PSY 5350 – INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOTHERAPY
SPRING 2018 Syllabus

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Class location: Bay Hall 128
Class Hours: Tuesday 4:20-6:50pm.

Course Description

The goal of this course is to give you the foundation necessary for eventually becoming a successful psychotherapist. During this course we will review numerous theoretical approaches to psychotherapy. You will understand the similarities and differences between these approaches at both the theoretical and technical level. We will also consider various stages in treatment and a range of important issues in conducting psychotherapy. There will be a reliance on information from research-supported psychotherapeutic approaches. Successful therapists must have a general understanding of the “rules” and process of therapy, an ability to conceptualize client problems in a way that suggests potential interventions, and knowledge of techniques that can facilitate improvement. What is needed is a broad repertoire that can be applied flexibly as called for in specific cases. Such a broad repertoire cannot be built by reading and discussion alone, as such it is expected that students who take this course will eventually receive many hours of direct face-to-face experience with client and appropriate supervision and training for many years to come.

While a broad and flexible therapeutic repertoire cannot be built entirely didactically, we will attempt to maximize what can be accomplished by having you 1) read many case studies, so that after reading about a particular approach you can get a feel for the kind of conceptualizations, interventions, and exchanges that might take place between the client and therapist, and 2) watch video tapes weekly (during class) of master therapists describing and doing psychotherapy, so you can see many hours of exchanges occurring between therapists and clients. In the end, this course will provide you with some answers to questions often asked by beginning therapists, a general knowledge of the therapy process, familiarity with and a sense of the importance of idiographic clinical case formulations, knowledge of therapeutic strategies that will be useful across a range of clientele, and a sense of the atmosphere and types of exchanges that occur (i.e., a better image of what it is like to be in the room) during therapy.

Objectives: Through participation in this course you will begin to acquire the following core competencies:

- Listening attentively and compassionately to problems and identifying strengths and signs of resilience (so as to build a strong therapeutic bond)
- Gathering information effectively using a range of interviewing/information gathering strategies appropriate to the practice context (psychology clinic vs. primary care)
- Develop foundational competency in basic psychotherapy skills
Suicidality assessment and intervention strategies
Developing a collaborative case conceptualization (providing a shared, agreed upon understanding of presenting problems and how the rationale for treatment follows)
Conducting functional analysis of target problems in a manner appropriate to the practice context (psychology clinic vs. primary care)

**Evaluation**

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of a hypothetical case</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Therapy Session 1</td>
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<td>Therapy Session 2</td>
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<td>Therapy Session 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Case Conceptualization Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction/Observation/Question Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fluency Final Exam</td>
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Course grades will be based primarily on the total number of points earned by the end of the semester. To receive an "A" for the course, you will need 90% of the possible points. A "B" requires 80%, a "C" requires 70%, and a "D" requires 60% of the total points.

**Attendance and Participation**
Class attendance is required. Because so much of the learning in this course depends on discussion of the articles and case studies and watching and commenting on the video tape presentations of the master therapists, it is absolutely critical that you are in class and actively participating. Cell phone use will not be allowed during class time.

When you do psychotherapy you will inevitably find yourself, at times, guiding/asking/coaching/supporting your clients in the efforts to do things that are important to them and in their best interests, but are avoided because they are frightening, unsettling, or novel. If class participation produces some anxiety in you, realize that you are in the same position that your future clients will often be in: Your training is important to you, yet actively participating in it can at times be anxiety provoking. Here is your chance to practice the same kind of responding that you will someday seek from your clients.

- **100%**: 0 missed classes and active participation
- **90%**: 1 missed class and active participation
- **80%**: 2 missed classes and active participation
  - 0 missed classes and passive participation
- **70%**: 1 missed class and passive participation
- **60%**: 3 or more missed classes or consistent silence

**Development of a hypothetical case**
Each student will develop a hypothetical case that will be turned in on 1/23/18. A handout will be provided giving the student a description of what information he/she should
include in developing the background for the case. The case is hypothetical and the
student can draw information from whatever sources he/she would like (personal
experiences, books that he/she has read, friends, imagination, etc) and combine them in
any way that they would like to present a clinical picture and history for this hypothetical
client. This is an invented case and while it should be clinically realistic, no personal
disclosure is expected or necessary. Developing the case will help the student get a sense
of the relevant information to be gathered about a client in the early sessions and will
give the student knowledge of an invented case that they will then be prepared to role
play during class demonstrations/activities. Development of the hypothetical clinical case
is worth 10% of your grade.

Mock Therapy Sessions:

As another primary goal of this course is for you to begin to learn to conduct therapy,
each class member will meet with me once in the middle of the semester (Therapy
Session 2) and once near the end of the semester (Therapy Session 3) to role-play a
therapy session. You will be the therapist and I will play the client. To help prepare you,
the first mock therapy session (Therapy Session 1) will be between you and a peer in the
course using the hypothetical cases you developed. You and the peer will meet and take
turns role-playing the role of therapist and client. The context will be a client arriving to
an outpatient clinic for a first session of psychotherapy. The peer who is playing the role
of client will use the hypothetical case they developed earlier in the semester as the basis
for the enactment of the client role. The mock session should last about 45 minutes.
Afterward a guided discussion of the session will occur between the two participants
where each will share the perspective with the other. More information about the post-
session discussion will be provided as we approach the date of the exercise. Two separate
role plays will occur such that both members of the dyad engage in both the client role
and the therapist role. Therapy session 1 should be completed between 2/6/18 and
2/28/18 Therapy session 2 will also involve a client just beginning psychotherapy and
require you to implement skills learned in the first half of the class. You should schedule
a one hour meeting with the instructor during the time period between 3/1/18 and 3/31/18
to complete the mock session. The second therapy session with me will be tailored so that
you’re implementing skills learned in the second half of the course. You should schedule
a one hour meeting with the instructor during the weeks of 4/1/18 to 4/30/18 to complete
the third mock session.

Each mock session is worth 10% of your grade and requires 3 activities: 1) the clinical
interaction, 2) completion of a Progress Note (details provided in class), and 3)
completion of a 2-4 page Reaction Paper where you describe your experience of the
session, and what you learned about yourself as a beginning therapist, and about the
process (was it like you expected? What was going on internally? Describe the balance
between being “In your head” versus being “in the room”, What were the high-points &
low-points, what surprised you, what did you expect?, etc).

Reaction/Observation/Question papers
You are expected to complete all readings prior to coming to class. You will submit a brief (about 1 page single-spaced) paper by 5am Tuesday in which you provide (a) an integrative summary of the main ideas from the readings, (b) observations and reactions to the content of the reading, and (c) any substantive discussion points that emerge from the reading. Reaction papers are in total worth 20% of your grade.

Fluency Final Exam

Throughout the semester there will be certain material (e.g., acute suicide assessment questions) that during class I will suggest you memorize so that when it is necessary to access the information in session you will be more likely to recall it. To help facilitate long standing memorization you will take a fluency final exam. You will be aware ahead of time what materials will be on this exam and your task will be to reproduce this information. The fluency final is worth 20% of your grade.

Case Conceptualization Report

Developing a beginning-level competency in case conceptualization is an important objective in this course. During the course of the semester many of the readings will emphasize case conceptualizations from various perspectives studied, offering clinical case examples describing how client problems were conceptualized. This assignment will require you to use your knowledge of case conceptualization to provide a formulation of a case based on a clinical vignette that I provide to the class. Working alone, each student will provide a written conceptualization of the case. Your case conceptualization will be due the day of your third nock therapy session. Additional details on the structure of the paper will be provided in class. The case conceptualization report is worth 20% of your grade.

Course Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Reading/Videos</th>
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| 1/16 | Introduction to the course and to psychotherapy  
- APA (2015). Preparing Professional Psychologists to Serve a Diverse Public: A Core Requirement in Doctoral Education and Training  
- Video: Carl Rogers |
| 1/23 | Clinical Interviewing |
| 1/30 | Interview: Diversity and inclusion  
Willer Chapter 5: Psychotherapist-client difference and coping with prejudice  
Willer Chapter 4: Boundaries  
**Video: Cultural competence and mental illness** |
| 2/6 | Stages of change and motivational interviewing  
Willer Chapter 13  
**Video: Motivational Interviewing – also available on Kanopy** |
| 2/13 | Solution focused interviewing  
Willer Chapter 12:  
**Video: Solution Focused Therapy** |
| 2/20 | Functional Analysis:  
**Functional Analysis Video** |
| 2/27 | Suicide assessment  
Willer Chapter 18. Assessing suicide risk and warning signs  
Willer Chapter 19. Suicide prevention, risk reduction, and documentation  
Suicide assessment - John Sommer-Flanagan  
Complete the interactive Columbia suicide severity rating scale training module: [http://zerosuicide.sprc.org/sites/zerosuicide.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/files/cssrs_web/course.htm](http://zerosuicide.sprc.org/sites/zerosuicide.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org/files/cssrs_web/course.htm) |
| 3/6 | Willer Chapter 6  
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<tr>
<td>3/13</td>
<td>Spring break</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>Behavioral Activation</td>
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<td>3/21</td>
<td>ACT</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/28</td>
<td>Interpersonal Psychodynamic Therapy and Functional Analytic Psychotherapy</td>
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<tr>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>Dialectical behavior therapy</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/1</td>
<td>Termination and Integrated primary care interventions</td>
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<td>Final Exam Date</td>
<td>Fluency exam.</td>
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### Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in one or more of the following:

- Written reprimand;
- Requirement to re-do work in question;
- Requirement to submit additional work;
- Lowering of grade on work in question;
- Assigning grade of “F” to work in question;
- Assigning grade of “F” for course;
- Recommendation for more severe punishment.

### Dropping the course

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your
academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. [DATE from academic calendar] is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Classroom/professional behavior

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Grade Appeals

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Disabilities Accommodations

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room 116.
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto [http://cla.tamucc.edu/advising/](http://cla.tamucc.edu/advising/).