/03 | Communication patterns in the helping process:   * Counseling with cultural humility   Practice Sessions | Readings:  Cormier: Ch. 7  Yalom: Ch. 43-49 |
| 9 | 3/10 | Spring Break – no class meeting |  |
| 10 | 3/17 | Challenging responses, confrontation and feedback  Practice Sessions | Readings:  Cormier: Ch. 7  Yalom: Ch. 43-49 |
| 11 | 3/24 | Short-term counseling techniques  Motivational Interviewing  Practice Sessions | Readings:  Solution Focused Techniques:  <https://solutionfocused.net/what-is-solution-focused-therapy/>  (Canvas) Motivational interviewing  Yalom: Ch. 50-57  **Assignments Due:**  **-Session C Recording**  **-Reflection Paper 4**  **-Transcript** |
| 12 | 3/31 | Mental status and suicide risk assessment  Practice Sessions | Readings:  (Canvas) Granello (2010)  (Canvas) Polanski & Hinkle (2000)  Yalom: Ch. 58-64 |
| 13 | 4/07 | Using integrative helping strategies and interventions  Integrating theory into skills  Practice Sessions | Readings:  Cormier: Ch. 9  Yalom: Ch. 65-71 |
| 14 | 4/14 | Evaluating progress and termination  Progress/Case Notes  Practice Sessions | Readings:  Yalom: Ch. 72-78 |
| 15 | 4/21 | Discuss Yalom book  Practice sessions | Readings:  Yalom: Ch. 79-85  **Assignments Due:**  **-Session D Recording**  **-Reflection Paper 5**  **-Progress Note** |
| 16 | 4/28 | SCIP Day | Readings: TBA |

\*\*\*All assignments are due **by class time** on the date noted.