PSY501 Fundamental Therapy Skills

Reformed Theological Seminary – Orlando
Monday – Thursday, 8:30 – 3:30 p.m., Friday, 1:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Winter Term, 2007, 2 credit hours
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PURPOSE
This course seeks to develop the specific personal attributes and professional competencies you will use in your counseling career. The course provides the opportunity for you to build a framework of relational skills growing out of your academic work, your own life experiences, and your Christian worldview. The emphasis of the course will be on application and practice of basic counseling skills conducted in an environment that allows for immediate feedback and supervision. The focus will be placed on attending and essential interviewing skills.

OBJECTIVES
As a result of participation in this course the student should demonstrate the following:
1. Ability to structure an interview with a Biblical/theological rationale for all therapeutic strategies, techniques, and interventions.
2. Appropriate counseling techniques to engage the client, establish and maintain rapport and build the foundation for a therapeutic alliance.
3. Attending skills that include active listening skills, empathy, personal respect, and concreteness in problem identification.
4. Professional conduct that allows the client to perceive the counselor as trustworthy, caring, sincere, competent, and appropriately self-disclosing.
5. Counseling techniques that facilitate collection of data necessary to understand the client's worldview, relevant history and presenting problem. Eventually, these skills will be expanded to formulate a diagnostic impression.
6. Specific interviewing competencies which include use of open-ended and close-ended questions, the ability to assist the client in staying focused, reflection of feeling and content, use of supportive interventions, communication of appropriate observations and the use of immediacy and confrontation.
7. Development of observation and feedback skills in assisting other students to increase their competencies.
8. Ability to conduct an initial interview with a confederate client.

REQUIRED TEXTS
Brooks/Cole.
REQUIREMENTS
1. Active and full participation in class discussions, debriefings, group exercises, and lab sessions.
2. Participation in lab sessions in the role of counselor, client, and observer.
3. Write up a daily progress note using the handout provided for each triad session in which you participated as the counselor. Your progress note for Friday’s session with a confederate client will be written up immediately after the session. The progress notes for your triad experiences are due at the beginning of the next class period. These are to be neatly handwritten using the format listed below on the form provide to you. Friday’s progress note will be due at the end of class on Friday. See progress note outline below.
4. Conduct a 30 minute intake session with a confederate client provided for you on the last day of class. This session must be digitally recorded (you will provide the rewritable DVD). Write a 2 page critique of your session regarding your ability to apply the skills learned in this class and in the required reading. You will sign up for a 30 minute supervision session of your intake session. Bring your DVD to this supervision session. Your critique will be due at the time the supervision session.
5. Complete the required reading by the time of your supervision session.

GRADING
The final course grade will be assigned according to the following schedule:
Progress notes (5 points x 5 notes)...........................25 points
Required reading ......................................................25 points
Critique and supervision...........................................50 points
Total points .............................................................100 points
Course grades will be determined by adding points from the five progress notes, required reading, and critique and supervision assignments. Grades will be based on the following scale:
A = 97-100 points  B- = 86-87 points  D+ = 75-77 points
A- = 94-96 points  C+ = 83-85 points  D = 72-74 points
B+ = 93-91 points  C = 80-82 points  D- = 70-71 points
B = 88-92 points  C- = 78-79 points  F = below70 points

NOTE: Satisfactory completion of this course is a prerequisite to enroll in Practicum PSY650.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS
1. 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 total score.

2. Format for progress notes:
   “D” = Data
   - Subjective and objective data about the client.
   - What did client say or feel. For example, “Ct reports improved mood.”
   - Thematic phrase that encapsulates the session, such as “Frequent fights with M during past wk.”
   - Significant observable behavioral by therapist. For example, “Avoided eye contact with me.” or “Ct smiled & laughed when talking about childhood abuse.”
   - What was observed? For example, “W repeatedly interrupted H when he tried to talk. H
yelled at W near end of session.”
- Assessment tools used—methods, tests, and questions—but not results
- Counselor intervention and client response. For example, “Confronted ct’s sarcasm and he offered a quick apology.”
- Social and family history.
- Progress on presenting problem.
- Review of HW.
- Description of both the content and process of the session.

“A” = Assessment
- Clinician’s hypotheses—how do you as a client make sense of the data above. Working hypotheses, gut hunches.

P=Plan
- Homework assigned
- Issues to be discussed in next session
- Interventions to be used.

3-4 sentences per section are sufficient and desirable.

Example DAP note:

(D) Met with Sally and Joe. Joe reported that he was sleeping less and able to concentrate more at work, but does not think it is due to starting Prozac two weeks ago. Both Sally and Joe report and increase in the frequency and effectiveness of their communication due to their “speaker-listener” HW. Sally stated that “Joe still doesn’t seem to open up that much.” Joe disagrees with Sally’s assessment and feels that he is really “spilling his guts.” The rest of the session focused on their differing views of openness and possible relationship to family-of-origin issues (Note: you may want to list these). During this discussion Sally interrupted Joe four times to add to his statement; after the fourth time Joe sat quietly and stated Sally could finish for him. Sally shouted at Joe that he was a quitter and after a few moments apologized. (A) Joe’s symptoms of depression appear to be lessening. Couple has improved their communication style, but have not rebuilt their trust and safety. Sally continues to view Joe as not trying and thus not caring. (P) Continue work on building safety for communication. HW: What did you learn about being a husband/wife from your parents?