PSY632 Psychology in Relation to Theology II  
PSY634 Psychology in Relation to Theology III  

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando  
Thursday, 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 p.m., February 3 – March 17, 2 credit hours total  
Spring Semester, 2012  
Instructors: Jim Coffield, Ph.D.  
Scott Coupland, Ph.D.  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Telephone: (407) 366-9493, ext. 220  
E-mail: jcoffield@rts.edu  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Telephone: (407) 366-9493, ext. 238  
E-mail: scoupland@rts.edu  

PURPOSE  
This course is designed to help students integrate and consolidate their thinking and positions on a variety of issues related to counseling. It will also familiarize students with popular issues and professionals in the Christian and secular counseling worlds. The intent is to prepare students to be able to respond to commonly asked questions they may have to field in job interviewers, and from referral sources or clients.

COURSE OBJECTIVES  
Upon completion of this course, the student will:  
1. Organize their thinking and responses to popular issues and questions often raised by job interviewers, and from referral sources or clients.  
2. Familiarize themselves with well-know professionals in the Christian counseling world.  
3. Be able to state their positions on counseling related issues in a concise, verbal manner.  
4. Challenge students to engage each other professionally and respectfully in a roundtable dialogue format.  
5. Gain confidence in their ability to articulate their philosophy of counseling.

COURSE FORMAT  
Roundtable dialogue and students presentations.

SCHEDULE  
Date  Topic  
Feb. 9  Introduction  
Feb. 16  Presentations and class discussion  
Feb. 23  Presentations and class discussion  
Mar. 1  Presentations and class discussion  
Mar. 8  Presentations and class discussion  
Mar. 15  Presentations and class discussion  
Mar. 22  Presentations and class discussion  
Mar. 29  Spring break, no class  
Apr. 5  Presentations and class discussion  
Apr. 12  Presentations and class discussion  
Apr. 19  Presentations and class discussion  
Apr. 26  Presentations and class discussion  
May 3  Oral exams, Christian counseling  
May 10  Oral exams, mental health counseling
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class attendance and participation in roundtable discussions
The course format is dialogue-based, and students are expected to participate in the class discussions. Showing up late and/or missing class will result in a deduction in your grade.

2. Position papers and informational summaries
Each student will be assigned four issues (two Christian counseling and two mental health counseling related issues) and one topic from the list below. For each of these you will write a brief response (1-2 double-spaced pages). For the four issues you will write position papers. For the topics you will write informational summaries. You will be assigned a day when you will use your write-up to briefly share your responses and then lead a discussion on your issue or topic during the class. Submit an electronic copy of your papers to Dr. Coupland’s email by 9:00am the day before you are assigned to use your paper to lead a class discussion. Electronic copies of your papers should also be emailed to all of your classmates. Late papers will receive a grade deduction.

3. Biography write-up and presentation
Each student will be assigned the name of a well known Christian counselor. Write a brief biography (1-2 double-spaced pages) discussing this person’s professional history and any unique emphases in his or her counseling approach and publications. Include a bibliography of books he or she has written. You will be assigned a date to present an overview of you paper during the class. Submit an electronic copy of your write-up to Dr. Coupland’s email by 9:00am the day before you are assigned to present your paper in class. Electronic copies of your biography write-up should also be emailed to all of your classmates.

4. Oral exams
The last two days of class the students will be put into groups of 6 students. On May 3rd each group will appear for one hour before a panel of pastors and your professors and be asked to orally respond to random questions from the Christian counseling section of the issues and topics listed on this syllabus. Each student will have approximately 10 minutes where he or she will answer questions. During the remainder of the hour, the student will listen to the responses of the other members. On May 10th the same procedure will occur, expect that the questions will come from the mental health counseling section of the issues and topics listed on the syllabus, and the panel will consist of local counseling professionals and your professors. You will be graded on the quality and thoughtfulness of your responses.

GRADING SCALE

Listed below are the assignments that will determine your final course grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance and participation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position papers and informational summaries</td>
<td>80 (20 each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biography presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral exams</td>
<td>100 (50 each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total possible points</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course grades will be determined by adding points from all the assignments. Grades will be based on the following scale:

- **A** = 243-250 points  
- **A-** = 235-242 points  
- **B+** = 228-234 points  
- **B** = 220-227 points  
- **B-** = 215-219 points  
- **C+** = 208-214 points  
- **C** = 200-207 points  
- **C-** = 195-199 points  
- **D+** = 188-194 points  
- **D** = 180-187 points  
- **D-** = 175-179 points  
- **F** = 174 points and below

**Christian Counseling Issues**

1. What is Christian counseling?
2. How does your faith inform what you do in the counseling room?
3. After two sessions with a client she asks you why you, as a Christian counselor, haven’t quoted any scripture during your counseling. How do you respond?
4. How do you use the bible in counseling?
5. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” Given this passage, why would you need anything but scripture in your counseling of others?
6. What is your understanding of the sufficiency of scripture, particularly as it relates to counseling?
7. Why would you use words, concepts, phrases that are not found in scripture in the counseling process?
8. Is using the bible in a proof texting manner appropriate in counseling?
9. Why does a person need to deal with the past especially considering a passage like Philippians 3:13-14 that says “But one thing I do; Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”?
10. So many of theories of counseling were developed by unbelievers and many were anti-faith. How can such humanistic theories ever be incorporated into a biblical understanding of counseling?
11. Psychology is only 150 years old. How can it possibly be an important part of understanding soul care? The saints of old never had psychology. Why is this so important now?
12. Doesn’t much of psychology simply justify people’s sin instead of calling sin “sin”? Why do Christian counselors focus so much on feelings or emotions, when scripture seems to focus more on fact and faith?
13. When is mental illness sin and when is it not?
14. Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of sin, not to make us feel better. So, why is so much Christian counseling focused on helping people feel better?
15. Is poor self-esteem a biblical concept? What is your understanding of self-esteem?
16. Do people need to forgive themselves?
17. Do people need to love themselves?
18. How and why would you counsel a non-Christian?
19. What does evangelism look like in the context of counseling a non-Christian?
22. How do you justify counseling outside of the church; that is, outside the authority of a pastor or elder board?
23. Aren’t counselors just circumventing the role or authority of the pastor?
24. The counseling concept of confidentiality seems to go against the authority of the church and church discipline. How do you justify keeping information away from the very body of leaders God ordained to deal with it?
25. How do you deal with separation and divorce?
26. How would you respond to a client that says “I’m depressed and praying against a demon of depression,” and then quotes Ephesians 6:12 “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”
27. How can a Christian counselor justify charging so much money for discipling someone?
28. It seems like Christian counselors are more concerned with state requirements for licensure and secularly defined ethical roles than truly biblical ethics of care?
29. The means of grace are the preached Word, baptism, and the Lord’s supper. How does counseling sometimes get elevated to a means of grace?
30. How do you incorporate the means of grace into your counseling?
31. Contrast the difference between emotional and spiritual health. Justify biblically how these are the same or different?
32. How do the concepts of the imperative and indicative inform your counseling?
33. What is your theology of change in the context of counseling?
34. What are your larger counseling goals in working with a person struggling with same sex attraction?
35. In the context of a counseling session an adult female client reports being lured into a sexual relationship with your pastor or elder in your church. What would you do?
36. A client is struggling with abuse from her past. She feels guilty because she feels angry with God but thinks this is sinful. How do you respond to her concern?

Mental Health Counseling Issues
1. How does your religion inform what you do in the counseling room?
2. Describe your theory of counseling.
3. What does it mean to have an eclectic approach to counseling?
4. You did your counseling training at a seminary. What was your rational for doing so?
5. How will you deal with persons of diverse faith backgrounds?
6. How will you deal with gays of lesbians seeking support in their relationships?
7. You have a client that needs help coming out to his family as a gay man. How do you help him come out to his family?
8. How would you counsel a woman with an unwanted pregnancy?
9. How would you deal with a woman that reports having had abortions?
10. Discuss a current research issue that you have been following and how has it impacted your counseling.
11. What counseling-related books have you read recently?
12. Are you a member of a professional organization? If so, which ones?
13. What is the difference between a clinical mindset and a counseling mindset?
14. What are the strengths and weaknesses of CBT?
15. Does a person need to deal with the past? Why or why not?
16. What is the role of assessment and screening tools?
17. What is the role of medications in treating psychological disorders?
18. How does your understanding of neurobiology affect the way you address trauma and addictions?
19. What makes a counselor culturally competent?
20. How does your understanding of multiculturalism affect your diagnosis?
21. What will make you effective as a counselor working with a client that has a very different personality than you?
22. Suppose you are counseling a family that consists of two parents and their 11 and 9 year olds. Based on your counseling over a few sessions you suspect there is a history of physical abuse by the parents. However, all the family members report the counseling has been helpful in significantly improving the communication between the parents and the children, and the parents are now working together as a team in parenting, and the children are not acting. You fear that reporting abuse at this point would interfere with their progress. What would you do?
23. How might a counselor assess problematic and/or compulsive/addictive on-line sexual activities?
24. What concerns do you have about the DSM-IV-TR?
25. What is your philosophy of giving diagnoses?
26. How would counseling a teenage person differ from counseling a middle-aged person in terms of addiction?
27. Give a treatment plan for depression.
28. How would you use mindfulness in your counseling?
29. A newlywed couple enters counseling after returning from their honeymoon with the presenting problem of sexual problems. More specifically, he says his problem with premature ejaculation prevents them from being able to engage in sexual intercourse. How would you help him/them with this issue?
30. A woman reports to you that her husband has been physically beating her, and, in fact, has a bruise on her face from a fight she had with him that morning. Should you report this to the abuse hotline? How would you help her?
31. How does crisis counseling differ from typical counseling?
32. Where does social justice and client advocacy come into your work?
33. What are “rapid emotional change” techniques? How do they work?
34. Can counselors from one cultural group really hope to be effective with clients from another cultural group?
35. How are remembering conversations (practices) different from conventional grief counseling?
36. If you want to assess a client’s suicide potential, what questions would you ask him?

Counseling Topics
1. EMDR
2. Motivational interviewing
3. Positive psychology
4. Mindfulness
5. Interpersonal neurobiology
6. Dialectic behavioral therapy
7. Solution focused therapy
8. Life coaching
9. Repressed memories
10. Internal family systems
11. Attachment holding therapies
12. Healing prayer
13. Christ-Centered therapy (deliverance-oriented counseling)
14. Sonship theology and ministry
15. Compass therapy
16. Theophostic therapy
17. Biblical counseling
18. Reparative therapy

Counseling Professionals
1. David Powlison, Tedd Tripp, Ed Welch
2. Leanne Payne
3. Larry Crabb
4. Dan Allender
5. Tim Clinton
6. John Townsend, Henry Cloud
7. Diane Langberg
8. Steve Arterburn
9. Mark Laaser
10. Eric Johnson
11. Everett Worthington
12. Doug Rosenau
13. John Trent
14. Archibald Hart
15. Siang-yang Tan
16. John Eldredge
17. Mark Yarhouse
18. Gary Oliver
How does Christianity inform your counseling?
What is your position on common grace?

Start with assumption we agree on rather than where we have differences.
Recognize and be careful how you translate Christian terminology with people.

Sufficiency of scripture. It comes down to faith and practice. Frame may be too broad for some, but he forces you to deal with life practically. The tri’s have to be held in tension.
## Course Objectives Related to MAC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: PSY632/PSY634 Psychology in Relation to Theology II & III  
Professor: Jim Coffield, Ph.D. and Scott Coupland, Ph.D.  
Campus: Orlando  
Date: 2/24/12

### MAC Student Learning Outcomes

In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Oral and written assignments where students apply biblical knowledge to counseling related issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>A reformed perspective is used to evaluate counseling issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Students apply knowledge of Scripture to counseling situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>Students form and refine their theory and approach to counseling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counseling philosophy and practice uses the bible as its foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students learn to bring the Gospel to clients in the context of the counseling process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Class discussions and assignments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</td>
<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Oral and written assignments where students apply biblical knowledge to counseling related issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Students apply knowledge of Scripture to counseling situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reformed Theology</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>A reformed perspective is used to evaluate counseling issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Students form and refine their theory and approach to counseling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desire for Worldview</td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Counseling philosophy and practice uses the bible as its foundation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winsomely Reformed</td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Students learn to bring the Gospel to clients in the context of the counseling process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preach</td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherd</td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Students apply counseling skills in practice counseling sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church/World</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context,</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Class discussions and assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>about being counselors in the church and in secular settings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>