

## PSY510 Social and Cultural Issues in Counseling

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando  
Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 3 credit hours  
Fall Semester, 2011  
Instructor: Scott Coupland, Ph.D.  
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### PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to expose students to the psychosocial similarities, differences, and adversities which exist among people groups nationally and internationally and to encourage the development of (1) a healthy awareness/understanding of people both inside and outside the student's frame of reference, (2) an understanding of his/her own learned and socially prescribed attitudes and beliefs concerning "others," and (3) a multidimensional contextual framework for understanding people from various people groups and providing them with competent counseling services.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, the student will more culturally competent counselor which will include:

1. Familiarity with various theories of multicultural counseling, identity development, and social justice.
2. Understanding the effects of racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.
3. Learning the counselors' roles in developing cultural self-awareness, promoting cultural social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, as well as eliminating biases, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination.
4. Developing an understanding of the attitudes, beliefs, understandings, acculturative experiences, and mental health needs of various people groups.
5. Identifying and evaluating his/her own cultural values, attitudes, and behaviors and how they affect his/her ability to develop effective counseling relationships with persons from other cultures/people groups.
6. Increasing his/her respect for persons with cultural values different from his/her own.
7. Being a learner in a cross-cultural situation.
8. Learning approaches, strategies, and techniques shown to be effective when working with specific populations.

### LEARNING FORMAT

Students will learn through lecture, class discussion, small group interactions, student presentations, guest lecture, cross-cultural immersion experiences and interviews, and self-assessment exercises.

### REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- Anderson, D. A. (2007.) *Gracism: The art of inclusion*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervaristy. ISBN: 978-0830837373.
- Zuercher, B., & Anderson, D. (2001). *Letters across the divide: Two friends explore racism, friendship, and faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker. ISBN: 978-0801063435

### ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READING

These readings are on reserve in the library.

- Dyrness, W. A. (1997). *The earth is God's: A theology of American culture*. New York: Orbis. Chapters 3-4.
- Paniagua, F. A. (2005). *Assessing and treating culturally diverse clients: A practical guide (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Chapters 3-6.

The following articles are available on reserve in the library or online at [www.desiringgod.com](http://www.desiringgod.com):

- The Reformed Faith and Racial Harmony*  
*The Sovereignty of God and the Soul Dynamic: God-centered Thinking and the Black Experience in America, Past and Future*  
*Every Race to Reign and Worship*  
*Class, Culture and Ethnic Identity in Christ*  
*Race and Cross*  
*God Pursuit of Racial Diversity at Infinite Cost*  
*Jesus Is the End of Ethnocentrism*

### RECOMMENDED READING

- Thomas, A. J., & Schwarzbaum, S. (2006). *Culture and identity: Life stories for counselors and therapists*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ware, A. C. (2001.) *Prejudice and the people of God: How revelation and redemption lead to reconciliation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel.

### SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading
8/ 25	Principles of Multidimensional Contextual Counseling	
9/1	Principles of Multidimensional Contextual Counseling	Dyrness, Ch. 3-4
9/8	Principles of Multidimensional Contextual Counseling	Online articles
9/15	Documentary viewing with discussion	
9/22	Principles of Multidimensional Contextual Counseling	
9/29	African Americans	Paniagua, Ch. 3;
10/6	Latinos and Latinas	Paniagua, Ch. 4
10/13	No class, fall break	
10/ 20	Asians and Pacific Islanders	Paniagua, Ch. 5
10/ 27	Native Americans	Paniagua, Ch. 6
11/ 3	Gay Men	
11/10	Lesbians	
11/17	Middle-Easterners	

## SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>
11/24	No class, Thanksgiving	
11/1	People with Disabilities	

## REQUIREMENTS

1. Complete assigned reading.
2. Participation in structured exercises and class discussion. This class is experiential and participatory. You will be graded on your participation.
3. Classroom presentation. Each student will be assigned a specific people group to study. Each student will make an in-class presentation reporting his/her findings. Presentations should be 75 minutes. DO NOT invite a guest speaker without first getting approval from the professor.

Guidelines for presentations

- A. Answer the following questions:
  - a. What has been the historical experience of this group in the U.S.? Discuss how this history has led to:
    - i. the development of normative behaviors/relational patterns of the group.
    - ii. their immediate social problems and needs.
    - iii. specific issues caused by economic, social, and educational deprivation/disadvantage.
  - b. What are the core cultural values of the group (include aspects of their worldview, the role of family and of religion)?
  - c. How may cultural values/historical experiences affect the group's perception of counseling?
  - d. What approaches, strategies, and techniques have been shown to be effective when working with this people group?
- B. You may (but do not have to) use brief video clips or music, but they must be clearly tied to the point you are trying to convey.
- C. A electronic presentation outline and bibliography with at least 5 references must accompany your presentation and be distributed to the professor and students in the class.
- D. Make sure your presentation is balanced such that you address the four questions above. Failure to do so will be reflected in your grade for your presentation.
- E. If you present statistics, they must be as up-to-date as possible.
- F. Demonstrate evidence of reading outside of class readings.

Presentation groups, topics, and dates will be assigned the first day of class.

4. An "in-community" experience and journaling.

Guidelines:

  - A. The purpose of the journal assignment is to have you record your cross-cultural experience.
  - B. Attend an event (e.g., cultural gathering or festival, club meeting, ministry event) or visit at setting (e.g., retirement home, social service agency, ministry center) in which the cultural or minority composition of the event or setting represents a people group(s)

other than your own. You may attend more than one event to fulfill the three hour requirement as long as group composition is the same. Attending a religious service does not meet the requirement of this assignment. This should not be an event, persons, or a setting with which you have previous involvement. The amount of time spent with this group should be no less than three hours. These three hours may be in one block of time, or can be broken into smaller time segments. Any event you attend must be presented, at least in part, in a language that you speak fluently. Part of intent of this assignment is to put you in the place of experiencing what it is like to be a minority amongst persons that are cultural/ethnically, racially different than you. So, if you feel comfortable in this setting, you are not fulfilling the intent of this assignment. Note: The event must be approved by the professor prior to attending it. Not seeking approval will result in a lower grade for the assignment.

- C. You must attend this experience alone. Do not attend an event if you believe there may be a safety risk involved.
- D. Journal your experience shortly after your attendance at the event(s). Waiting to write diminishes your recall and risks losing important information. It is preferable not to write in the presence of the group members or during the event but to wait until you get home to write in your journal.
- E. Keep material in chronological order.

What to write:

- A. Write about the event or setting you attended. Describe the physical setting, the people that were present, the mood of the people, etc.
- B. Write about your observations of and internal responses to the people and the setting. What do you see, taste, feel, smell, etc. Ask yourself questions like, "What things are going on?," "Who is doing what?," "How do I feel about it?," "How does it affect me?," "How are they responding to me?" **Be descriptive and elaborate** in your journal. Rather than assuming anything, capture it while it is fresh in your mind.
- C. Write about your level of involvement. Reflect on questions like, "What is my involvement?" "How much am I involved?" "How do I feel about my involvement?"
- D. Write your reflections or hypotheses as to how your worldview is similar or contrasts with this people group.
- E. What are the implications of this for counseling with persons from this people group?
- F. This write-up should be no less than 4 pages in length. Include a sentence in your paper stating the number of hours you spent at the event(s).

Due Thursday, October 27 at the beginning of class.

- 5. Attend a religious service of culturally/ethnically/racially different group. You must attend this service alone and it should not be one that you have ever visited. Do not attend a service spoken in language that you do not speak unless there is an interpreter present. Be prepared to discuss your experience in class. The intention of this experience is for you to attend a service and not just talk to a religious leader. Note: The location must be approved by the professor prior to attending it. Not getting prior approval will result in a lower grade for the assignment.

A bulletin or some piece of literature from the religious service that you attended is due November 10 at the beginning of class.

6. A cross-cultural interview with write-up.

Guidelines for interviews and write-up:

- A. The purpose is to become acquainted a person from a culturally/ethnically/racially different group.
- B. Avoid cultural matching (i.e., do not interview individuals of an ethnic/racial group of your same background. Do not select a person just on the basis that he or she is of the opposite gender of you).
- C. In the interview process:
  - a. Watch your non-verbal communication.
  - b. Be aware of ethical issues (e.g., inform your interviewees and get permission if you will be tape recording, taking notes, etc.; provide confidentiality if requested; etc.).
  - c. Use discretion in choosing your topics. Avoid topics that are not germane (e.g., sex life), and issues that might be too personal (e.g., divorce). Remember—you are not counseling these people.
- D. Your write-up should include:
  - a. A background on the individual as a member of a particular people group(s).
  - b. Special problems/issues that they face because of their membership in the group.
  - c. Their perceptions about their situation (i.e., their group's relation to the dominant society).
  - d. Some institutional barriers, if any (e.g., the school system, law enforcement, job market).
  - e. Special situations such as housing, health care, transportation, relations with police, family issues, employment, coworkers in the workplace, etc.
  - f. Analyze the individuals' situations with regard to such issues as racism, segregation, oppression, etc., if appropriate. Discuss their experiences in the U.S.—barriers, adjustment, racism/discrimination, or their relation to the dominant culture.
  - g. Your assessment of their degree of assimilation/acceptance/acclulturation (Use the identity development scale discussed in class).
  - h. You may find the "Culture-centered Interview Guide" a helpful guide in obtaining information about the person's social customs, family life, housing, clothing, food, employment, political patterns, religion and folk beliefs, economics, arts, and value systems. Report the relevant information in your write-up. Do not just list these pieces of information; instead, focus on their experiences of them.
- E. Your write-up should be in narrative form. It should not be written with a Q & A transcript format.
- F. Use pseudo names in the write-ups.
- G. This interview needs to be conducted separately from the other assignments.
- H. This write-up should be no less than 5 pages in length.

Due Thursday, December 1 in Dr. Coupland's at the beginning of class.

7. Cultural identity analysis.
  - A. Identify 5 aspects of who you are or life experiences that you believe have significantly shaped who you are culturally (e.g., grew up in a mountains of TN; am racially White; was strongly influence by my maternal grandparent’s worldview; grew up in the Southern Baptist church; was in the army and fought in the Iraqi war).
  - B. Come up with 5 stories/experiences by which you can help others understand the importance of these aspects of your cultural identity.
  - C. Identify how you see or expect to see this self-understanding impact your counseling work.

Your analysis/stories will be shared in class during one of the last two days of the course. Email the list of the 5 aspect of your cultural identity with the implications for counseling by the date of your presentation to scoupland@rts.edu. Assignment dates will be assigned.

### GRADING

Class participation and attendance: 50 points

Class presentation: 50 points

In-community experience write-up: 50 points

Religious service attendance: 30 points

Interview write-up: 40 points

Cultural identity analysis: 30 points

Total possible points: 250

Course grades will be determined by adding points from your class participation, class presentation, in-community experience write-up, interview write-up, and cultural identity analysis. Grades will be based on the following scale:

A = 239-250 points	C+ = 185-194 points
A- = 227-238 points	C = 176-184 points
B+ = 216-226 points	C- = 167-175 points
B = 205-215 points	D = 139-166 points
B- = 195-204 points	F = 138 points and below

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Classroom attendance and participation are required at all class sessions. If you should miss a class, you are expected to contact another student regarding the information covered. It is the student’s responsibility to inform me if he/she cannot attend class. Unexcused absence will affect the students’ grades.

As we will be discussing a number of topics deemed controversial, it is imperative the classroom discussions are done with the utmost respect of others. This means not interrupting others and understanding others may have opinions different from yours.

All assignments will be due on the date specified in the syllabus. For each day an assignment is late, 5 points will be deducted from the score of that assignment.

Writing format: APA style, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. An abstract is not required.

## Bibliography

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### Elderly

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### Hispanic/Latino

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### Asian Americans

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### Native Americans

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### Arab and Middle Eastern Americans

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#### African Americans

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