

# Theories of Psychotherapy

Fall 2006

Instructor: Alexandra F. Corning, PhD  
Course Number: PSY 60311  
Office: 101 Haggar Hall  
Contact: [acorning@nd.edu](mailto:acorning@nd.edu) | 631-9928  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Web Page: <http://www.nd.edu/~acorning>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is twofold. The first purpose is to introduce you to research on psychotherapy process and outcome so you become equipped to critically examine questions regarding both the effectiveness and efficacy of psychotherapy. The second purpose is to facilitate your understanding of classic and contemporary theories that guide the psychotherapy process.

## TEXTS

Corsini, R. J., & Wedding, D. (2005). *Current psychotherapies* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole.  
*Theories of Psychotherapy Course Packet*.  
American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

## REQUIREMENTS

The following assignments have been developed to help meet the objectives of the course:

Facilitation of a Construct Analysis	10 points
Midterm Examination	30 points
Term Paper	30 points
Final Examination	30 points

Participation is required to pass the course. Points are not maintained for participation.

## EXPECTATIONS


This course is a graduate course taught as a seminar, and as such, each class member's professionalism is important to the seminar's success. Three basic expectations follow. First, attendance is required at each class for the duration of each class, and consistent participation is expected; the only reasonable absence is an excused absence (i.e., personal illness or death in family); if an absence is anticipated, the class member should inform the instructor in advance. Second, class members with disabilities are expected to

familiarize themselves with the student resources offered by the University and to discuss with the instructor at the outset of the semester how both classroom and outside learning needs can best be met. And finally, academic integrity is required. I will not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form. The University provides a clear statement regarding academic dishonesty that reminds our community of our shared purpose both within the institute of academia and as members of a broader humanity; the statement also outlines policy violation procedures. Any questions regarding academic integrity, particularly regarding assignments in this course, should be directed to the instructor.

## SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

WEEK	DATE	COURSE TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT
2	Aug 28	Introduction to Course	
3	Sept 04	What Exactly Is Psychotherapy?	<u>Course Packet</u> Some Formal Aspects of Communication by Watzlawick and Beavin How to Win Friends and Not Influence Clients: Popular but Problematic Ideas that Impair Treatment Decisions by O'Donohue and Szymanski
4	Sept 11	What is a Theoretical Orientation and How Do I Get One?  and  Is "Multiculturalism" a Theoretical Orientation, or Not?	<u>Course Packet</u> Comparing Theoretical Orientations of Counseling and Clinical Psychologists by Johnson and Brems  Cross-Cultural Counseling Frameworks for Exploring Cultures Why is Multiculturalism Good? by Fowers and Richardson Misunderstandings of Multiculturalism (a response to Fowers and Richardson) from ten signatories
5	Sept 18	Is Therapy Effective?  What about Efficacious?	<u>Course Packet</u> Does Therapy Help? by Consumer Reports The Effectiveness of Psychotherapy: The Consumer Reports Study by Seligman  Absolute Efficacy: The Benefits of Psychotherapy Established by MetaAnalysis by Wampold Relative Efficacy: The DoDo Bird was Smarter than We have been Led to Believe by Wampold Establishing Specificity in Psychotherapy by Baskin et al.

**SCHEDULE (continued)**

6	Sept 25	What Really Matters? Therapist Variables, Client Variables, or Relationship Variables?	<p><u>Course Packet</u> Therapist Variables by Teyber and McClure Stalking the Elusive Client Variable in Psychotherapy Research by Petry, Tennen, and Affleck Relation of the Therapeutic Alliance with Outcome and Other Variables: A MetaAnalytic Review by Martin, Garske, and Davis</p>
7	Oct 02	Psychoanalytic and Adlerian Therapy	<p>Corsini Ch. 2 Corsini Ch. 3</p> <p><u>Course Packet</u> Defense Mechanisms Dream Analysis by Mail: An American Woman Seeks Freud's Advice by Benjamin and Dixon</p>
8	Oct 09	Person-Centered Therapy	<p>Corsini Ch. 5</p> <p><u>Course Packet</u> Sports Slave: The High Stakes World of Selling Out by Dennis Rodman Stages of Therapist Genuineness or Self- Congruence</p>
9	Oct 16	 <p>We are adjourned for our <b>Autumn Recess</b></p>	
10	Oct 23	Existential Therapy	Corsini Ch. 9
11	Oct 30	Feminist Therapy	<p><u>Course Packet</u> Feminist Therapy by Laura S. Brown</p>
12	Nov 06	Cognitive Therapy  and  Rational-Emotive Therapy	<p>Corsini Ch. 8</p> <p><u>Course Packet</u> Cognitive Behavior Modification Distinguishing Cognitive from Non-Cognitive Approaches</p> <p>Corsini Ch. 6</p> <p><u>Course Packet</u> Common Irrational Beliefs An Evening with Albert Ellis by an Ohio State Student observing his RET Institute Group in Manhattan in the Autumn of 1984</p>

**SCHEDULE (continued)**

13	Nov 13	Gestalt Therapy	Corsini Ch. 10  <u>Course Packet</u> Madonna: An Old-Fashioned Tale of Romance by Dennis Rodman
14	Nov 20	Behavior Therapy	Corsini Ch. 7  <u>Course Packet</u> Self-Efficacy Theory Modeling Methods Examples of Systematic Desensitization Hierarchies
15	Nov 27	Solution-Oriented Therapy	Watching Your Language: Having a Conversation for Change by O'Hanlon and Weiner-Davis  The Session as Intervention by O'Hanlon and Weiner-Davis
16	Dec 04	Multimodal Therapy  and  Class Integration   Term Paper Due	Corsini Ch. 11
	Date and Time TBA	Final Examination	

**ASSIGNMENTS**

**Participation**

This course is a seminar. This means that you are members of a group of scholars contributing to your own learning, rather than taking a passive, receptive role. You are self-motivated and take control of your learning by preparing for the seminar meeting ahead of time, listening carefully to others, presenting your viewpoint, pursuing extra points of interest on your own, and, ideally, sharing what you have discovered. In preparing for class each week, you are expected to have completed the corresponding readings prior to our meeting.

**Facilitation of a Construct Analysis**

The purpose of this assignment is to help you develop a more nuanced understanding of theoretical constructs through critical comparison. Class members will work with a partner and, together, take responsibility for facilitating discussion of two of the topics below. It is each class member's responsibility to become versed in the relevant constructs, to take full advantage of the available time by presenting thought-provoking questions to the seminar members, and to guide and encourage the seminar

## ASSIGNMENTS (continued)

discussion. Prior to the first construct analysis, the instructor will provide suggestions for effective facilitation of a discussion, including respectful listening, how to work with silence, tips for balancing focus with freedom, and how to ensure encouragement of individual ideas within a group context. The dates of the facilitations are based on the course topic schedule. This assignment is worth a total of 10 points.

Oct 23	Existential and Adlerian Therapies' Perspectives on the Point of Existence
Nov 06	Person-Centered and Rational-Emotive Therapies' Take on Unconditional Positive Regard
Nov 13	Gestalt and Behavior Therapies' Ideas Regarding the Role of the Environment
Nov 27	Feminist and Solution-Oriented Therapies' Emphases on Language

### Midterm Examination

An opportunity for you to demonstrate your independent understanding of the class material pertaining to the first purpose of the course – developing a command of the research on psychotherapy process and outcome – will be provided on September 25<sup>th</sup> in the form of a take-home, essay exam. Examination responses are to be double-space typed on as many pages as it takes to provide a clear, cogent response. A cover page with a codename of your fancy is to be appended, and the codename revealed to me only as examinations are returned. Class members are required to work alone on the midterm without notes, books, or consultation of any other sources. The examination is due in hardcopy to my faculty mailbox no later than 4:30pm on Monday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you choose to submit your examination after this time, 5 points per day will be deducted. This examination is worth 30 points.

### Term Paper

The purpose of the term paper is to invite in-depth exploration of a topic of the class member's choosing. The paper should be 8-10 double-spaced pages in length and adhere to APA style. Students should discuss their ideas with the instructor early in the semester, and class members may consult with one another, share ideas freely, and critique one another's papers throughout the semester. This assignment is due December 4<sup>th</sup> and worth 30 points.

*Theoretical Orientation of a Professional.* Identify a practicing psychologist in an area of interest and arrange an interview to learn about her or his theoretical orientation as it manifests in actual practice. The purpose of this type of paper is to gain an understanding of how theory might operate in real-world therapy relationships. After briefly presenting the psychologist's identifying information (e.g., who, where, how long, populations served, common issues seen), the theoretical orientation should be discussed and analyzed, with an emphasis on how the professional describes the theory, her or his rationale for using it, the purity with which it appears to be practiced, the techniques used that are consistent or inconsistent with the theory, and so forth. The paper should make a clear presentation of what the professional describes and your integration and analysis of the manifestation of theory in practice.

*Literature Review.* A literature review paper includes a summary, integration, and critique of relevant empirical studies. For this paper, identify either a clinical issue (e.g., depression, addiction, abuse) or clinical population (e.g., Native Americans, women, gay persons) – or the intersection of both (e.g., depression among women) – and write a critical review of process or outcome research as it pertains to your selection.

*Research Proposal.* A research proposal provides an opportunity to extend the scientific progress in a particular area. Select a debatable theoretical notion from any of the theories presented in class (e.g., "All problems of living boil down to one of four existential life issues"), provide a critical summary of the research related to examination of the specific question your proposed study will address, and then propose

## **ASSIGNMENTS (continued)**

the study. The research proposal includes an introduction section that summarizes and critiques related prior work with the aim of presenting a convincing rationale for the study to be proposed, and culminates in a logically-following, clear statement of purpose. The Introduction section is followed by a well-thought-out Methods section that details the design with a level of clarity permitting execution by the reader.

### **Final Examination**

At the conclusion of the course, class members will be required to demonstrate fluency in all of the theories of psychotherapy presented in the course. The final examination will be essay in format and held at the time and date indicated by the University. It is worth 30 points.