

Professional Issues: Ethics, Conduct, and Law
Argosy University – Course Syllabus
Spring 2010

Class: PC6300 Professional Issues: Ethics, Conduct, and Law
Program: M.A. - Counseling Psychology
Instructor: Heather Martarella, Psy.D.
Email: hmartarella@argosy.edu (preferred)
Telephone: 510-217-4745
Format: Weekly in class sessions
Class Meets: **Section A:** Mondays 2-5pm 1/11/10 – 4/23/10 (no class 1/18 or 2/15)
Section B: Tuesdays 2-5pm 1/12/10 – 4/23/10

Argosy Communication:

If you choose to use an email address other than the assigned Argosy email, please be advised that you do so at your own risk. Any difficulty receiving Argosy emails will be your responsibility.

Required Text:

Pope and Vasquez. *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling, 3rd Edition.*
Publisher: Jossey-Bass
ISBN: 0787994006

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition, Text Revision: DSM-IV-TR
Publisher: American Psychiatric Association, 2000
ISBN: 0890420246 (hardcover) or 0890420254 (softcover)

American Psychological Association. *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.*
(download for free from www.apa.org/ethics)

Course Description:

This course will facilitate a critical examination of common ethical issues that may arise in the practice of psychotherapy and assessment. The course will explore boundaries, personal and professional responsibilities in the course of acting ethically, and developing a process to assess situations from an ethical framework. Students will become familiar with the 2002 APA Ethics Code and its applications in various therapeutic settings. Attention will also be paid to specific ethical situations, such as suicidality, informed consent, multiple relationships, and cultural aspects of ethics. Legal issues pertaining to the professional practice of psychotherapy will also be addressed including, but not limited to: confidentiality, privilege, mandated reporting, etc. Handouts regarding relevant legal issues will be provided by the instructor.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students will:

- Ψ Be well versed with the issues covered by the ethics code
- Ψ Apply the ethics code to common situations that may occur within the therapy setting
- Ψ Appreciate the ethical implications of the therapeutic relationship, including special situations such as informed consent, suicide assessment, and ethics in research
- Ψ Develop an ethical decision-making process for approaching ethical problems
- Ψ Understand the implications of ethics with regard to other aspects of the client, such as culture, gender, age, and client type
- Ψ Be knowledgeable about the current legal issues in regard to the professional practice of psychology

Program Outcomes: Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology:**Program Outcome One: Professional Practice****Competency 1: Assessment and Skills**

Formulate assessments of psychological functioning and apply therapeutic intervention strategies when working with individuals, couples, families, and groups, toward the development of optimal mental health.

Competency 2: Theory

Interpret and apply psychological and developmental theories to therapeutic intervention strategies.

Competency 3: Writing

Employ media and technology when presenting counseling information orally and in writing, so that the presentation is concise, organized, well supported, professional, and appropriate to the audience.

Program Outcome Two: Research

Competency 1: Analyze research, and translate research findings for improvement of counseling services using statistics and program evaluation methods.

Program Outcome Three: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Professional Development

Competency 1: Students will develop positive relationship skills that promote personal and professional development via effective communication, encouragement, empathy, respect for others, self-awareness, and other-awareness.

- a. Apply active listening communication skills in interpersonal scenarios to establish empathetic relationships.
- b. Analyze the importance of effective nonverbal communication skills in interpersonal relationships.

c. Solicit and utilize feedback to build and maintain interpersonal relationships.

Program Outcome Four: Ethics

Competency 1: Using the American Counseling Association’s Standards of Practice /or the American Psychological Association’s Ethical Code, as well as, and local state law as it applies to the behavior of mental health professionals, identify ethical dilemmas and apply ethical decision making strategies while engaging in professional activities.

Program Outcome Five: Diversity

Competency 1: Multicultural Skills

Provide assessment, counseling, and consultation services in work with clients by applying psychological and multicultural theories and research to diverse populations, and modifying interventions as needed to work effectively with diverse clients.

Competency 2: Multicultural Awareness

Examine personal values and biases, reflect on beliefs, and understand how they impact work with clients and interpersonal relationships with other students and faculty.

Competency 3: Multicultural Knowledge

Identify and assess the complexity and multidimensionality of cultural/diversity theories and issues in the field of counseling psychology while working with clients and interpersonal relationships with other students and faculty.

Reading and Lecture Schedule:

Please read all relevant material, and be prepared to discuss it, prior to attending class. Legal issues will be presented via lecture, video, and handouts. This schedule is flexible and reading assignments may be reorganized due to holidays and possible guest speaker arrangements.

Week 1	Chapters 1 & 2
2	Chapters 3, 4 & 7
3	Chapter 5
4	Chapters 8 & 9
5	Chapters 6 & 10
6	Chapter 11
7	Chapter 12
8	Chapter 13
9	Chapter 14
10	Chapter 15
11	Chapter 16
12	Chapter 17
13	Chapter 18

Papers

Students will complete reflection papers (1-2 pages in length) as assigned. Students will also complete a 7-10 page research paper on an ethical or legal issue. Details will be provided in the first class session.

Class Participation & Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes. Unless special arrangements are made ahead of time with the instructor, the student's final grade will be negatively impacted by any absences. Students will earn points for attending and participating in a meaningful way during the thirteen class meetings. Students will begin with 20 points but will forfeit 5 points for each missed class or classes in which they do not actively participate in. School policy dictates minimal attendance required to earn credit for any class. Students missing 8 hours of instruction, for any reason, will need to withdraw from the class or will receive a grade of F.

Final Exam:

The exam may include multiple choice questions, brief essay questions, and vignettes.

Final Date to Drop the Class:

To receive a "W" grade a student must officially drop this class by the date listed below that corresponds to this course's term and length (indicated by bold type). Students may not withdraw from this course after this date. If a student chooses to discontinue course work after the final drop date, the student may receive an "F" grade for the course.

Spring Session I (7.5 week courses): February 14, 2010

Spring Session II (7.5 week courses): April 7, 2010

Spring Full Term (15 week courses): March 20, 2010

Spring Full Term (15 week courses): January 22, 2010

Grades will be based on the following: Participation & Attendance: 10% Quiz/Vignette: 20% Reflection Papers: 20% Research Paper: 20% Final Exam: 30%	Grading: 93-100 = A 90-92 = A- 87-89 = B+ 83-86 = B 80-82 = B- 77-79 = C+ 73-76 = C 70-72 = C- 69 and below = F
--	---

Criteria for Class Participation

Grade	
A = 90+	Student actively participated in discussions in >80% of class sessions; nearly all comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings
B = 80 – 89	Student actively participated in discussions in >80% of class sessions; most of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings
C = 70 – 79	Student participated in discussions in >70% of class sessions; comments/questions demonstrate a surface level understanding of course topics

F = <70	Student participated in <70% of class sessions; comments/questions did not demonstrate an understanding of course topics, or student did not participate in class discussions.
---------	---

Criteria for Class Presentation

Grade	
A = 90+	Presentation is well organized and provides excellent coverage of the topic area; informative visual aids provided to the instructor and classmates
B = 80 – 89	Presentation is well organized and provides adequate coverage of the topic area
C = 70 – 79	Coverage of material is marginal; presentation is slightly disorganized
F = <70	Presentation is disorganized and does not provide adequate coverage of the topic area, or presentation was not completed by student.

Criteria for Paper:

Grade	Requirements
A = 90+	Paper is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well thought out with proper grammar/writing skills AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in appropriate APA format AND <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides excellent coverage of material
B = 80 – 89	Paper is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well thought out with proper grammar/writing skills BUT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is missing one component of APA format OR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coverage of material is adequate
C = 70 – 79	Paper has <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor grammar/writing skills present OR (one or more of the following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APA format is inadequate • Insufficient number of references provided • limited coverage of material
F = <70	Paper is (one or more of the following) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disorganized • coverage is not adequate • does not conform to APA format • there is evidence of plagiarism • paper not submitted

University Policies:

Library

All resources in Argosy University's online collection are available through the Internet. The campus librarian will provide students with links, user IDs, and passwords.

Library Resources: Argosy University's core online collection features nearly 21,000 full-text journals and 23,000 electronic books and other content covering all academic subject areas including Business & Economics, Career & General Education, Computers, Engineering & Applied Science, Humanities, Science, Medicine & Allied Health, and Social & Behavior Sciences. Many titles are directly accessible through the Online Public Access Catalog at <http://library.argosy.edu>. Detailed descriptions of online resources are located at <http://library.argosy.edu/misc/onlinedblist.html>.

In addition to online resources, Argosy University's onsite collections contain a wealth of subject-specific research materials searchable in the Online Public Access Catalog. Catalog searching is easily limited to individual campus collections. Alternatively, students can search combined collections of all Argosy University Libraries. Students are encouraged to seek research and reference assistance from campus librarians.

Information Literacy: Argosy University's Information Literacy Tutorial was developed to teach students fundamental and transferable research skills. The tutorial consists of five modules where students learn to select sources appropriate for academic-level research, search periodical indexes and search engines, and evaluate and cite information. In the tutorial, students study concepts and practice them through interactions. At the conclusion of each module, they can test their comprehension and receive immediate feedback. Each module takes less than 20 minutes to complete. Please view the tutorial at <http://library.argosy.edu/infolit/>

Academic Policies

Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism: In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition (2009)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Scholarly writing: The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing, free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You may be asked to submit your course assignments through "Turnitin," (www.turnitin.com), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

It is the policy of Argosy University to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If a student with disabilities needs accommodations, the student must notify the Director of Student Services. Procedures for documenting student disability and the development of reasonable accommodations will be provided to the student upon request.

Students will be notified by the Director of Student Services when each request for accommodation is approved or denied in writing via a designated form. To receive accommodation in class, it is the student's responsibility to present the form (at his or her discretion) to the instructor. In an effort to protect student privacy, the Department of Student Services will not discuss the accommodation needs of any student with instructors. Faculty may not make accommodations for individuals who have not been approved in this manner.

The Argosy University Statement Regarding Diversity

Argosy University prepares students to serve populations with diverse social, ethnic, economic, and educational experiences. Both the academic and training curricula are designed to provide an environment in which students can develop the skills and attitudes essential to working with people from a wide range of backgrounds.