

**COUN 516 Basic Skills**  
**Fall 2015**  
**Thur. 7:20-10:00**  
**CCHE**

**INSTRUCTOR**

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**OFFICE HOURS**

Wed. 3:00 - 4:30 (Bin)

Thur. 7:10 – 10:00 (CCHE)

Other time by appointment

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE**

516. *Basic Skills*. Three semester hours.

Provides the foundation for all practicum and internship experiences. Students learn communication and interpersonal skills under faculty supervision. Demonstration of these skills is a prerequisite for enrollment in practicum (Coun 551). Students will examine their intrapersonal issues and interpersonal styles and will follow ACA Ethical Standards. Prerequisites: Application form returned to department several months before actual enrollment in this course (check department for availability and due dates), Coun 501, 510, and completion of or current enrollment in Coun 528.

**GENERAL COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of Pre-Practicum is to provide continued acquisition of counseling skills. Supervised application of a number of interviewing skills is the primary focus. Students can expect to examine their intrapersonal issues and concerns. They should be able to demonstrate the ability to express and understand their own personal dynamics and development, including strengths, sensitivities, defenses and limitations. A grade of “B” or higher must be earned in COUN 501, 510, 528, and 516 for admission to candidacy status (or its equivalent for those seeking school counselor certification only). Completion of these requirements is mandatory before enrollment in practicum (COUN 551).

**COURSE OBJECTIVES include, but are not limited to, the following:**

Students will demonstrate understanding and appropriate application of:

1. Essential interviewing and counseling skills so that the student is able to develop a therapeutic relationship,
2. Essential interviewing and counseling skills so that the student is able to establish appropriate counseling goals, design intervention strategies, evaluate client outcome, and successfully terminate the counselor-client relationship,
3. Self-awareness to promote therapeutic relationships and appropriate professional boundaries.
4. Ethical standards of ACA and related entities, and application of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling, and
5. Process/communications skills; conceptualization skills; personalization skills; and professional skills.

**CONTENT AREAS include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- I. ACA ethical standards and the counseling relationship
- II. Process and communications skills
  - A. Attending behavior
  - B. Open-ended and closed-ended questions
  - C. Reflecting, paraphrasing, summarizing
  - D. Differentiation between cognitive and affective messages
  - E. Immediacy, self-disclosure, confrontation
- III. Relationship Skills
  - A. Additive empathy
  - B. Positive regard
  - C. Genuineness
  - D. Concreteness
- IV. Personalization Skills
  - A. Self awareness
  - B. Boundary issues
- V. Interpersonal skills
  - A. Developing a collaborative relationship
  - B. Identifying and responding to resistance
  - C. Developing an internal focus with the client
  - D. Identifying and responding to conflicted emotions
  - E. Conceptualizing client dynamics

### **METHOD OF INSTRUCTION**

Lecture, discussion, guided practice

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Attendance and participation.

2. Students are expected to demonstrate and practice interviewing skills with class peers.
3. Video tapes of practice interviews will be made outside of class.
4. Video tape interview sessions will be reviewed in class for feedback and formative evaluation. The instructor will see that all tapes are erased by the end of the semester.

## **STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES**

Students will be evaluated **ONLY** on their performance as the counselor in the interview sessions.

Tapes will be reviewed by the instructor and evaluated on the student counselor's demonstrated effectiveness in the interview session.

Evaluation of effectiveness will be on a scale of 1 to 5:

- 1 – poor
- 2 – minimal
- 3 – satisfactory
- 4 – very good
- 5 – excellent

An "A" grade represents an exceptionally high level of effectiveness in the use of the communications, relationship, personalization, and professional skills taught in this course. Students who achieve this grade are usually more comfortable with feedback and view the process of training as both a personal and professional growth opportunity. Final evaluations must be modal 4 or above.

A "B" grade represents an expected level of effectiveness. Students who achieve this grade can employ the skills satisfactorily, and have a uniformly beneficial effect on interviewees. As a result, students with this grade will be capable of working with clients in a field setting (COUN 551, Practicum). Evaluation must be a modal 3 or above.

A "C" grade represents a minimal level of effectiveness, and is a restricted or qualified endorsement. Students with this grade are functioning below the level required for field placement. There are usually severe limitations in certain areas. Students who fail to grasp and to consistently demonstrate basic communication and interpersonal skills will generally earn this grade. Students with this grade will not be accepted for Field Placement. Evaluations must be modal 2 or above.

When students demonstrate personal limitations that might impede future performance, or consciously violate ethical standards, and are ineffective and harmful to clients, then these students will not receive the instructor's endorsement to continue with the program. Evaluation is below a modal 2.

## **REQUIRED TEXT(S) AND/OR READING(S)**

Teyber, Edward (any edition) Interpersonal process in psychotherapy

## **TE<sub>x</sub>ES COMPETENCIES THAT RELATE TO THIS COURSE** (*TE<sub>x</sub>ES is the state examination required for school counselor certification.*)

Competency 001 (Human Development)

The school counselor understands processes of human development and applies this knowledge to provide a developmental guidance program, including counseling services, that meets the needs of all students.

Competency 002 (Student Diversity)

The school counselor understands human diversity and applies this knowledge to ensure that the developmental guidance and counseling program is responsive to all students.

Competency 006 (Counseling)

The school counselor understands how to provide effective counseling services to individuals and small groups.

Competency 008 (Collaboration with Families)

The school counselor knows how to communicate effectively with families and establish collaborative relationships that enhance work with students.

Competency 010 (Professionalism)

The school counselor understands and complies with ethical, legal, and professional standards relevant to the profession.

## **ATTENDANCE**

The student is expected to be on time and attend class regularly. Two unexcused absences will result in the student being administratively dropped from the class. University guidelines regarding attendance policy will be followed.

## **ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

**Texas A&M University-Commerce**

**Gee Library Room 132**

**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**

**Fax (903) 468-8148**

**StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.**

### **CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct) "Graduate students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work." (See Section A13.12, Academic Honesty, A&M-Commerce Procedures.)

### **UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER**

Check <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/> regarding class cancellations. Also, KETR radio on 88.9 FM and television channels 4, 5, and 8 (channel 7 for Tyler & Longview Area).

### **TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**

9/3 Introduction, Orientation, & Lecture

9/10 TBA

9/17 TBA

9/24 TBA

10/1 Tape review & critique

10/8 Tape review & critique

10/15 Tape review & critique

10/22 Tape review & critique

8/5 Tape review & critique

10/29 Tape review & critique

11/5 Tape review & critique

11/12 Tape review & critique

11/19 Tape review & critique

11/26 No Class

12/3 Tape review & critique

12/10 TBA

### Pre-practicum Counseling Response Scale

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 poor
- 2 marginal
- 3 good
- 4 excellent

Established a collaborative relationship 1 2 3 4 5

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Used opened questions 1 2 3 4 5

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Validated the clients experience 1 2 3 4 5

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Articulated empathic understanding 1 2 3 4 5

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Reflects content 1 2 3 4 5

---

Provides appropriate structure (direct-nondirect) 1 2 3 4 5

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Reflects clients feelings 1 2 3 4 5

---

Differentiates thoughts and feelings 1 2 3 4 5

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Summarizes 1 2 3 4 5

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Restatements	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrates effective listening	1	2	3	4	5
Identifies and responds to clients nonverbal communication	1	2	3	4	5
Avoids premature problem solving	1	2	3	4	5
Avoids advice giving	1	2	3	4	5
Established and maintained therapeutic distance	1	2	3	4	5
Identified and responded to feelings	1	2	3	4	5
Identified and responded to cognitions	1	2	3	4	5
Immediacy	1	2	3	4	5
Encourage client to experience feelings	1	2	3	4	5
Used confrontation appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
Identified and responded to ambivalence	1	2	3	4	5
Responded to conflicted emotions	1	2	3	4	5
Clarified client's subjective feelings	1	2	3	4	5
Identified recurrent theme/affect	1	2	3	4	5
Provides appropriate interpretation	1	2	3	4	5
Provides alternative perspective (reframes)	1	2	3	4	5
Shifted client to an internal focus	1	2	3	4	5
Identified and honored resistance	1	2	3	4	5
Identified and tracked clients anxiety	1	2	3	4	5

<u>Able to differentiate content and process</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Uses silence effectively</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Self-discloses appropriately</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Demonstrates ability to be present with client</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Effectively terminates session</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>

## **CORE COUNSELING SKILLS**

### **ATTENDING & EXPLORING SKILLS**

**APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE:** counselor uses language that the client understands

**EYE-CONTACT:** counselor maintains appropriate eye-contact with client, with consideration for cultural differences.

**ATTENDING TO CLIENT PRESENTATIONS:** counselor observes and monitors client body posture, voice levels, verbal and facial expressions.

**COMPLIMENTS:** counselor recognizes and comments on client strengths and traits so as to increase motivation for change.

**USE OF MINIMAL ENCOURAGERS:** counselor models effective listening and supports client via verbal and nonverbal methods. For example: "m.m.-hhmmm", "uh-huh", "yes"; "help me understand that", "tell me more"; nodding, eye contact, variation of posture; comfortable posture.

**USE OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS, DIRECTIVES, & LEADS:** counselor invites client reflection and exploration by making regular use of open-ended questions, calling client attention to specific subjects, and suggesting useful material to examine.

**USE OF SILENCE:** counselor does not speak when silence would effectively allow for client expression, experience, reflection, and movement.

**FOLLOWING:** counselor demonstrates ability to enter the client's world, attend to his/her presentation, & refrain from introducing irrelevant material or detouring client into nonproductive/irrelevant directions.

**FOCUSSING:** counselor identifies and develops appropriate issues, themes, and subjects in the session, limiting unhelpful storytelling, and reducing irrelevant material. Counselor is able to select the most useful material from various alternatives.

**PACING:** counselor is able to keep the session moving at a natural, productive speed that is neither too hurried nor too slow. Counselor adapts session pace that allows for satisfactory communication between client and counselor (e.g., slow client down).

**RESTATEMENT:** counselor conveys understanding of the session content by restating in exact or near-exact words whatever the client has just verbalized.

**REFLECTION OF CONTENT:** counselor is able to reflect back to the client his/her understanding of the subject matter being discussed in such a way as to promote understanding, clarification, and exploration.

**REFLECTION OF FEELING:** counselor is able to reflect back to the client her/his understanding of the emotions (feelings) being expressed in the session in such a way as to promote understanding, clarification, and exploration.

**SUMMARIZING:** counselor makes a general statement that reviews and condenses client presentation in segments, to facilitate transitions during session, or at end of session.

**APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO CLIENT ANXIETY:** counselor recognizes increased levels of anxiety in client and works directly to reduce that anxiety in the session.

**EFFECTIVE INQUIRY:** counselor is able to make effective use of prompts and probes to gather information via questions, statements, & requests for more information.

**GENUINENESS:** counselor displays sincerity and remains congruent in response to client. Core Condition.

**POSITIVE REGARD:** counselor communicates to the client an acceptance of the

client's experiences, feelings, views, and possibilities. Core Condition.

**CONGRUENCY:** counselor consistently presents congruency of cognitive, affective, and behavioral processes. Core Condition.

**RESPECT:** counselor communicates to the client an acceptance of the client as a person by responding to her/him in a nonjudgmental and appreciative manner.

**ACCURATE EMPATHY:** counselor is able to understand and communicate to the client his/her understanding of the client's experience, behavior, affect, and cognitions. Core Condition.

**EFFECTIVE COUNSELOR-CLIENT RELATIONSHIP:** Counselor works to establish a collaborative association that emphasizes clients doing their own work with the facilitation of the counselor.

**ELABORATION:** counselor facilitates client exploration of pertinent topics by encouraging amplification, exploration, and examination.

**PRIORITIZING:** counselor selects potentially useful topics/problems/focus to address from various alternatives offered by the client.

## **UNDERSTANDING SKILLS**

**ADVANCED EMPATHY:** counselor responds to client experience, behavior, affect, and cognitions on a deeper level than what the client has been able to express herself/himself. Outcome of advanced empathy is to move client to deeper level of reflection on his/her experience.

**IDENTIFICATION OF THEMES:** counselor identifies recurrent patterns of behavior, affect, and cognition in client presentation and demonstrates their inter-relatedness.

**APPROPRIATE SELF-DISCLOSURE:** counselor shares elements of her/his own experience with client in such a way as to facilitate (not interfere with) client progress. Appropriate self-disclosure keeps the focus on the client, not on the counselor.

**ACCURATE INTERPRETATION:** counselor offers alternative explanations for client behaviors, cognitions, and feelings in a tentative manner.

**REFRAMING OR RELABELING:** counselor offers the client an alternative viewpoint that invites the client to see things differently, e.g. seeing the glass as half full rather than half empty.

**EXTERNALIZING THE PROBLEM:** counselor assists the client in separating self from problems.

**EVOCATION OF CHANGE TALK:** counselor elicits and promotes client expression of change intention (self-motivational statements).

**SCALING QUESTION:** counselor uses scaling question to ascertain levels of client concern and/or improvement or to focus session.

**“UNIQUE OUTCOMES” QUESTIONS:** counselor uses specific questions to ascertain differences in how the problem occurs, especially times when the problem does not occur (i.e., exceptions, on-track, relationship, and coping questions)

**RECOGNITION & MANAGEMENT OF RESISTANCE:** counselor recognizes the conscious and/or unconscious defensive postures of clients, attempts to explore resistance with the client, and assists the client in reducing defensiveness.

**HERE-&-NOW:** counselor helps the client to stay focused on the present. Counselor allows focus on past or future only as germane to the present.

**IMMEDIACY:** counselor is able to monitor the here-&-now client-counselor interaction as it relates to client issues and session progress. Counselor uses immediacy to raise client awareness and reduce resistance.

**CONFRONTATION:** counselor points out inconsistency, incongruency, or discrepancy in client presentation in such a way as to encourage further exploration & reflection.

**ADVANCING FOCUSSING:** counselor identifies, prioritizes, and develops underlying client issues, emotions, themes, and concerns.

**ALTERNATIVE EXPLORATION:** counselor assists client in exploring alternative options and possible consequences.

**WORK WITH CLIENT COGNITIONS:** counselor responds appropriately to

client thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs via identification of distorted, self-defeating or irrational cognitions, raising client awareness of their thinking, and assisting client in altering or amending unhelpful cognitions.

**WORK WITH CLIENT AFFECT:** counselor works appropriately with client emotions by facilitating client experience of their emotions, identification and labeling of emotions, recognition of intensity levels, examination of conflicted affect, identification and exploration of both screen and underlying emotions, and enhancement of client toleration of emotional state.

**DECISIONAL BALANCE:** Counselor assists client in evaluating the advantages & disadvantages (pros & cons) of potential change decisions (consistent w/ motivational interviewing).

**WORK WITH CLIENT BEHAVIOR:** counselor works with client actions via identification of helpful and unhelpful behaviors, exploration of impact of client behaviors on client issues/problems, and helping clients to alter their behaviors.

**WORK WITH INTERPLAY OF COGNITIONS, AFFECT, & BEHAVIOR:** counselor helps client recognize the inter-connectedness of their thinking, feeling, and doing as appropriate.

## **ACTION SKILLS**

**STRUCTURE A COUNSELING SESSION:** counselor demonstrate ability to develop a counseling session, including exploration of concerns, identification of presenting issues/problem, setting a goal for the session and/or treatment, developing action or choosing the appropriate format (structure) to address presenting issue in the direction of a preferred scenario, and pacing the session.

**DEFINING GOALS/DIRECTION:** counselor works with client to define goal(s) and/or direction for current client session and/or course of treatment.

**THEORETICAL CONCEPTUALIZATION:** counselor conceptualizes & explains client issues according to various theoretical approaches.

**INTERVENTION SELECTION:** counselor selects structures & intervention strategies (Action phase) consistent with technical eclecticism, theoretical conceptualization, differential treatment, and evidence-based counseling practices.

**COUNSELOR ANXIETY:** counselor effectively manages her/his own anxiety in counseling sessions.

**COUNSELOR AFFECT:** counselor recognizes, labels, and feels her/his feelings; recognizes intensity levels, accepts her/his emotional experiencing, manages emotions effectively in counseling sessions.

**COMPREHENSION OF COUNSELOR-CLIENT PROCESS:** counselor demonstrates understanding of the interpersonal and intrapsychic dynamics at work in session between counselor and client.