

## **CO790 Professional Standards**

Tuesday 6/1/10-Friday 6/4/10 8:30am-12pm; 1pm-4:30pm

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Office hours: during lunch or after class

*In any moment of decision the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing you can do is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

*When you have to make a choice and don't make it, that is in itself a choice.*

*William James*

*Always do right. This will gratify some people and astonish the rest.*

*Mark Twain*

### **Course Description:**

This course is designed as a review of the professional standards of counseling/therapy including ethical standards and legal responsibilities. The course also includes discussion of several models of ethical decision-making within the context of ethical dilemmas.

### **Course Objectives**

As a result of this course students will be able to:

1. List ethical decision making models
2. Know their profession's ethics code
3. Know Massachusetts law as it refers to the practice of counseling
4. Apply critical thinking to ethical dilemmas

### **Instructional Methods:**

Instructional methods will include lecture, guided discussion, small group discussion, and case discussion.

### **Required Text:**

Kenneth S. Pope and Melba J. T. Vasquez (March 2007) *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling: A Practical Guide*, 3rd Edition John Wiley & Sons: San Francisco

### **Recommended Text:**

Sanders, R. K. (Ed.). (1997). *Christian counseling ethics: A handbook for therapists, pastors, & counselors*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

### **Resources**

American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists Code of Ethics (Effective July 1, 2001) <http://www.aamft.org/resources/LRMPlan/Ethics/ethicscode2001.asp>

American Counseling Association (Effective 2005)

<http://www.counseling.org/Resources/CodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx>

American Psychological Association Ethics Code (Effective June 1, 2003)

<http://www.apa.org/ethics/>

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 Public Law 104-191 (HIPAA)  
<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/hipaa/> or [www.hipaadvisory.com](http://www.hipaadvisory.com)

Board of Registration of Allied Mental Health and Human Services Professionals:  
Mental Health Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, Rehabilitation Counselors and  
Educational Psychologists

[http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=ocasubtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Licensee&L2=Division  
+of+Professional+Licensure+Boards&L3=Board+of+Registration+of+Allied+Mental+Heal  
th+and+Human+Services+Professionals&sid=Eoca](http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=ocasubtopic&L=4&L0=Home&L1=Licensee&L2=Division+of+Professional+Licensure+Boards&L3=Board+of+Registration+of+Allied+Mental+Health+and+Human+Services+Professionals&sid=Eoca)

Massachusetts General Laws (MGL):

Chapter 13, Sections 88-90—Creation of Board of Registration of Allied Mental Health  
and Human Services Professionals

Chapter 19A—Elder abuse and protection

Chapter 19C—Disabled persons abuse and protection

Chapter 119—Protection of children (section 51A—reports)

Chapter 112 Section 12CC—Inspection of records

Chapter 112, Sections 61-65, 163-172—Licensing provisions for registration of Allied  
Mental Health and Human Services Professionals

Chapter 123—Mental Health

Chapter 123A—Care, treatment, and rehabilitation of sexually dangerous persons

Code of Massachusetts Regulations

262 CMR 1.00 – 9.00—Rules and regulations governing Allied Mental health and  
Human Services Professionals

## **Requirements**

Students are expected to attend **all** classes and to participate actively. *Students will discuss **all absences** with the instructor.* Students will complete all reading and other assignments ON TIME. Discuss all late assignments with the instructor. One point will be deducted from all late assignments per day late (including the weekend) and will not be accepted more than 1 week late.

## Assignments

1. Keep ongoing reflective journal entries for each chapter of the text, capturing your reactions such as new knowledge or realizations, rethinking a past case, thinking about a current case, or developing a plan for how to incorporate the principles of the chapter in your practice, etc. Each entry should be between 150 and 250 words single spaced. (36 points: 2 points per chapter)
2. Written ethical case study (24 points; see rubric below)
3. Open code final test on HIPAA, either the AAMFT or ACA Code of Ethics and Massachusetts Law (40 points)

The Ethical case study will describe an actual ethical dilemma you experienced in your clinical experience:

The ethical dilemma (4 points)

The model(s) and the application of the model(s) you are choosing to use including possible courses of action regarding the dilemma and the one(s) you should have selected including consequences of choice(s) (20 points)

DO NOT PICK “reporting child abuse.” This is not an ethical dilemma. It is a legal question of whether you have “reasonable cause to believe that a minor is suffering abuse.” The only considerations are whether what you know fits the criteria of your having reasonable cause to believe the child is suffering abuse. If you must pick this issue of reporting, you may write about the ethical issue of reporting when your supervisor tells you not to.

DO NOT PICK breaking confidentiality when a client is at risk for suicide. Again this is not an ethical dilemma. If you have reasonable cause to believe that there is a clear and present danger, then you must break confidentiality.

### **Course Outline with Assignments**

*Assignments are due on day listed.*

June 1 Review of syllabus; codes, laws, and HIPAA; when spiritual beliefs and professional ethics and laws clash; ethics versus law versus best practice; models of ethical decision making, thinking critically about ethical and legal issues. Competence; referral; professional development and professional identity development; self-care.

Assignments:

Read:

1. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 1) Helping Without Hurting: Personal Responsibility, Constant Questioning, and Basic Assumptions and (Chapter 2) Ethics and Critical Thinking
2. Forester-Miller, H. & Davis, T. (1996) A Practitioner’s Guide to Ethical Decision Making American Counseling Association online at <http://www.counseling.org/Counselors/PractitionersGuide.aspx?>
3. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 3) Trust, Power, and Caring and (Chapter 4) Competence and the Human Therapist
4. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 5) Creating Strategies for Self-Care and (Chapter 6) Creating a Professional Will

June 2 Responding to complaints / suits; keeping records (SOAP notes); informed consent; accessibility

Assignments:

Read:

1. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 7) Codes and Complaints in Context: Historical, Empirical, and Actuarial, Foundations and (Chapter 8) Responding to Ethics, Licensing, or Malpractice Complaints
2. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 9) Steps in Ethical Decision Making and (Chapter 10) Beginnings and Endings, Absences and Accessibility

June 3 Assessment, testing, diagnosis; dual relationships

Assignments:

Read:

1. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 11) Informed Consent and Informed Refusal and (Chapter 12) Assessment, Testing, and Diagnosis
2. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 13) Sexual Relationships with Clients and (Chapter 14) Nonsexual Multiple Relationships and Other Boundary Issues

June 4 Maintaining and breaking confidentiality: reporting suspicion of abuse/neglect; suicide risk; homicide risk; supervision; test

Assignments:

Read:

1. Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 15) Culture, Context, and Individual Differences and (Chapter 16) Confidentiality
2. Read Pope & Vasquez: (Chapter 17) Responding to Suicidal Risk and (Chapter 18) The Supervisory Relationship
3. **Open code final test on HIPAA, either the AAMFT or ACA Code of Ethics and Massachusetts Law**

July 5

1. **Turn in a written copy of your ethical case study**
2. **Turn in Reflective Journal**

August 13 4pm

Last day to apply to Registrar (not to instructor) for extension if needed. Let the instructor know if you are applying for an extension.

### **Additional Resources**

American Association of Christian Counselors Code of Ethics

<http://aacc.net/about-us/code-of-ethics>

American Association of Pastoral Counselor Code of Ethics

<http://www.aapc.org/ethics.cfm>

Bersoff, D. N. (1999). *Ethical conflicts in psychology* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Brock, G. W. (Ed.). (1998). *Ethics casebook*. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy.

Clarkson, P. (2001). *Ethics: Working with ethical and moral dilemmas in psychotherapy*. Philadelphia, PA: Whurr Publications.

Corey, G., Corey, M.S., & Callanan, P. (2006). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*. (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Thompson Publishing.

Fisher, C. B. (2003.) *Decoding the ethics code: A practical guide for psychologists*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

- Gabriel, L. (2005). *Speaking the unspeakable: The ethics of dual relationships in counseling and psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Routledge Publications.
- Herlihy, B. & Corey, G. (2006). *ACA ethical standards casebook* (6<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Alexandria, Virginia: American Counseling Association.
- Jenkins, P. (2002). *Legal issues in counseling & psychotherapy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Johnson, Lynn D. (1995). *Psychotherapy in the age of accountability*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Company.
- Koocher, G. P. & Keith-Spiegel, P. (1998). *Ethics in psychology: Professional standards and cases* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Nagy, T. F. (2005). *Ethics in plain English: An illustrative casebook for psychologists* (2nd ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Pack-Brown, S. P. & Williams, C. B. (2003). *Ethics in a multicultural context: multicultural aspects of counseling and psychotherapy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ronch, J. L., Ornum, W. V., & Stilwell, N. C. (Eds.). (1994). *The counseling sourcebook: A practical reference on contemporary issues*. New York, NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company.
- Sanders, R. K. (Ed.). (1997). *Christian counseling ethics: A handbook for therapists, pastors, & counselors*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Tjeltveit, A.C. (1999). *Ethics and values in psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Routledge Publications.
- Welfel, E. R. (2006). *Ethics in counseling and psychotherapy: Standards, research, and emerging issues* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole/Thompson Publishing.
- Wilcoxon, S. A. & Gladding, S. T. (2007). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in the practice of marriage and family therapy* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Woody, R. H. (1988). *Fifty ways to avoid malpractice: A guidebook for mental health professionals*. Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Exchange.
- Woody, R. H. (1997). *Legally safe mental health practice: Psycholegal questions and answers*. Madison, CT: Psychosocial Press.
- Woody, R. H. (1988). *Protecting your mental health practice: How to minimize legal and financial risk*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

