Advanced Professional and Ethical Issues in Clinical Psychology (PSYC 8480)

Credit Hours: 3 (Lecture contact hours: 3 per week)

Course Description: Advanced discussion of professional issues and ethical mandates of contemporary clinical psychology, emphasizing critical thinking skills and planning for a successful career in psychology.

Course Objectives: The goals of this course, designed to be taken by 4th or 5th year clinical graduate students, are to a) provide you with advanced exposure to the clinical issues and ethical mandates of contemporary clinical psychology, b) foster critical thinking skills within the context of clinical care and scientific psychology, and c) help you develop and plan for a successful career in psychology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Assignments:

Discussion Questions. You are expected to have read assigned material and be prepared to participate in class discussions in the form of asking questions and integrating information. Over the course of the semester, all students are required to turn in 10 discussion questions based on the readings for the upcoming class. The questions should be used to comment or inquire about some aspect of the assigned readings for the upcoming class. Discussion questions will be used in class as a tool for generating discussion. To facilitate the integration of the questions into lecture and discussion, they must be emailed to me by noon the day before class.

Class Presentations. Students will be required to conduct two oral presentations throughout the course:

1. Didactic Case Presentation. An oral presentation on one of the readings presented below (see Texts, Major Resources, & Schedule). Specifically, the student is required to use a particular reading to guide a formal presentation of a case they have treated (or are currently treating) at the AUPSC or as part of their clinical practicum. Each student will meet with the professor following their presentation for feedback.

2. Careers in Psychology Presentation. Students will be provided a list of potential careers in psychology that are typically not discussed and, in some cases, represent career pathways for psychologists about which student's are typically unaware. Each student will pick a career to research and to subsequently present their findings during class.
Projects. There will be two projects that students are required to complete:

1. **Scientist-Practitioner Case Summary.** Students will be required to demonstrate their knowledge of psychotherapy integration and scientific and critical reasoning skills to a psychotherapy case through a series of tasks (e.g., find relevant empirical research on a given aspect of the case and apply this information to your case conceptualization or treatment plan) and questions (e.g., What common factors would Weinberger and Rasco [2007] suggest are most important with respect to this case).

2. **Ethical Reasoning Project.** Student’s will be given a series of vignettes regarding various ethical dilemmas and will be required to apply models of ethical decision-making and their knowledge of relevant ethical mandates to the case materials provided.

Grading:

Grades will be based on class participation/discussion questions, class presentations, and class projects. Each class participation/discussion question grade will be worth a total of 10 points for a cumulative total of 100 points for the semester (There are 30 class meetings; students choose which 10 classes to submit questions). The class presentations and projects will all be worth 75 points each. Final grades will be based on the following scale:

A = 360 - 400
B = 320 - 359
C = 280 - 319
D = 240 - 279
F = less than 239 points

Course Policy:

This course will be conducted primarily as a seminar. There will be a lecture component, but mostly we will discuss the readings and assignments, participate in in-class exercises, and watch training videos. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, complete all readings and assignments prior to the class meeting for which they are scheduled, and participate actively in discussions and exercises. Each week before class, students should generate a discussion question and email it to the instructor. They should be prepared to ask their question during the class as a component of their participation grade.
Assignments turned in after the due-date without a university sanctioned excuse (see *Tiger Cub*) will be subject to a 20% penalty for each day late. You are invited to turn in assignments before the due-date.

You are expected to maintain the standards of academic honesty consistent with the *Student Academic Honesty Code* in the *Tiger Cub*. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with this code. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Plagiarism (using an author’s work as your own)
- Furnishing false or misleading information to course instructors
- Copying another student’s work
- Use of unauthorized materials during exams or other assignments
- Providing information to other students for the purpose of cheating

Instances of academic dishonesty will be prosecuted according to the procedures described in the *Tiger Cub*. Students are free to withdraw from the class until mid-semester. Withdrawal from the class will result in a *W* on student’s transcript.

Students who need special accommodations are asked 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 alternate time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by E-mail. Bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need accommodations, make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

**Texts, Major Resources, & Schedule:**

I. The Integration of Psychotherapy Models

**MODULE 1: Models of Psychotherapy Integration (Classes 1-2)**


Case Presentation: Class 3

MODULE 2: Third Wave Behavior Therapy (Class 4)


Case Presentations: Class 5

II. The Integration of Science and Practice

MODULE 1: Thinking like Psychological Scientist (Class 6-7)


Case Presentation: Class 8

MODULE 2: Models for Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making (Class 9)


Case Presentations: Class 10 (Scientist-Practitioner Case Summary Due)

III. Advanced Ethical Issues

MODULE 1: General Models for Ethical Decision Making (Class 11)


**Case Presentation: Class 12**

**MODULE 2: Ethical Decisions in the Context of Managed Care (Class 13)**


**Case Presentation: Class 14**

**MODULE 3: Special Topics (Class 15 – 18)**


**Case Presentations: Class 19 (Ethical Reasoning Project Due)**

**IV. Career Planning**

**MODULE 1: Introduction (Class 20)**

Careers in Psychology Presentation: Class 21

MODULE 2: The Short Run (Class 22)


Careers in Psychology Presentation: Class 23

MODULE 3: The Long Run (Class 24)


Careers in Psychology Presentation: Class 25

V. Balancing Multiple Roles

MODULE 1: Multiple Roles (Class 26)


MODULE 2: Training and Supervision (Class 27-28)

Augusto, K.. Supervision Issues and Dilemmas.


**MODULE 3: Self-Care (Class 29-30)**


*Justification for Graduate Credit*: This course is designed for advanced (4th or 5th year) graduate students. Given the evolving complexity of professional and ethical issues in clinical psychology, advanced students must be formally and systematically exposed to such didactics, allowing them to apply their accumulated knowledge and experiences in a capstone course. This course will foster students' professional identity and critical thinking skills, expanding on numerous topics touched upon in previous coursework or through individual mentoring. Our master streamlined curriculum incorporated plans to develop this course in order to standardize and expand information perhaps given through other less systematic methods.