

Clinical Skills and Interventions

Spring 2012

Instructor: Alexandra F. Corning, PhD
Course Time: 9:00–11:30 am Fridays
Course Number: PSY 61385
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course focuses on the empirical foundations of clinical intervention, with emphasis on the skills important to the developmental phases of intervention – from rapport-building, through exploration, insight, and action, to termination. This course also informs the student of the roles and meaning of clinical dynamics and the therapeutic process. As such, there are three primary purposes of this course: 1) to facilitate understanding of the therapeutic premises and research bases of the fundamental skills used by professional psychologists, 2) to increase the student's facility with each skill through structured practice and feedback, and 3) to enhance the student's ability to assess, manage, and work effectively with clinical dynamics and the therapeutic process.

TEXTS

Hill, C. E. (2004). *Helping skills* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: APA.
Additional readings and handouts will be provided by the instructor.

REQUIREMENTS

To meet the objectives of the course, the following assignments are required:

Participation	15 points
Homework Assignments	5 points
Skill Demonstration Exams (3 @ 5 points each)	15 points
Case Conceptualization Report	10 points
Therapy Stage Written Examinations (3 @ 10 points each)	30 points
Final Examination	25 points
Individual Conference (Required for Receipt of Grade)	

Successful completion of this course is required for advancement to the practicum.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

WEEK	DATE	COURSE TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT
1	Jan 20	Course Overview and Self-Reflection toward Professional Development	Chapter 1 Handout: Five Elements of Feedback
2	Jan 27	Overview of the Therapy Process and THERAPY STAGE I: EXPLORATION and Session Foundations: Rapport-Building within Session Mechanics	Chapters 2, 3, 4, & 5 Handout: <i>Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA)</i>
3	Feb 03	Basic Listening I: Attending and Basic Listening II: Paraphrasing and Restatements	Chapters 6 & 8
4	Feb 10	Basic Listening III: Reflecting and Accurate Empathy	Chapter 9 Handout: Accurate Empathy: Tape Recording of Carl Rogers
5	Feb 17	Integration of Exploration Stage Skills and Therapy Stage I Written Examination	Chapter 11

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (continued)

6	Feb 24	<p>Skill Demonstration Exam I Due</p> <p>and</p> <p>THERAPY STAGE II: INSIGHT</p> <p>and</p> <p>Silences</p>	<p>Chapters 10 & 12</p> <p>Handout: Tape Recording of Carl Rogers with a Schizophrenic Client: "A Silent Young Man"</p>
7	March 02	<p>Confrontation</p> <p>and</p> <p>Asking Questions: Empathic Prompting and Probing</p>	<p>Chapters 7 & 13</p> <p>Handout: The Art of Probing & Summarizing</p>
8	March 09	<p>Interpretation</p> <p>and</p> <p>Immediacy and Self-Disclosure</p>	<p>Chapters 14, 15, & 16</p>
9	March 16	<p>SPRING RECESS</p>	
10	March 23	<p>Integration of Insight Stage Skills</p> <p>and</p> <p>Therapy Stage II Written Examination</p>	<p>Chapter 17</p>

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (continued)

11	March 30	<p>Skill Demonstration Exam II Due</p> <p>and</p> <p>THERAPY STAGE III: ACTION</p> <p>Providing Information</p> <p>and</p> <p>Offering Direct Guidance</p> <p>and</p> <p>Case Conceptualization</p>	<p>Chapters 18, 19, & 20</p> <p>Handout: Cognitive-behavioral therapy: Basic principles and recent advances (Wright, 2006)</p>
12	April 06	GOOD FRIDAY -- NO CLASSES	
13	April 13	Case Conceptualization (continued)	
14	April 20	<p>Case Conceptualization Paper Due</p> <p>Integration of Action Stage Skills</p> <p>and</p> <p>Therapy Stage III Written Examination</p>	<p>Chapter 21</p> <p>Handout: What to Do with <i>Inaction</i>: When the Client is Stuck – A Solution-Focused Approach</p> <p>Handout: Making Referrals</p>
15	April 27	<p>Skill Demonstration Exam III Due</p> <p>and</p> <p>In-Class Integrative Skills Practice Session</p> <p>and</p> <p><i>Class Guest: Current UCC Practicum Student</i></p>	Chapter 22
16	May 10 & 11	<p>Final Examination</p> <p>and</p> <p>Individual Conferences</p>	

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation

Your openness, contributions, commitment, and willingness to improve your clinical skills are necessary to advance your learning. Because much of what you will learn in this course is experiential in nature, attendance, promptness, and participation are essential and will be taken into consideration in evaluating your overall performance. You are expected to attend all class meetings. Structured practice through roleplaying as well as in-class examinations will be a regular part of most class meetings. In preparing for class each week, you are expected to have completed the corresponding readings prior to each class meeting and to have begun practice of the associated skills. Finally, appropriate ethical and virtuous behavior is expected – with particular attention paid to the maintenance of your peers' confidentiality.

Homework Assignments

At various points in the course, you will be asked to respond to course material outside of class. A set of brief homework assignments has been designed to promote your personal understanding of course topics independent of the perspectives of others. Homework assignments will be made during designated class meetings and the corresponding due dates will be announced at those times. You are required to work alone on these assignments and should submit them in hardcopy to my faculty mailbox by their due dates. Evaluation will be based on completeness and accuracy of the work.

Skill Demonstration Examinations

Practicing the basic skills of clinical intervention likely is the best way to integrate them into a systematic model of therapy. Most class meetings will involve the practice of new skills. It is your responsibility as the learner to extend your practice of the skills and their cumulative integration to outside of class. At three points during the course, you will be required to demonstrate competency with a determined set of skills by way of either a taped or in vivo examination (to be discussed further in class). You and a classmate acting as a client will be provided a clinical scenario and you will be responsible for demonstrating the required skills in a therapeutically meaningful way. You will be informed well in advance of the skills to be demonstrated. Qualitative feedback and a numerical grade will be provided based on the extent to which the skill was adequately demonstrated in a clinically meaningful way.

Case Conceptualization Report

Clinical intervention requires conceptualization first of the client's difficulty so that you may plan an appropriate treatment. You will be provided information about a client from which you will write a case conceptualization report. The format of the report will be discussed in advance in class. Evaluation will be based on the thoroughness and completeness of the report, as well as its clarity and readability (given that case reports may be read as well by other professionals).

Therapy-Stage Written Examinations

Close attention to the assigned readings for each week and integration with the class lecture materials is necessary to your success in the class. Three written examinations assessing your intellectual understanding of the clinical skills associated with each of the three stages of therapy and based on the readings and class lectures will be administered (see the Schedule of Events for the dates). This assignment helps ensure the student's intellectual understanding of the bases of the skills. Exams contain multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank type questions and are worth 10 points each.

ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

Final Examination

At the conclusion of the course, you will be required to demonstrate fluency in the skills presented throughout the course. This examination will take the form of an extended therapy session segment in which all the skills covered in the course are to be demonstrated in a contextualized manner appropriate to the session dynamics. Each student will be paired with a class peer playing the role of client. The session will be observed live by the course instructor. The final exam will be held during finals week with individual session times to be scheduled.

Individual Conference

An individual conference with the instructor is required of the student at the close of the semester. The purpose of the conference is to discuss evaluation of the student's progress. Subsequently, a written evaluation of the student's progress will be submitted to the student's permanent file in the Department.