

**George Mason University Graduate School of Education**

**College of Education and Human Development**

**EDCD 603: Counseling Theories and Practice**

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**Course Description:**

*Prerequisite:* Admission to the Counseling and Development program, and EDCD 602 taken previously or concurrently; or permission of the department. Covers major theoretical approaches to counseling, including psychodynamic, Adlerian, existential, person-centered, cognitive-behavioral, systems, solution-focused and integrated. Provides practice in basic counseling skills through supervised practice. A lab is included.

**Student Outcomes:**

At the successful completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate understanding of the rationale, development and application of major theoretical approaches to counseling including: psychodynamic, Adlerian, person-centered, existential, cognitive-behavioral, multicultural, systems, solution-focused and integrated.
2. Recognize appropriate counseling interventions associated with each major theory.
3. Demonstrate understanding of counseling interventions associated with each major theory.
4. Identify key terms associated with each major theorist.
5. Demonstrate theoretical understanding of gender and multicultural issues within the counseling context.
6. Demonstrate understanding of appropriate application of theories and interventions with diverse populations, contexts and issues.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of several models of helping.
8. Demonstrate facilitative counseling interventions including the use of attending skills, minimal encouragers, silence, paraphrasing, questions, empathy, summarization, probing, challenging, focusing skills, self-disclosure and information giving.
9. Demonstrate appropriate application of counseling skills with a client.
10. Demonstrate clinical application of key terms associated with each theory.
11. Apply clinical skills appropriately with culturally and gender different clients.
12. Be open to receiving and utilizing constructive feedback on application of counseling skills.
13. Write a comprehensive, APA style, research paper on a counseling theory.

**Relationship to Program Goals and Professional Organization:**

EDCD 603 is an entry-level course for the Counseling and Development degree program. It is intended to offer counseling majors an introduction to counseling theories and the associated application of these approaches in practice. In addition, it affords those individuals who have an interest in counseling, but who have not yet made, and may never make, a commitment to enter the counseling profession, an opportunity to sample what this profession is about.

EDCD 603 is a prerequisite to EDCD 606 or EDCD 609 that focuses on advanced counseling skills and techniques. This series of courses will provide minimum necessary foundation for the rest of the curriculum relative to theories and how they are applied in the profession of counseling.

EDCD 603 provides the foundation in the knowledge base for the M.Ed. degree in Counseling and Development for students seeking that degree whether they enter the profession in a school, or community settings. This foundation is built upon with other courses culminating in an internship in an appropriate setting.

EDCD 603 fulfills the requirements of the following professional organizations:

- Virginia Department of Education requirement for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the knowledge, skills and processes of individual counseling.
- Virginia Department of Health Professions requirement that Licensed Professional Counselor candidates complete graduate study in theories and techniques of counseling and psychotherapy.
- Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core requirement described in Section II.K.e: Helping relationships: An understanding of counseling and consultation processes.
- American Counseling Association Code of Ethics requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

**Professional Dispositions:****Professional Performance Criteria** (Effective February 25, 2003).

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. The Counseling and Development Program in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to the dispositions found on the C & D Homepage at:

[http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional\\_performance.htm](http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional_performance.htm)

**The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:**

1. George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students
  - a. Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
  - b. Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their

account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].

- c. Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students’ personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
  - d. Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>.
  - e. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
  - f. The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
  - g. University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].
2. Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.

### Course Structure:

Basic theoretical approaches to individual counseling will be discussed, analyzed and applied in this course. Students are responsible for reading assigned material in the theories text (Ivey or Seligman), and other supplemental material, prior to class, and should come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussion and activities. Class activities will include lecture, skill demonstrations, role-playing, small group work, experiential exercises, videos, and the analysis of tape-recorded counseling sessions. Students will be assigned to a small group and will be responsible for sharing information within the group and making a presentation concerning a theory to the class.

During the lab sessions, students will have the opportunity to practice skills that are fundamental to effective counseling. Lab activities will focus primarily on practicing skills through role-plays in dyads and triads in which students will take a role. The instructor will critique role-plays and provide verbal and/or written feedback on skill development.

### Course Requirements:

- **Active Participation** and high levels of performance in all class and lab activities. Students are expected to attend all classes and come to class prepared having completed all reading and written assignments. [20 points for attendance, participation, and use of technology.]
  1. **Technology Competence:** Students are expected to be able to use a computer, send and retrieve email, open attachments, gain access to access the Internet, and conduct a library search on-line. All of the course documents will be available on Blackboard, the course

management system. Students will need to log onto Blackboard regularly and be able to use the Blackboard resources.

- **In-Class Skill Work:** Skill work activities include, but are not limited to: demonstration of counseling skills through demonstration, role-play, and recorded exercises, as well as the critique of another student's counseling tapes. [25 points]
- **Group Presentation** The group presentation of one theory will focus on providing the class with an overview of the theory and facilitating a discussion of an article related to the application of the assigned theory. Theory presentation topics are determined by the instructor and assigned to each group. The presentation should include lecture, PowerPoint/Prezi, an experiential activity, and a handout summarizing key concepts. The article needs to be distributed to the class at least one week prior to the presentation date. Specific guidelines for the presentation and the handout will be provided on blackboard. The presentation should be no longer than 45 minutes including Q/A. [80 points]
- **Research Paper** concerning a specific counseling theory (a different theory than the one chosen for the group presentation) and use it to discuss its use or shypothsized use with a counseling issue. [80 points]  
Paper requirements:
  - Describe and apply a counseling theory (e.g, multicultural theory) to a current counseling issue (e.g., domestic violence among teens);
  - Choose a counseling issue related to an advocacy or social justice topic of interest to you. Clearly describe the counseling issue and/or population (e.g., Coping with HIV; depression in the elderly, helping children manage ADHD; dealing with chronic illness).
  - Briefly describe aspects of the counseling theory relevant to the counseling issue; (What makes you believe that this theory should be used to understand and/or treat this issue?)
  - Present the strengths and weaknesses of the theory as applied to the counseling issue and implications for use with diverse populations;
  - Use 5 or more references to include at least 3 professional counseling or psychology journals;
  - Paper length: **6 page maximum** (not including cover, abstract, or references); and
  - Use of APA style 6<sup>th</sup> edition.
- **Take Home Case Studies:** Two take-home case study analyses will be posted on blackboard. Each is worth 40 points. [80 points]
- Three **Audio or Video-recorded Counseling Sessions** with a volunteer client. Guidelines and an assessment rubric concerning this assignment can be found on Blackboard. Students must provide their own audio or video equipment

**Recording #1:** Students will conduct an audio recorded counseling session using another student from class. Students' will review the CD, self evaluate (prior to class), and ask another student listen and critique their CD (in class). **This session will not be graded.**

**Recording #2:** Students will need to find an adult volunteer or classmate to participate in *two* counseling sessions (cannot be the same client as first recording). When recruiting volunteer clients (aside from classmates), the client should be told that the purpose of the session is to provide the student counselor practice using basic counseling skills. Volunteer clients should be encouraged to talk about real issues. Appropriate issues can be real “problems-in-living” but volunteer clients should be discouraged from using these sessions to make major life decisions or discuss serious life crises. A person who is currently seeing a therapist is not a suitable client for this assignment. At the start of the session, the student counselor should provide the limits of confidentiality, assure the client that the DVD will be destroyed immediately following its critique, and explain in basic terms the purpose of counseling and this assignment. A signed permission slip is available on blackboard. The student counselor will: **1)** Critique recording #2 (self-assessment on Bb); **2)** Select any 5 minute portion of this session to write a verbatim transcript of this part of the session; **3)** AND label evidence of at least 15 *incidents* of counseling skills. (25 pts)

**Recording #3:** Student counselors will record a second session with the same volunteer client/ or classmate from recording 2. Students will write a 2 page (double spaced) assessment of their counseling skills including progress made this semester and goals for the future. *See Rubric on Bb.* (90 pts)

#### Summary of recorded counseling assignments:

- **Recording #1:** 10 minute session with classmate, critiqued by self (can be done prior to class) and classmate member (complete in class). The labeled CD and the Self-Assessment worksheet are turned in to the instructor at the end of class in a large envelope. This is to be a first session.
- **Recording #2:** 15 minute second session with a volunteer client or classmate, critiqued by you and a student (not your client/classmate) The labeled DVD and the Self-Assessment worksheet, verbatim transcript including identification of 15 *incidents* of counseling skills are turned into the instructor at the end of class in a large envelope (25 points).
- **Recording #3:** 15-20 minute third session session with volunteer client or classmate (same as #2), evaluated by instructor (90 points).

#### Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes, to come on time and stay for the entire class. Students who miss all or part of two classes may not be able to complete the course.

#### Grading System:

Attendance, Participation & Technology	20 points
In-Class Skill Work	25 points
Group Presentation (group grade)	80 points
Research Paper	80 points
Take Home Case Studies (2 @ 40 pts)	80 points
Mid-Term (Recording #2)	25 points
Final (Recording #3)	90 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>400 points</b>

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved:

A	380-400	points
A-	360-379	points
B+	345-359	points
B	328-344	points
B-	316-327	points
C	315 points and below	

**Required Text:**

Ivey, A.,E., D'Andrea, M., and Ivey, M. B., (2012). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: A multicultural perspective (7<sup>th</sup> ed)*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

**Optional Text:**

Seligman, L. (2010). *Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: Systems, strategies and skills (3rd e.d)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill, Prentice-Hall, Inc.

**Electronic Devices Usage Policy**

Regarding electronic devices (such as laptops, cell phones, etc.), please be respectful of your peers and your instructor and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and may affect your participation grade.

**COURSE AGENDA \***

**Class 1                      August 28                      Introductions and Course Overview**

Ivey Text: Chapter 1  
(Seligman Text: Ch. 1 – 2)

**Class 2                      September 4                      Topic: Psychodynamic Theories – Freud**

Ivey Text: Chapters 4 & 5  
(Seligman Text: Ch. 3-9)  
Psychoanalytic Terminology doc (Bb)  
Skills: Minimal encouragers; Establishing a contract; Helping the client tell a story; Stages of Change

**Class 3                      September 11                      Topic: Psychodynamic Theories – Adler**

Reading: Ivey Text: Ch. 6  
(Seligman Text: Chap. 3-9)  
Family Constellation - Birth Order doc (Bb)

**Class 4                      September 18                      Topic: Cognitive-Behavioral Theories**

Ivey Text: Ch. 7 & 8  
(Seligman Text: Chap. 15-21)  
Skills: Listening theoretically, questions, disputing, and interpreting  
*In – class case analysis exercise*  
**\*\*\*\* DUE: Research Paper\*\*\*\***

**Class 5                      September 25                      Topic: Cognitive-Behavioral Theories**

Ivey Text: Ch. 7 & 8

(Seligman Text: Chap. 15-21)

Skills: Irrational Ideas, Self-disclosure, Immediacy

*In class review of Recording 1 \*\* Bring CD and player/headphones\*\**

*\*\*\*Self evaluation and peer evaluation due to instructor at the end of class*

**Class 6                      October 2                      Topic: Logotherapy & Gestalt Counseling**

Ivey Text: Ch. 10

In-class interview critique - Skills: Important sentences, cutting off, and drawing out

**NO CLASS    October 9<sup>th</sup> (Monday classes meet on Tuesday)**

**Class 7                      October 16                      Topic: Existential-Humanistic Theories**

Ivey Text: Ch. 9

(Seligman Text: 10-14)

Existential-Humanistic terms (Bb)

Counseling Skills Boot Camp I

**Due: Case Analysis I** (Bb)

**Class 8                      October 23                      Topic: Existential-Humanistic Theories**

Ivey Text: Ch. 9

Counseling Skills Boot Camp II

**Class 9                      October 30                      Topic: Transactional Analysis**

Review Recording #2 with classmate, critique due to instructor

**Due: DVD Recording # 2 critique forms of self & peer (in class)**

**Class 10                      November 6                      Group Presentations**

Ivey Ch. 15

Family Systems Theory

Solution Focused Theory

**Class 11                      November 13                      Group Presentations**

Ivey Ch. 3 & 11, 12

Multicultural Counseling Theory

Feminist Counseling Theory

**Class 12                      November 20                      Group Presentations**

Ivey: Ch. 13, 14 & 16

Wellness Counseling

**Class 13                      November 27                      Integrating Theories I**

Ivey Ch. 16

Termination  
Counseling Skills Boot Camp III

**Class 14                      December 4                      Wrap –Up & Evaluation**

***Due: Case Analysis II*** (Bb)

**Class 15                      December 11                      Drop Off - Final Recording**

***Due: Final Recording #3, Verbatim Transcription & Analysis***

Provide name on DVD and on all paperwork in a large envelope labeled with your name.

**Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want the DVD returned to you, otherwise, it will be destroyed.**

\* Course agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor