

Ethical, Legal and Social Issues in Counseling Practice Spring 2017 Course Syllabus

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Class time: Wednesdays 5:10-8:00PM
Class Location: TBD

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I. Course Description: This course is designed to provide the prospective counselor with the knowledge of the professions' ethical and legal standards, as well as the social/community aspect of the profession. The course will explore the evolution of those standards, methods of change and applications to various professional activities.

II. Required Text: Pope, K.S. & Vasquez, M.J. (2011). *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling* (5th Ed). San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

You will refer to the ACA Ethical Guidelines and will benefit from familiarizing yourself with the searchable Revised ACA Ethical Guidelines online at:

<http://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

III. Objectives and Anticipated Learning Outcomes:

- Enhancing understanding of the legal and professional context within which ethical decision-making occurs.
- Learning how mental health practice is "regulated" through the passage and enforcement of licensing statutes by state legislatures and the development of voluntary ethical codes and credentialing and accreditation procedures by professional organizations.
- Becoming familiar with the current Ethics Codes of the American Counseling Association, The Association of State and Provincial Licensing Boards, and the Laws governing the state of Tennessee.
- To apply professional ethical standards in practical situations.
- To explain the relationship between professional preparation standards and current professional roles and functions.
- Learning "how public policies on the local, state and national levels affect the quality and accessibility of mental health services," (CMHC Program Standards for Ethics E6.), and
- Appreciating the "importance of advocating for policies, programs and services that are equitable and responsive to the unique needs of clients." (CMHC Program Standards for Ethics, F2.)
- Increasing awareness of your own "ordinary moral sense" (i.e., personal values, attitudes, beliefs, and biases that effect your ethical decision making).
- Stimulating understanding of widely accepted ethical concepts, principles, and theories as they apply to the counseling practitioner.
- Developing an ethical decision-making model that you will use systematically and consistently in analyzing and responding to ethical issues.

IV. Method of Instruction:

- Traditional experiences - class will be structured in a seminar/discussion format.
- This class will be the most beneficial to those who are fully engaged; therefore, **the use of electronics of any kind is prohibited during class.**
- Clinical experiences – group presentation: student is responsible for the presentation of one topic during the course of the semester in the form of a research paper and presentation of that paper to the class. That responsibility includes, but is not limited to finding journal articles, or legal rulings about the topic, or finding examples of ethical dilemmas posed by various aspects of the topic.

Objective	Outcome and Method	Method of Evaluation
Gain an understanding of professional issues relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling, (CACREP CMHC C9)	Distinguish relevant practical and ethical issues related to case studies	Exams
Understand ethical and legal considerations specifically related to the practice of clinical mental health counseling (CACREP CMHC A.2)	Apply decision making model to case discussion	Exams and case study
Know the professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling (CACREP CMHC A4)	Identify resources and standards relevant to clinical mental health	Group Paper and Presentation
Be aware of professional issues that affect clinical mental health counselors (e.g., core provider status, expert witness status, access to and practice privileges within managed care systems) (CACREP CMHC A7).	Identify relevant professional issues to counselors	Exams
Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in clinical mental health counseling (CACREP CMHC B1).	Apply decision making model	Case Study
Demonstrate the ability to recognize his or her own limitations as a clinical mental health counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate (CACREP CMHC D9).	Demonstrate awareness of limits and self care	Exam and Group Presentation
Appreciating the “importance of	Identify strategies for	Exams and Paper

advocating for policies, programs and services that are equitable and responsive to the unique needs of clients.” (CMHC Program Standards for Ethics, F2).	advocating for clients	
Learning “how public policies on the local, state and national levels affect the quality and accessibility of mental health services,” (CMHC Program Standards for Ethics E6).	Understand policy impact on mental health services	Exams and case discussion

V. Evaluation and Grade Assignment:

- Disclosure Statement. (must be in to take midterm)
- Quizzes (40 points) 4 best of 6 quizzes at 10 points each.
- Midterm Exam (15 points)
- Advocacy Assignment (15 points)
- Trigger Population Paper (20 points.)
- Group Presentation on a portion of the ACA code. (10 points)
- Optional Final Exam (20 points to replace 2 lowest quiz grades) **Replacement is mandatory if taken.**

Disclosure statement: Each student will be required to prepare a disclosure statement similar to one you would give a client in a clinical setting. Examples will be provided. This is an opportunity for you to apply ethical thinking to your clinical practice.

The **mid-term** will be a clinical scenario and will test your knowledge and understanding of the ethical issues presented as well as your ability to apply them practically.

Group presentation: Presentation of a section of the ACA code. Presentations should take about thirty minutes and include some method of evaluating the content learned. Presentation of relevant research, case law, impact of technology on your topic or new clinical thinking is expected. The groups comprise the following:

1. Client Welfare ACA Sec A1-4, A11
2. Boundaries ACA Sec A5-8
3. Confidentiality ACA Sec B
4. Competence ACA Sec C
5. Supervision ACA Sec F
6. Resolving Ethical Issues ACA Sec H

Advocacy Paper: The advocacy paper will be a 2-3-page discussion of the type/s of advocacy in which the student anticipates they may be likely to/called upon to engage in their chosen area of counseling. This paper will include a possible scenario that might necessitate advocacy, possible courses of action and potential ethical considerations that might arise in the course of advocating for clients.

The **final exam** will be a short answer essay exam covering textbook, content papers and class lecture material. This exam is worth 20 points and is optional. It can be used to replace student's 2 lowest quiz grades. Replacement is mandatory.

VI. Policy on Instructional Modification:

Students who have a disability or condition, which may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the course instructor to identify, discuss and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. The student should notify the instructor no later than the end of the second week of the semester/term in which the course is offered or no later than the end of the second week latter such a disability or condition is diagnosed, whichever occurs earliest.

VII. Grading Scale

A = 94-100	B+ = 88-89	C+ = 78-79
A- = 90- 93	B = 84-87	C = 74-77
	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73

VIII. Policy on Mandatory Reporting

All faculty (including TAs) must report allegations of sexual misconduct and intimate partner violence to the Title IX Coordinator. Vanderbilt has several programs designated as limited confidential resources, meaning that they will generally not reveal personally identifying information about the incident to others in the University barring situations where failure to report that information could potentially result in further harm to others. These are:

- Project Safe: 304 West Side Row: [615-875-0660](tel:615-875-0660)
- P.C.C. (Psychological & Counseling Center: 2015 Terrace Place: [615-322-2571](tel:615-322-2571)
- Office of University Chaplain & Religious Life: 401 24th Ave. S: [615-343-2288](tel:615-343-2288)

General Paper Grading Guidelines

A: A **superior** paper, well organized and comprehensive, focusing in depth on the central and relevant topics. *It is written with correct grammar and spelling and flowing sentence and paragraph structure.* It is clear, and concise, avoiding vague generalities... The argumentation is convincing and logical. Controversial issues and the positions of others are accurately represented; factual errors are absent. Rather than merely summarizing, describing, or expressing unsupported opinions or conclusions, *it critically analyzes the material, appropriately applying course concepts. With originality and creativity, it goes beyond the basic requirements, demonstrating intellectual struggle and hard work.*

B: A **good** paper, containing no factual errors and substantially meeting the requirements of the assignment as expected of upper-level college students. Although the paper may be better than average, it lacks one or more of the qualities of the A paper described above.

C: A **competent** paper. It develops certain arguments quite well and meets the minimal requirements of the assignment, but shows definite weaknesses in one or more of the following: organization; **proofreading**; precision in reporting factual data; convincing, clear, and critical argumentation; careful researching of the topic; proper use of English.

D: An **unsatisfactory** paper containing some of the deficiencies of the C paper, but to a greater degree. It appears to be hastily written or demonstrates little careful thought.

F: A **poor** paper that shows little comprehension of the subject matter or little organization. It appears to have been written by someone who did not understand the material or the purpose or requirements of the assignment.

Modified from Source: <http://www.dennisfox.net>

Academic Honesty/Honor Code Violations

Vanderbilt University places a high priority on and strives to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity while protecting the rights of students and faculty. Should the instructor find evidence of cheating, plagiarism, other inappropriate assistance in work presented by a student, or any other violation of the honor the code, the student will receive no points on the assignment/exam, and will be referred to the Honor Council for further disciplinary action. A list of honor code violations is included below.

Violations of the Honor Code are cause for disciplinary actions imposed by the appropriate honor council. The following are included as violations:

- **Falsifying or cheating** on a report, paper, exercise, problem, test or examination, tape, film, or computer program submitted by a student to meet course requirements. Cheating includes the use of unauthorized aids (such as crib sheets, discarded computer programs, the aid of another person on a take-home exam, etc.); copying from another student's work; soliciting, giving, and/or receiving unauthorized aid orally or in writing; or similar action contrary to the principles of academic honesty.
- **Plagiarism** on an assigned paper, theme, report, or other material submitted to meet course requirements. Plagiarism is defined as incorporating into one's own work the work of another without properly indicating that source. A full description of plagiarism is given in the section below.
- **Failure to report** a known or suspected violation of the Code in the manner prescribed.
- **Any action designed to deceive** a member of the faculty, a staff member, or a fellow student regarding principles contained in the Honor Code, such as securing an answer to a problem for one course from a faculty member in another course when such assistance has not been authorized.
- **Submission of work prepared for another course** without specific prior authorization of the instructors in both courses.
- **Use of texts or papers prepared by commercial or noncommercial agents** and submitted as a student's own work.
- **Falsification of results** of study and research.

The Honor Code Applied to Preparation of Papers

- Papers are to express the original thoughts of the student. If a topic for a paper has been discussed fully among students prior to an assignment, then the students should consult the instructor about writing on that particular topic.
- Failure to indicate the source of ideas, expressions, phrases, or sentences constitutes plagiarism.
- A student may not submit papers substantially the same in content for credit in more than one course, without specific and prior permission of all instructors concerned.

Diversity and Inclusivity

It is our intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is our intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity including gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, culture, perspective, and other areas of human difference. Your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course are encouraged and appreciated.

Note

At times this semester, we will be discussing topics that may be disturbing and even traumatizing to some students. If you ever feel the need to step outside during one of these discussions, either for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to this material, either with the class or with me, I would welcome such a conversation as an appropriate part of your professional development. Learning to manage personal reactions to potentially disturbing material that our clients discuss is an important part of preparing to be a counselor.

IX. Tentative Weekly Schedule

Classes will be structured and scheduled in the following way:

- 5:10 -6:30PM Textbook reading – related discussion and activities (Jay Tift *)
- 6:45-8PM Review of additional content papers and readings that will be provided with class discussion (George Davis **)

Date	Pope/Vasquez	Content Papers**	Assignments	Readings*
1/11/17	Introduction	Sources of Authority		Chap. 1 & 2 (4&5 th) ACA Code Preamble (2014)
1/18/17	Critical Thinking & Steps in the Ethical Decision Making Process	Sources of Authority, LPC Licensure Rules & Regs		Chap. 3 & 11 (4 th) Chap. 5, 6, 7, 17 (5 th)
1/25/17	Technology-Related Issues	Electronic Considerations		Chap. 5 (4 th) Chap. 11 (5 th)
2/1/17	Informed Consent	Confidentiality with Minor Clients/Releasing Adolescent Records		Chap. 14 (4 th) Chap. 19 (5 th)
2/8/17	Assessment & Diagnosis	Documentation		Chap. 15 (4 th) Chap. 20 (5 th)
2/15/17	Codes and Complaints	Legal Actions Primer for Counselors		Chap. 9, 10 (4 th) Chap. 15, 16 (5 th)
2/22/17	Confidentiality	<u>Jaffee/Culbertson II</u> Confidentiality with Adult Clients	Disclosure paper due**	Chap. 19 (4 th) Chap. 24 (5 th)
3/1/17	Working with Members of Vulnerable Populations; mandatory reporting	Minor Sexuality / Minor Decision Tree	Midterm*	
3/8/17	Spring Break			
3/15/17	Vulnerable Populations II	Elder Abuse	Group 1**	Emanuel reading in e-reserve Chap. 4, 6, 18 (4 th) Chap. 9, 12, 23 (5 th)
3/22/17	Duty to warn	<u>Turner v Jordan;</u> The Dangerous Client	Group 2*	TBD
3/29/17	Crisis	Suicide Risk Factors	Trigger Assignment Due Group 3*	Chap. 20 (4 th) Chap. 25 (5 th)
4/5/17	Boundaries	Therapist Sexual Misconduct Act/ Responding to a Subpoena	Group 4*	Chap. 16, 17 (4 th) Chap. 21, 22 (5 th)
4/12/17	Absences and Endings	(Discuss Trigger papers)	Advocacy Paper Due, Group 5**	Chap. 13 (4 th) Chap. 18 (5 th)
4/19/17	Integration	Final review**	Group 6**	
4/26/17	Evaluation	Movie night: Boundaries	Final Exam	