



Syllabus  
Counseling Children – COUN 661  
Summer 2008

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to provide counseling students with specialized knowledge and skills in working with young children (ages 3-12). Students will learn to identify and treat various forms of abnormal child behavior using play therapy and other child therapy techniques. Students will also learn current theories related to the identification and treatment of disorders of childhood. Students will be presented with information regarding parenting skills training. Students will interact with and observe children, applying techniques and theories learned in class. **(Prerequisites: COUN 561 & 562).**

**RATIONALE:**

The demand for counseling services for children in a variety of settings requires that students have knowledge of theory and treatment issues related to counseling children and their parents so that effective therapeutic interventions can be planned to address these concerns.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Students will:

1. Develop a personal philosophy and working strategy which is grounded on an understanding of legal and ethical considerations of working with children. (EG 1)
2. Acquire the ability to conceptualize a case from different theoretical orientations and develop appropriate treatment plans. (EG3)

3. Acquire a deeper understanding of appropriate approaches for treating children with special needs (academic/developmental/physical/social-emotional), and children with special concerns (dealing with homelessness, alcoholism, death, depression, abuse, prejudice, etc). (EG 1,7,9,4,)
4. Reflect on the effects of various parenting techniques on childhood development and behavior. (EG 3,10)
5. Response in a flexible and accommodating manner to the needs of each child. (EG 2,10)
6. Develop the working knowledge and skill level to devise intervention strategies for a variety of childhood and family concerns. (EG 3)
7. Communicate effectively and appropriately with all parties involved in assisting children learn, grow and thrive. (children, parents, teachers, administrators, community workers, etc.) (EG 7, 8)
8. Create positive environments which encourage, promote, and accept the value of individual differences. (EG 2,5, 8)
9. Create counseling tools which will enhance communication between people understanding of concerns, and increase coping skills. (EG 4)
10. Demonstrate a growing knowledge and understanding of the demands, advantages and challenges of being part of a multicultural community. (EG 1, 4, 9)

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Thompson, C.L. & Rudolf, L.B. (2000). *Counseling children*. Belmont, California. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, a division of Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Hobday, A. & Olier, K. (2005). *Creative therapy with children & adolescents*. Atascadero, California. Impact Publishers, Inc.

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS:** Books for referencing. You can find them in most libraries.

Axline, V.M. (1947). *Play therapy*. New York, Ballantine Books.

Gibbs, J.T., Huang, L.N. and associates. *Children of color*. (1998). San Francisco. Jossey Bass Publishers.

Kearney, Christopher, *Casebook in Child Behavior Disorders*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition @ 2006.

Sklare, Gerald B. "*Brief Counseling That Works: A Solution-Focused Approach for School Counselors and Administrators*.(2005) Thousand Oaks, California. Corwin Press.

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Due to the intensive format of this course 100% attendance is required. Missing a class could result in the lowering of the final grade by a letter grade. If you have an emergency, please notify the instructor immediately. (Call the work office and leave a message with the secretary.)

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **1. Creative Play Therapy Activity:**

Each student will demonstrate a mini version of an activity taken from the *Creative Therapy with Children and Adolescents* book designed to be used with a small group or class. Other class members will participate as the students and will respond in age appropriate ways. The “leader” will provide the necessary materials needed to complete the activity. Participants will give feedback to the leader from two perspectives – a participant in the activity and as a peer. (10 pts.)

### **2. Child interactive session and class presentation:**

Each student will schedule and conduct a **30 to 35** minute initial counseling session with an unrelated volunteer child between the ages of 5 and 10 years. The video-taped session will demonstrate techniques/activities learned from the class or the readings. The attached permission form must be signed and returned with your paper. It is best if the taping session is done in a neutral location. The use of the department’s CTC can be scheduled through Christine Streb, our administrative assistant.

Each student will write a **three to five** page formal paper describing the child, the goal(s) of the session, the theory applied, the child’s reaction during the session, a critique of the session, and an explanation of what the following session would cover.

Each student will give a brief (10) minute presentation based on the session and corresponding paper. The presentation will include a description of the child, the activity, a short portion of video tape and a response to the experience. (60 pts.)

### **3. Bibliotherapy Project:**

Each student will choose a children’s book which relates to a theme of one of the classes and/or a childhood concern or situation. During class, each student will present their selection to the class. This demonstration and paper will include: reading a brief portion of the book, and demonstrating and/or explaining how and when this book could be used for bibliotherapy. (20 pts.)

### **4. Creating a Counseling/Guidance Game:**

Each student will utilize an existing board game to create an alternative version which could be utilized in counseling sessions with a child. Components will include: a rationale, skills to be learned, rules, directions, time requirement, number of players and the target age group. Members of the class will play a mini version of the game during the last two sessions of the class. (30 pts.)

### **5. Response Cards:**

Each student will respond to a prompt based on assigned readings and/or class activities for sessions 1 to 7. These will be handed in at the beginning of the next class. (5 pts. each).

**6. Pop Quizzes:**

Each student is expected to have read the session’s assigned chapters prior to each class, so class discussion can be truly interactive. Pop quizzes may be given at the discretion of the professor. (points to be determined)

**7. Participation Points**

This class is taught in an interactive manner. Active participation is expected from each student. Points will be given based on attendance, level of participation and attitude. (40 pts – 2 for attendance per class and 3 for participation per class...absences will result in the loss of attendance and participation points for that session)

**8. Final exam**

Each student will take the final exam. The exam will be comprehensive. Format to be determined. (50 pts.)

A component of “professional judgment” will be included in each assignment. Professional judgment means that students use the level of judgment that is expected, for each assignment in accordance with accepted standards of ethical practice in the counseling profession. While there are no direct points assigned to professional judgment, assignment grades may be greatly influenced by poor professional judgment.

**DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS**

Creative Play Therapy Activity	10
Child Interactive Session and Presentation	60
Bibliotherapy Project	20
Creating a Counseling/Guidance Game	30
Response Cards	35
Participation Points	40
Final Exam	50

- NOTE: Points for pop quizzes will be added.

**GRADING SCALE:**

A.....	235-245
A-.....	227-234
B+.....	218-226
B.....	208-217
B-.....	200-207
C+.....	193-199
C.....	183-192
C-.....	171-182

## **CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**Note: assigned readings should be done prior to class.**

**Additional readings are on a disc which will be passed out during the first session.**

- May 12                      Orientation to Class  
Lecture: Introduction to Counseling Children  
Text: Chapters 1,2,& 14 – *Counseling Children*  
Text: Introduction pp 1-15 *Creative Therapy*  
Bibliotherapy  
Response Cards  
**Sign up for Class activities**
- May 19                      Lecture: Theories and Techniques  
Reality, Brief Counseling and Play Therapy  
Text: Chapters 4, 5  
Additional readings: *Loneliness in Young Children*  
Chapter I – *Counseling in the Schools: Problems and Solutions*  
**Creative Play Therapy Activities**  
Response Cards
- June 2                      Lecture: Theories and Techniques  
Person-centered, Gestalt, Adlerian and Play Therapy  
Text: Chapters 6 & 7  
Additional reading: Pamphlet: *The Law of Active Listening*  
**Creative Play Therapy Activities**  
Response Cards
- June 9                      Lecture: Theories and Techniques  
Rational-Emotive, Behavioral Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral  
Therapy  
Text: Chapters 8, 9  
Additional reading: Proposing an Answer: *A Community Problem Meets  
a Community Approach*  
**Bibliotherapy Projects due**  
Response cards
- June 16                      Lecture: Theories and Techniques  
Individual psychology and play therapy  
Working with multi-cultural populations  
Text: Chapters 11 & 14  
**Student videotape presentations- begin**  
Additional Readings: *Play Therapy Practices Among Elementary  
School Counselors*, Appendix E: *Multicultural Counseling Standards*  
Bibliotherapy Project  
Response cards

