

MHS 6701 - ISSUES IN MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICE

This syllabus is a representative sample for this course. Specific information such as texts, assignments, and schedule may vary by semester.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course addresses professional practice issues in mental health counseling. It includes history, identity, roles, and trends affecting the field and practice of mental health counseling.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to the primary settings in which counselors provide services and critically evaluates numerous areas within the mental health field, including the legal, ethical, social, professional, organizational, research, and contextual realities that shape and direct the profession.

Changing paradigms within the practice of mental health counseling will be explored. Mental health issues within the context of societal and economic expectations and limitations will be examined. This course is designed to enhance student understanding of the conceptual complexity of mental health and “mental illness,” and encourage critical evaluation of the field.

TEXTS AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS:

United States Department of Health and Human Services (2003). *Mental health, United States, 2000*. Washington, DC: Author. Visit www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/SMA01-3537/default.asp

President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (2003). *Achieving the promise: Transforming mental health care in america*. Washington, DC: Author. Visit www.mentalhealthcommission.gov/reports/FinalReport/toc.html

United States Department of Health and Human Services (2000). *Mental health: A report of the Surgeon General*. Washington, DC: Author. Visit www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/toc.html.

Readings as assigned.

You are expected to access library resources to complement the textbook

COMPETENCIES:

CACREPGeneral: K1a, K1b, Kd-g, K2a-e, K3c-e, K4a, K 5a-c, K8a.

Mental Health: A1-5, B1-4, C5, C9, C10.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. To provide students with the historical, philosophical, societal, cultural, economic, and political dimensions that shaped and influenced the mental health counseling field.
2. To help students explore through experiential learning their attitudes, beliefs, and acculturative experiences related to their professional roles with clients, functions, and relationships with other human service providers within the mental health system's network.
3. To provide students both empirical and deconstructive tools to critically evaluate the pressing issues of current practice in mental health to include policy processes, advocacy processes, credentialing and licensure, and accreditation standards.
4. To help students cast a critical gaze upon the changing paradigms of human behavior and mental health treatment and grapple with the implications of that change towards developmental crises, disability, psychopathology, and environmental factors that shape behavior.
5. To specifically explore and evaluate the empowerment strategies suggested by these new paradigms in terms of multicultural counseling, learning and personality development, and pluralistic trends in promoting positive change within clients' social environment.
6. To review counseling and consultation characteristics and behaviors that influence treatment and synthesize essential skills required to develop and maintain therapeutic relationships with the various systems involved in mental health counseling and treatment. Within this context, the student will identify counseling models that reflect current professional research and practice and evaluate effectiveness within an evolving health care system.
7. To help students become aware of the ethical and legal considerations within current mental health practice to include program evaluation, conflict resolution, discrimination, and oppression.

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY:

This course utilizes three methods of instruction: lecture, assignments and exercises, and most importantly, student reflection, participation, and discussion. It is critical to your success in this class that you read the material prior to class and be prepared to discuss it. The course is designed to allow you to struggle with and master, via lecture, debate, and group interaction, your own uniquely constructed meanings about a challenging set of ideas that are the most influential to contemporary mental health practice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Complete all assigned readings. Each reading is to be done in advance of the classroom experiences so that the student may fully participate in class discussions.
2. A paper 3-5 pages is required that explores the multidimensional nature of the student. The paper must use the framework of the RESPECTFUL counseling model and describe the student's self-evaluation on each dimension. (refer to competency-building activity 1.1 in Lewis, et al.)
3. A report based upon student's research of local human service resources and programs. This report will describe student's contact with a mental health counseling community agency/facility to include the type of clientele served, professionals employed,

treatment/counseling model, focus on multicultural issues, and ethical and professional issues pertinent to this facility. The report will be 30 minutes maximum, and student is required to provide a handout to the class with the above information.

4. A major presentation is required and must be accompanied by a summary of the findings of the student group. Each presentation will be 60 minutes minimum; provide at least one supplemental reading to the class prior to the presentation and allow for discussion. These presentations must cover:
 - one of the issues addressed in class, **or**
 - one of the following mental health topics -managed care, mental health licensure, professional mental health organizations, or mental health counseling over the web, **or**
 - an issue identified by the student group based on their desire to further explore a relevant topic in mental health practice.
5. The final exam will consist of:
 - a final paper 3-5 pages that must **empirically** (cite support from current literature) address the pros and cons of the student's preferred place of future practice, and must include an interview of a counselor from that work setting (not included in the 5 page limit).

COURSE EVALUATION:

Class Participation	20 pts.
Multidimensional paper	10 pts.
Human Services Report	10pts.
Group Presentation	30 pts.
Final	30 pts.

GRADING:

A = 94-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F = <60
A- = 90-93	B = 84-86	C = 74-76	D = 64-66	
	B- = 80-83	C- = 70-73	D- = 60-63	

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

American Psychological Association. (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.)*. Washington, DC: Author.

American Counseling Association. (1995). *Code of ethics and standards of practice*. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Bandura, A. (1989). Human agency in social cognitive theory. *American Psychologist*, 44, 1175-1184.

SCHEDULE:

Week	Class Content	Student Preparation	Evaluation
	Introduction Course Requirements Shifting Counseling Paradigms	Lewis, et al, 1 Neukrug 1,6 Mental Health, US, 2000, 1,2 Multi paper assignment	
	Mental Health Policy 20 th Century America Multifaceted approaches within multicultural society	Lewis, et al, 1 Neukrug 1-2 Mental Health, US, 2000, 1,2	
	Prevention rationale Health promotion Status of mental health services	Lewis, et al, 2 Neukrug 3 Mental Health, US, 2000, 7,8,9 President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health report	
	Promoting personal competence Outreach to vulnerable populations Adult MH Services in 21 st Century	Lewis, et al, 3 Neukrug 7 Mental Health, US, 2000, 11	Multidimensional paper due
	Promoting personal responsibility Systems theory and environmental influences	Lewis, et al, 4 Neukrug 4-5,6	Should have group presentation topic by now – must be approved by instructor
	Elements of the national statistical picture in mental health	Neukrug 8 Mental Health, US, 2000, 14 - 20	
	The counselor as a social change agent	Lewis, et al, 5 Neukrug 9-10	
	Client advocacy Empowerment strategies Finding a	Lewis, et al, 1,2,3,6 Neukrug 9-10	

	responsive helping network		
	Critical review of the client/community counseling framework	Lewis, et al, 7 Neukrug 7, 9-10	Student reports begin
	Skills required for effective operation of mental health programs and services	Lewis, et al, 8 Neukrug 3-4	Student reports
	Issues involved when developing counselor identity	Instructor supplemental reading Readings provided to class by first group	
	Group Presentation and Discussion:	Review readings provided by student group	
	Group Presentation and Discussion	Review readings provided by student group	
	Group Presentation and Discussion	Review readings provided by student group	
	Group Presentation and Discussion Review for Final Exam	Review readings provided by student group	Final paper due
	Final returned/reviewd		