

**COU 601**  
**Theories of Counseling and Practice I**  
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### **Course Description and Goals**

There are *three major goals* for this course. The *first* is to orient the student to the field of mental health counseling, the *second* is to introduce the student to the most basic techniques of counseling, and the *third* is to facilitate the students' experiential development of the basic relationship and interpersonal skills necessary for mental health counseling and psychotherapy. This will be achieved through personal reflections and self examination. During the course, the student will increase and sharpen his/her interview skills. Attention will be paid to the basic skills of "hearing" (attending, listening, and responding). By the end of the course the student should have a clear understanding of the overall field and in addition, should have reached the beginning level or improved the necessary basic counseling skills for listening with the "third ear" and be at the beginning level of being able to understand the "implicit message" in each communication. The primary focus will not be on intervention, but rather this course will lead to subsequent courses in counseling interventions. An "a-theoretical" approach will be used and multicultural and diversity issues in interviewing will be examined.

### **Methods of Instruction**

The techniques of instructors will consist of brief lectures, class discussion, video tapes, and role playing.

### **Course Requirements and Evaluation**

Evaluation will be based on attendance – 25% of grade, class participation – 25% of grade, weekly reflections – 25% of grade, and a 15-20 minute interview to be presented to the class during the last few class meetings – 25% of grade.

#### Attendance

In class participation is the essence of Theories I. Therefore, there is no way a student can "makeup" missing a class. If you think there is a possibility of missing more than one class, you should rethink taking this course at this time.

## Interviews

We require that you do a minimum of twenty-five (25) 45-50 minute interviews during the course of the term with subjects you do not know, or with whom you only have a casual relationship (neighbor up the street, co-worker in another area of your place of employment, etc.). Do not use family members or friends in completing this assignment. You will be given informed consent forms for each subject to sign. These will be turned in to the instructors the last class session.

## Midterm Video

We will also offer students the opportunity to turn in a midterm video. This will be turned in to the instructors during the 3rd class session to monitor the student's interviewing progress up to that point and make suggestions to students to facilitate development of their interviewing skills for the remainder of videotape requirement. The midterm video is to be 45-50 minutes in length. Instructors will critique the interview and return to the students week four. Refer to Video Presentation sheet handed out in class for taping details.

## Concluding Videotape Presentation

It is important to keep in mind certain factors in your concluding videotape presentation. Regarding the mechanical aspects, it should be of the highest quality you can make it. The camera should focus only on **you**. Do not videotape the interviewee. We should be able to hear both you and the interviewee without strain. There should be no distractions in the tape (people walking by, cats or dogs in the background or foreground, phone ringing, etc.). Student tapes will be critiqued weeks 5-9. The tape you critique in class for your grade is to be 15-20 minutes in length. The segment (or combination of segments) should be the one(s) you feel is reflective of your best interviewing effort.

## Personal Reflections

Students will be expected to keep a personal reflection/reaction journal to be turned in each week, the content of which will not be graded. It should be noted that the instructors consider the journal to be an extremely important part of a student's participation in this course. While the content itself is not graded, the student's effort to read, reflect, and react will be evaluated. We are looking for *serious reflection* guided by *critical thinking* regarding the reading each student does during the prior week. As a guide, we require a minimum 5-page reflection for each assigned unit in Annual Editions. Also each week you will select three personal articles on the same general Annual Editions topic for that week. For example, if the Annual Editions topic is taboos, you will read, reflect, and write on articles on taboos. You will write a 2-3 page personal reflection on each of those articles each week. Personal choice articles are to help broaden your exposure to that particular topic. In addition to the personal reflections of the Annual Editions and personal choice articles, you will write a 2-3 page class reflection each week. You will hand your reflections in weekly. Late journals will not be accepted. The writings must be typewritten (word processor or typewriter) using APA format. Handwritten material will not be accepted or read. While we cannot guarantee you will get back written feedback from the instructors each week, every effort will be made to comment when necessary.

## Class Participation

A high premium is placed by the instructor on class participation. Ideal class participation, that which earns the highest number of participation points, will exemplify the following:

- Integrating class readings into participation: Often cites from readings; uses readings to support points; often articulates fit of readings with the topic at hand and,
- Interaction in classroom discussions: Always a willing participant; responds frequently to questions; routinely volunteers point of view, and,
- Interaction in classroom learning activities: Always a willing participant; acts appropriately during all role plays, etc.; responds frequently to questions; routinely volunteers point of view.

## Required Textbooks

**NOTE: The Bookstore will have the most up-to-date text requirements for this course. Purchase Those books recommended by the Bookstore.**