Course Syllabus

Instructor: Kelly Breen Boyce, Psy.D.  
Class Times: February 12-13, March 11-12, April 15-16

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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description: This course covers the theological ground for helping relationships, counseling theories and application for helping relationships, including skills in listening, attending, and empathy needed in consultation and bringing about change.

Gordon Conwell Mission:
Article 3: To train and encourage students, in cooperation with the Church, to become skilled in ministry. The Church and the seminary share the goal of seeing knowledge, skills and experience integrated in the person who ministers. Through the courses and the practica/internships, a combination of careful training and supervised experience in counseling ministries are pedagogical practices essential to achieving that goal.

Relation to the Curriculum:
Helping Relationships is a required course for all students in the MACC program. It is a pre-requisite for CO867, Clinical Practicum I. This course is designed to introduce basic counseling skills, so that the students can learn and practice these skills as they implement them in their first practicum setting. The curriculum of Helping Relationships is required content for many state licensing boards, including the North Carolina LPC Board and also various accrediting bodies, including CACREP.

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary-Charlotte Counseling Department Mission Statement:
The aim of the Master of Arts in Christian Counseling Program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary-Charlotte is to advance Christ’s kingdom in various clinical, educational, and ministry settings by equipping counselors to think theologically, live biblically, and engage globally. Students who think theologically will develop a professional counselor identity that is grounded in orthodox Christian theology and sound clinical practice. Students who live biblically will demonstrate congruence between their faith and their actions in their personal and professional lives by maintaining a commitment to the process of ongoing spiritual formation. Students who
engage globally will fulfill their call to serve others by being sensitive and responsive to the needs of diverse cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic populations.

Objectives (Knowledge and Skills Outcomes):

- Develop an understanding of the psychological, philosophical, biblical, and theological principles of helping relationships
- Learn and practice basic counseling/interpersonal skills including: Attending, Minimal Encouragers, Interviewing/Assessing, Opening and Closing, Providing Feedback, Active Listening, Rapport Building, Reflecting Skills, Paraphrasing and Summarizing, Reflecting Feelings, Deepening Affect, Using Countertransference therapeutically, Empathizing, Reflecting Content, Noting Discrepancies, Reframing, Use of Silence, Noting Observations, Making Process Comments, Mirroring, and Offering Interpretations.
- Increase personal self-awareness, particularly in regards to interpersonal characteristics that either hinder or benefit the counseling process [CACREP II.G.5.b]
- Learn, practice and implement foundational clinical skills, such as empathy, reflective listening, creating a therapeutic alliance and affective attunement [CACREP II.G.5.c]
- Develop a client-centered treatment plan, emphasizing wellness and prevention, utilizing consultation as appropriate [CACREP II.G.5.a]

CACREP Standards are written to ensure that students develop a professional counselor identity and master the knowledge and skills to practice effectively and ethically. At the completion of this course, students should be able to satisfy the following competencies outlined in the 2009 CACREP Standards:

- CACREP II.G.5a – An orientation to wellness and prevention as desired counseling goals
- CACREP II.G.5b – Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes
- CACREP II.G.5c – Essential interviewing and counseling skills

Course Content: Helping Relationships introduces students to both individual and systems approaches to the application of various counseling theories and techniques. Attention will be given to the psychological and theological processes involved in helping relationships. Foundational client-centered counseling skills such as reflective listening and empathic attunement are emphasized. Supervision and guidance will be provided for students’ clinical skill implementation via transcriptions and videotapes of their counseling sessions.

Methods of Instruction:
The course will employ a variety of teaching methodology included but not limited to lecture, introduction of and modeling of basic counseling skills, practicing basic skills and receiving feedback via live and videotaped supervision, watching and critiquing actual counseling sessions, small group discussion and classroom discussion.

Required Text(s): (Students should expect to spend approximately 65 hours on the reading)

This text should be read in its entirety by February 12, 2016


This text should be read by March 11, 2016


This text should be read by April 15, 2016

**Recommended Readings:**


**Course Requirements/Assignments:** (Total number of hours including class time and completion of assignments should approximate 135 hours)

A. **Clinical Practice:** [CACREP II.G.5b,c]

The counseling lab will be utilized for portions of these assignments.

1. **Peer triads/groups:** Students will participate in a peer group, led by a TA, in which they will have extensive time to practice the above-named skills. Students will alternate roles among helper, client and observer. Coaching, encouragement, and feedback will be provided via live supervision by the TA.

2. **Counseling with peer client:** Students will be paired with a peer client with whom they will conduct at least three counseling sessions. The information shared by the student when they are in the client role will be an autonomous choice made by the student. Additional details will be discussed in class.

**Confidentiality:** By registering for the course, students, TAs, staff and faculty are agreeing to keep all personal material shared both verbally and in writing completely confidential. However, limits to confidentiality are congruent with state and federal law and ethics including threats to harm self and others, etc.
B. Technological equipment:
Students will be required to purchase a video camera that they will use throughout the duration of this course, videotaping each of their counseling and practice sessions. Video cameras will be used as an on-going basis as raw data is required to be used in every supervision session by both the NC MFT and LPC licensing boards. Therefore, please purchase a video camera of good quality that you will be using at least for the next three-five years. Portions of the sessions and/or transcripts will be reviewed in class for supervision and training purposes. Ensure that recordings are audible and visible and that you show the videotapes on a sufficiently large device (e.g. your computer and not your smart phone).

C. Assignments: All written assignments should utilize APA style, 6th edition.
1. Reflection paper: (Approximately 5 hours) [CACREP II.G.5.b] A three page double-spaced personal reflection self-awareness exercise regarding emotion and spirituality will be assigned. More information will be given in class. **Due: Uploaded on Sakai by 5:00 PM on March 11, 2016.**

2. Demonstration of counseling skills: [CACREP II.G.5b,c] The Student’s ability to demonstrate basic counseling skills will be measured by the transcript and review of the DVD by a TA and the professor. Instructions on how to format the transcriptions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counselor response/statement.</th>
<th>Skill Demonstrated</th>
<th>Critique &amp; alternative Response that could be more helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hello Caroline. Where would you like to start today?</td>
<td>Opening Skill</td>
<td>I could have made an observation that noted the client’s nervousness and discomfort with the therapeutic process. I could have said something like, “You mentioned that this is your first time in counseling and it makes sense that you may feel a little nervous and unsure of what to talk about.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client statement … Gee, I don’t really know where to begin. Silence. Um, I feel a little awkward about this.</td>
<td></td>
<td>I may have asked that question about her childhood because of my own anxiety with silence and wanting the client to feel like I knew what I was doing and that I had a plan for the session. However, offering an observation would have been more congruent with a less-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. **First session**: (8 hours) You will transcribe one 10 minute segment of the first peer client session (TBD). In the *Critique & Alternative Response that could be more helpful* column, it is also appropriate to include other information such as thoughts regarding transference & countertransference, conceptual frameworks, awareness of impact of client’s various systems, questions or therapeutic dilemmas, descriptions of client’s psychosocial and/or spiritual functioning, etc. This section should reflect your own thoughts and should incorporate ideas and information from the Hill and Kahn texts. When appropriate include references from all three textbooks in the commentary sections of the transcription. Due: uploaded onto Sakai by **Monday, March 21 at 10:00 AM**.

b. **Second session**: No assignments are associated with this session. It will take place during class time on the weekend of April 15-16. Videotapes of the sessions will be reviewed during supervision provided by the TA.

c. **Third Session**: (15 hours) Submit a 15-minute transcription of the third session and DVD of the same portion of the third session on **Sakai by 5:00 PM on Friday, April 29 2016**. When appropriate include references from all three textbooks in the commentary sections of the transcription. The timing of the third session will be mutually agreed upon by each dyadic partner. It is recommended that this final session is conducted approximately one week after the final class meeting in order to make the best use of the teaching and supervision provided during the last class meeting. However, students travelling from a distance have the option of conducting the third and final session after class from 4:30 to 5:30 on **Saturday, April 16**.

3. **Progress notes**: (2 hours) [CACREP II.G.5c] The student’s ability to write appropriate and succinct progress notes will be measured by this assignment. Write one one-page progress note for each session. Format of progress note will be explained in class. Include progress notes with final transcription. Due: **Email to TA within 72 hours of each session**.

4. **Self-Evaluation paper**: (10 hours) This paper should be 5-6 pages in length and should be written after reflecting on the following variables; reviewing the videotapes of the two sessions in which you provided counseling, the required and/or supplemental readings, feedback given by peers, TAs and professor and your own personal process. Information to include in the self-evaluation paper should include but not necessarily be limited to:
   - How well did you notice and track with affect?
   - Which skills were relatively easy? Provide examples.
   - Which skills did you struggle with? Propose hypothesis as to why this may have been and make self-recommendations on how you can continue to improve in these areas
   - How open were you to feedback provided by peers, TAs and professors? How did you incorporate the feedback into the practice opportunities?
• Lessons learned for future counseling sessions (what will you do differently in future counseling sessions and/or what would you have done differently for the practice sessions?)
• Make sure to include references to three texts as appropriate.

Due: Saturday, May 7 at 5 PM

C. Class Participation: Class will meet on the following weekends: February 12-13, March 11-12, and April 15-16. Students are required to attend all classes. Attendance and full participation is expected during all class meetings. If you miss up to three hours of class for any reason, you can either choose to 1. Have five points deducted from your final course grade or 2. Submit an annotation for an additional 500 pages of reading pertaining to course content as well as making up any pertinent assignments related to missed content to be decided by professor.

Document naming conventions: All documents should be uploaded onto Sakai and should be named with the convention of student name, course number, assignment name.

For example: the Self-Evaluation paper for this course may be named:
Smith, Mary; CO611; Self Evaluation paper

Evaluation:

Reflective paper 10%
Self-evaluation paper 20%
Demonstration of counseling skills 70%

1. Choose a 10-minute segment from the first session. Worth 20%

2. Choose a 15-minute segment from the third session. Along with the transcription, also include the 15-minute video clip. Part of this grade will focus on the student’s use of nonverbals, posturing, empathic tone, facial expressions, etc. that are not able to be captured in a written transcript alone. The 15 minute transcription and the 15 minute video clip should be of the same segment. Worth 50%

*Students who are taking this course as a pre-requisite for CO867 will need to obtain at least 40 out of the possible 50 points on the demonstration of counseling skills assignments in order to begin the first practicum (CO867). Students who are taking the course as a co-requisite for CO867 will need to obtain at least 40/50 points in order to register for CO868.

Grading: Final letter grades will be assigned based on the following distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>98-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>64-66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>Assignments Due:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
<td>An overview of basic counseling skills, ethics refresher, empathy as foundational to the counseling process; increasing empathy, importance of affect</td>
<td>Helping Skills text should be read by first class meeting (2.12.16). Begin reading the <em>Faithful Feelings</em> text</td>
<td>First 10-minute transcript due 3.21.16</td>
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<td>(weeks 1-5)</td>
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<td>February 12-13</td>
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<td>Module 2</td>
<td>Practicing basic counseling skills, introduction to advanced counseling skills, transference and counter-transference, progress notes and ethical obligations regarding record keeping</td>
<td>The entire <em>Faithful Feelings</em> text should be read by 3.11.16</td>
<td>Reflective Paper due 3.11.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>(weeks 6-10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct and videotape first counseling session with peer client. Email progress note to TA within 72 hours of session.</td>
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<td>March 11-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Ethical and clinical issues regarding terminating, addressing spiritual issues in the context of counseling, self-care for the counselor, using metaphors, self-disclosure of the counselor, practicing both basic and advanced skills.</td>
<td>The entire <em>Between Therapist and Client</em> text should be read by 4.15.16</td>
<td>Conduct and videotape second session with peer client. Email progress note to TA within 72 hours of session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(weeks 11-15)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct third session with peer client. Email progress note to TA within 72 hours of session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 15-16</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Second Transcript (of the third session) and DVD or uploaded digital file due 4.29.16</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Self-evaluation paper due: 5.7.16</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Academic Standards

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy

The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class

In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancellation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy

Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work”, as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams. However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades

Grades are posted on line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades. Those individuals
who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office. Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade.

Returned Work

Work submitted through Sakai will be returned via Sakai since no hard copies will be turned in. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope with any hard copy work submitted if you wish to have it returned.

Virtual Writing Center

Free assistance in writing papers is available to students through the Virtual Writing Center at Gordon Conwell. The Virtual Writing Center is staffed by Gordon Conwell graduates, or writing tutors with specialized knowledge in writing and/or ESL. Generally, this service is available to students who have completed or are currently enrolled in one of the following three classes:

- CT500 (Introduction to Theological Research)
- CO501 (Introduction to Counseling Research)
- IS502 (Theological Research and Writing)

If you enrolled in GCTS before Fall 2008, you were not required to take one of the three pre-requisites above, and you may request access to the Virtual Writing Center. Also, ESL writing tutors are available to ESL students even if they are not currently enrolled in a degree program. If you do not meet one of these qualifications, but feel you would benefit from using the Virtual Writing Center, contact us and we will evaluate your status.

Email writingcenter@gordonconwell.edu for more information.