

University of
Lethbridge



Faculty of Education

Master of Education: Counselling
Education 5704
Counselling Psychology: Skills
Fall Session, 2019

Seminar dates: Thursdays
Room: M 1004 **Time:** 1:00 am - 3:50 pm

Note: This syllabus, except for required textbooks, is subject to change until the first day of the course.

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Dr. Greidanus is best contacted by email. Virtual meetings are scheduled by appointment and may occur face-to-face, via telephone, or videoconference.

If you need assistance or have any questions regarding course content, assignments, or any other course-related concern, please speak to me in class or send me an email with your question.

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**Credit Hours:** 3.0

**Contact Hours:** *Contact hours per week: 3-0-0*

**Prerequisites:** Admission to the cohort for which the course is being offered or consent of the Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies and Research (Faculty of Education).

**Equivalents:** CAAP 6605

### **CALENDAR DESCRIPTION**

Understanding and acquisition of communication skills in interpersonal and counselling contexts. Emphasis is placed on the identification and development of specific communication skills that are essential for working in helping contexts in particular, and for the development of working alliances in general.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course focuses on the understanding and acquisition of communication skills in interpersonal and counselling contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the identification and development of specific communication skills that are essential for working in helping contexts, and for the development of working alliances.

Throughout the course there will be emphases on the nature and development of the working alliance (the therapeutic relationship), the counselling process, the development of the self as a counsellor/therapist/psychologist, and the role of the working alliance in consultation. The lecture component will develop a theoretical framework for the application of communication skills within the counselling process.

The lab component will provide opportunity for skill practice. Lectures, exercises, skill demonstrations, small group practice, peer supervision and instructor feedback will be employed in the teaching of counselling skills. You are encouraged to consult and practice with your peers as much as possible.

Counselling is a relationship that requires the counsellor's personal involvement. Knowing yourself as a person and as a counsellor are vital parts of this focus. Being present for the client, respecting boundaries, understanding projections, and expanding awareness of your sense of self are some themes that will be addressed. A three-pronged approach will be taken: (a) self-reflection, (b) research, and (c) application of skills.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course is designed to help students achieve the following learning objectives:  
Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the characteristics and responsibilities of effective helpers;
2. Summarize the literature related to developing working alliances with others.
3. Develop and maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
4. Identify and effectively demonstrate the following groups of core interpersonal communication skills:
  - Structuring skills
  - Engagement or Invitational skills;
  - Reflecting skills
  - Transitional skills
  - Establish a collaborative helping relationship, structure a counselling interview, gain information and clarify client needs
5. Understand and apply effective counselling approaches and techniques to facilitate client exploration of issues;
6. Examine alternate perspectives and develop appropriate actions with respect to issues presented;
7. Identify the relationships between counselling outcomes and communication skills applied;
8. Engage in self-reflection and self-exploration.

## **COURSE DESIGN**

The following experiences will define the nature of the course:

- dialogues on readings;
- experiential activities;
- video presentations;
- skill discussions and demonstrations; and
- supervised skill practice (supervision by Instructor and Graduate Teaching Assistant).

Students will be expected to work in dyads or triads and video record their practice sessions; these interactions will be assessed for skill analysis, critical self-evaluation, and quality. Integral to the course emphases, the roles of client and psychologist, pertinent issues facing psychologists, the nature of change for client and psychologist, the goals of psychological intervention, and psychologist effectiveness will be addressed. A combined theoretical and practical focus will be utilized to foster the development of a repertoire of skills and strategies.

## **ANTICIPATED TOPICS (subject to change)**

- Counselling Psychology as a Profession
- Characteristics of Effective Helpers
- General Counselling Outcomes
- Empathy
- Targets of Intervention: Cognitive, Affective, Behavioural
- Principles of Helping
- Building Relationships
- Attending Skills
- Soliciting Skills
- Reflecting Skills
- Structuring Skills
- Skill Coding and Rating of Skills
- Self-Evaluation
- Peer Supervision

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

The weekly course schedule will be posted in Moodle.

There will be no class the week of November 7<sup>th</sup> due to the Fall break.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th Ed.). Washington: Author.

Young, M.E. (2017). *Learning the Art of Helping: Building Blocks and Techniques* (6th Ed.). Columbus, Ohio: Pearson Education Inc.

*Additional required readings will be provided online.*

## **REQUIRED MATERIALS**

- Two USB memory storage devices
- Headphones
- External microphone (optional)
- Web Camera (external or built in)
- Laptop to video record (if you do not have a laptop, please let the instructor know and arrangements will be made for you to borrow one)

## **MOODLE SUPPORT**

- <http://moodleanswers.com/>
- <http://www.moodleanswers.com/index.php/information>

## **GENERAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES ASSISTANCE**

- <http://www.uleth.ca/information-technology/desktop/help>

## **EVALUATION**

The assessment structure is based on the following course activities, with the percentage weighting of each activity as indicated. Your final grade for the course will be a composite mark based on your performance in these course activities. There is a five (5%) percent deduction for late assignments unless arrangements are made with the instructor in advance. Late assignments will not be accepted if the assignment has already been returned to the students marked and graded.

| <b>Assignment</b>                              | <b>Due Date</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Assignment #1: Working Alliance Research Paper | October 3       | 25%               |
| Assignment #2: Skills Self Analysis            | October 24      | Pass/Fail         |
| Assignment #3: Peer Assessment                 | November 7      | 25%               |
| Assignment #4: Skills Demonstration Video      | December 10     | 50%               |

### **Assignment #1: Working Alliance Research Paper**

Write a 10-15 page (exclusive of title page, abstract, and references) academic paper related to the therapeutic alliance. The Research Paper is an opportunity to summarize and discuss the literature on the Working Alliance construct and the course material. Potential topics could include relationship between the therapeutic alliance and outcomes, client characteristics, counsellor characteristics, the therapeutic alliance with specific populations (e.g., age group, counselling concern, diversity group), interaction between client and counsellor attachment styles, etc.

All papers need to include an introduction that broadly introduces the topic and then narrows down into the specific thesis of the paper. This is followed by a literature review that reviews and critiques what is known and not known about the topic. This review goes beyond a summary of the literature and considers the strength of the theoretical and research evidence. Depending on

the complexity of the topic, the literature review could have several subsections. The final section of the paper is your conclusion, which provides a brief summary of what you have written, recommendations for clinical practice and future research, and then a final concluding paragraph.

*Formatting should meet the APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition requirements, including title page, abstract, running heads, headings, citation style, and references. All pages should have a minimum of one-inch margins on all sides and be a minimum of 12-point font.*

## Assignment #2: Skills Self Analysis

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Engage in basic counselling skills, reflecting both content and feelings. Transcribe your session in the provided format and engage in critical reflection regarding the skills used. Evaluation of this assignment, the emphasis focus on your ability to analyze your responses and create an alternative response.

1. Find a partner in class to be your client. Videotape a 10-15 minute dyad interview in which you help a class member to work through a personal concern (do not script or rehearse). This is a first session. It is important that you deliberately demonstrate an introduction (Structuring) to the session, rapport building skills (build a safe environment), use engagement or invitational skills (encouragers, questions, declarative probes), and use reflecting skills (paraphrases and reflection of feelings). End with a summary of what you have heard (Structure).
2. Transcribe as few as **three** and as many as **five FULL CONSECUTIVE** (one after another) interactions verbatim (word for word) from the interview. (Start and end the transcription with a client statement). Encouragers should be included but do not count as part of the total number of responses. Choose the **BEST THREE** of how ever many you have transcribed and highlight your choice in some way. Numbering them is the most straightforward way. (If you do not highlight responses, the first three will be evaluated regardless of the total number).

### Self-Analysis Format

| Original Response | Analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Alternative Response                                              | Self-Reflection                                                                                                                             |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Word for word     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Name the skill and critically evaluate the skill(s) or response (if unskilled) being used; include a description of the actual and/or potential effect of the response (i.e., both observed and inferred).</li> <li>2. Explain briefly how your alternative response is an improvement.</li> </ol> | Include an alternative even if your original was fine. (Required) | Both current and recollected remembered thoughts, feelings, images, judgments, body sensations, etc. in response to the client's statement. |

| Original Response                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Alternative Response                                                                                                                                                                     | Self-Reflection                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>C1:</b><br/>It was important that I do well in the course, since I wanted to get into the Master's program. Well, I was just so discouraged when I had studied so hard that I just gave up.</p> <p><b>H1:</b><br/>You felt that there was...like there wasn't anything you could do, that nothing that you tried had worked no matter how much effort you put into your studies. So you just decided to give up since every avenue that you explored seemed like a, like a deadend...Is that right?</p> | <p>I paraphrased the content of the client's message. I captured most of the message—especially the last part where she says that she had tried hard and had given up. However, the response is quite long and rambling. I missed the feeling component entirely..." You felt like there was nothing..." is really a thought. As I responded the client wiggled around in her chair and looked at me with puzzlement. In her next response she says the same thing over again using different words, probably hoping that this time around I would hear her feelings of discouragement. I imagine that she is becoming frustrated with my inability to understand her and doesn't have much confidence in me. My alternative response is much smoother. I paraphrase the main content and I identify two feelings (frustrated and discouraged). The image of "throwing in the towel" captures "gave up" using different words which would probably feel less mechanical to the client. I also like the feeling with the content demonstrating my understanding of the source of her emotion.</p> | <p>As you came to realize that your repeated tries at acing this course were getting you nowhere, you felt really frustrated and discouraged and decided to just throw in the towel.</p> | <p>I remember feeling a little judgmental towards the client. I wondered about taking off for the reading break instead of staying home and studying. I would have done that if the course was so important to me. I found myself thinking, well you have to work harder and that means staying home and studying! I wanted to ask her to explain further what she had done and to give her advice about what she could have done. I think because I was so busy in my head and not listening well, I felt awkward about giving my response and had the feeling that I was stumbling for words.</p> |

### Assignment #3: Peer Assessment

In groups of three students, you will examine your skill development using a peer review model. Each group includes an **observer**, a **client**, and a **helper**. The **helper** will decide which skills she/he wants to work on.

- Ahead of this class think carefully about two or three skills you, the helper, want to work on. Review previous interviews and reflect on any feedback that you have received from the instructor and peers.
- Make a brief outline of a role play that would allow you to work on the specific skills that you have chosen. This is a first session.
- Go over the skills and role play ideas with your triad. Get their input and further develop the role play.
- Conduct and **audiotape** a 15-20 minute role play.

- Observer role: note the impact of helper responses (watch for verbal and nonverbal responses) on progression through the helping model as outlined in class.
- **Continue to tape a 15-minute discussion** where feedback is provided to the helper by the client and observer. Feedback should include areas of strength, areas for improvement, with specific attention given to the effectiveness and impact on the client.
- Write a 4-5 page summary in which you:
  - o Summarize the feedback from the observer and client
  - o Compare your perceptions of the interview with the perceptions of the client and observer. Discuss similarities and difference. How do you account for differences?
  - o Discuss the skills you chose to practice (name them, how you would like to improve, improvement since first tape). Use quotes of your interactions from your taped sessions.
  - o Reflect on the effectiveness of your interactions throughout the interview. Any improvements? What were they? Obstacles? Use specific examples of effectiveness to support your conclusions.
  - o Other questions to consider: What are your strengths as a helper? What skills need improving? How would you compare this tape to your baseline (Assignment Two)?
  - o **NOTE:** Use concrete and specific examples from session to support your conclusions.

### **Assignment #4: Skills Demonstration Video**

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Participants will be required to provide a demonstration of their counselling skills in a simulated context of a first session through the submission of the following elements:

- a minimum 15-minute, and maximum 20 minute video example of their counselling skills;
- a verbatim transcription of the session; and
- a coding sheet identifying the particular counselling skills used, an evaluation/analysis of the effectiveness and quality of each skill, an alternate response, and an overall summary of the effectiveness of the interaction (self-reflection).

The focus of the counselling skills demonstration will be on the ability to explore a client presenting issue. While the emphasis should remain on whatever domain the client presents (e.g., affective or cognitive), it is expected that the helper will demonstrate *at least* the following:

- soliciting skills;
- reflections of verbal content;
- reflections of meaning;
- reflections of affect;
- transition skills; and
- effective summaries.

Evaluation will be based on:

- accurately coded and evaluated the skills used in the interaction, and summarized the overall effectiveness of the interaction
- used appropriate solicitation techniques to elicit information
- captured the affect throughout the interview
- identified and maintained a focus on the core issue/meaning of the interaction from the client's perspective, and avoided a premature movement to a solution
- demonstrated fluency and comfort with managing and structuring the interaction process
- accurate representation and analysis of the session
- demonstrated knowledge of the course material, depth of reflection, an insight demonstrated in the paper

## GRADING GUIDELINES

| Numeric Value                                                                                          | Letter Grade | Grade Point |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| 97 – 100                                                                                               | A+           | 4.00        |
| 93 – 96                                                                                                | A            | 4.00        |
| 90 – 92                                                                                                | A-           | 3.70        |
| 87 – 89                                                                                                | B+           | 3.30        |
| 83 – 86                                                                                                | B            | 3.00        |
| 80 – 82                                                                                                | B-           | 2.70        |
| <b>NOTE: Any course with a grade of less than B- cannot be considered for credit in M.Ed. program.</b> |              |             |
| 77 – 79                                                                                                | C+           | 2.30        |
| 73 – 76                                                                                                | C            | 2.00        |
| 70 – 72                                                                                                | C-           | 1.70        |
| 67 – 69                                                                                                | D+           | 1.30        |
| 63 – 66                                                                                                | D            | 1.00        |
| <63                                                                                                    | F            | 0.00        |

## STUDENT RIGHTS and EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to be familiar with the Academic Calendar <https://www.uleth.ca/ross/academic-calendar> including but not limited to: add/drop deadlines, Principals of Student Citizenship, Academic Regulations and Policies, and Standards of Professional Conduct. Students are subject to the student discipline policy for academic and non-academic offences in accordance with the University Calendar. A few points are emphasized here:

- **If you have a disability, special learning needs, or a recent injury** that requires academic accommodation to complete the required activities and/or assignments, please follow the procedures outlined in the University Calendar. You are encouraged to contact the Accommodated Learning Centre (<http://www.uleth.ca/ross/accommodated-learning-centre/>) for guidance and assistance. Counselling Services (<http://www.uleth.ca/counselling/>) is another resource available to all students.

**Student conduct:** *Students are subject to the student discipline policy for academic and non-academic offences in accordance with the University Calendar ([www.uleth.ca/ross/academic-calendar/sqs](http://www.uleth.ca/ross/academic-calendar/sqs))*

Additionally, in the Faculty of Education graduate programs, students are required to adhere to the conduct expectations as stipulated in Faculty of Education policies, and the Standards of Practice/Conduct, Code of Ethics, and/or the Code of Professional Conduct for the field, as noted below.

- ATA Code of Professional Conduct  
<https://www.teachers.ab.ca/The-Teaching-Profession/ProfessionalConduct/Pages/default.aspx>
- Standards of Professional Conduct for Master of Education Students:  
<http://www.uleth.ca/graduate-studies/master-education/resources/beginning-your-program/professional-conduct>
- College of Alberta Psychologists Standards of Practice:  
<http://www.cap.ab.ca/Portals/0/pdfs/StandardsOfPractice.pdf>



- Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists:  
<http://www.cpa.ca/aboutcpa/committees/ethics/codeofethics/>
- Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association Code of Ethics:  
<http://www.ccpa-accp.ca>

**Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty** in which another person's work is presented as one's own. Be certain that whenever you use a secondary source in your course work and assignments you reference your source in a consistent and logical manner. All direct quotes (quotations of any number of words from the original) and indirect quotes (paraphrased ideas) must be acknowledged. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and as with any form of academic misconduct, it will be penalized. Penalties may take the form of rejection of the submitted work; expulsion from the course or the program; or legal action, depending on the specific nature of the infraction. However, dutiful citation of quotes and paraphrased materials does not mean that you can write an essay assignment by stringing together a series of quotes. You should always try to summarize or describe someone else's ideas in your own words. When you present your own ideas or opinions in a paper, provide evidence or arguments to substantiate your position. The [APA website](#) offers information about the citation styles of the American Psychological Association. (*Excerpt from CAAP 6615: Dr. B. Shepard*).

As outlined in the University calendar: "No student shall represent the words, ideas, images or data of another person as his or her own. This regulation will affect any academic assignment or other component of any course or program of study, whether the plagiarized material constitutes a part or the entirety of the work submitted."

## **COURSE POLICIES**

**Privacy and Confidentiality:** Although we place a heavy emphasis in this course on your own school settings, practices, and data, it is imperative that we refrain from using personal identifying information in our dialogue.

The personal information your classmates and course instructors disclose to you should not be discussed with anyone outside the course, now or in the future, unless the author of the personal narrative has stated otherwise. Unless you have the person's specific permission, please do not mention identifying information about the person's story (e.g., no names, no agency) and keep the disclosure broad rather than specific.

Recording lectures or class discussions is not permitted unless the instructor and all audience members have granted permission in advance.

If you are aware of any situations where individuals are not honoring the expectation of privacy/confidentiality, you are encouraged to intervene by discussing the matter with that individual. If you are not comfortable doing so, or if a resolution is not forthcoming, please contact your instructor as soon as possible.

While faculty/staff and students are expected to take all possible precautions to safeguard the personal information that is exchanged in each course, whether it be in discussion forms, web conferencing, recordings, assignments, etc., there is no guarantee of confidentiality.

**Learning responsibilities:** In order to be an active learner, you are responsible for reading and knowing the information in all assigned readings, even if not covered directly in class lectures. This information may be included in quizzes/exams and/or is expected to be integrated into your assignments, as appropriate.

**Recording lectures:** Recording lectures or class discussions is not permitted unless the instructor and all audience members have granted permission in advance.

**Attendance:** Mandatory attendance at all weekly lessons is required, except in exceptional circumstances approved by the instructor. Should you be absent from a lesson, you are required to assume responsibility for catching up on all the material and information missed by contacting a fellow classmate. If you are going to be absent, please notify the instructor.

**Assignment assistance:** I want you to succeed in this course; therefore, I am happy to help answer any questions or concerns you have about assignments and/or class material. However, I am only able to help you if you come to me with your questions or concerns, so please come see me, as I am here to support you and your learning.

**Withdrawal from a course:** If you have indicated in writing to your instructor that you will be withdrawing from an online course, your access to that course will need to be removed as soon as possible. You must notify the program staff immediately to complete the required paperwork.