

COUN 504 PRE-PRACTICUM: COUNSELING TECHNIQUES

School of Leadership and Education Sciences, Counseling Program
University of San Diego

Fall 2010

Kenneth P. Gonzalez, Ph.D.

Phone (619) 260-7546 Cell (619) 370-9636

Email kennethg@sandiego.edu

Office: MRH 215B

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 am – 3:45 pm and by appointment

Course Description and Methods of Instruction. In COUN 504, students practice essential interviewing and counseling skills. The course helps students acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with the following Counseling Program Learning Outcomes*:

- Individual Counseling Skills
- Assessment
- Diversity
- Professional Identity

The course also addresses many of the required areas for Helping Relationships addressed in the 2009 Standards for Counseling Programs presented by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The course helps candidates acquire knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with the practice of individual counseling in a variety of settings. Students practice interviewing and counseling skills in class through dyads, triads, and small group interactions. They give and receive feedback on this practice. Students also receive feedback on their skill development from the instructor. The course integrates ethical-legal, cultural and gender issues throughout the semester. Most of the class time is spent reviewing counseling constructs and practicing the basic counseling techniques identified in the Egan text (2009). The instructor uses role-plays, small groups, session transcripts, videotape critiques, case discussions, and lectures throughout the course.

**Note:* Please visit the Counseling Program website for a detailed description of the Program's 10 Learning Outcomes. The outcomes are also described in your Student Handbook.

Course Goals. The course has two broad goals:

- 1.) Provide students with a practical introduction to essential interviewing and counseling skills with the desired outcomes of cognitive clarity, behavioral clarity, and initial competence. (CACREP Section II.K.5.b – primary course for addressing this standard)
- 2.) Introduce students to reflectivity as a crucial element both in critical thinking and in the life-long learning associated with counselor professional and self-development.

Course Objectives. Course objectives in a counselor training program seek to answer two questions: (a) what should the counselor candidate be able to do? (b) Under what conditions should the performance occur? For COUN 504, seven objectives are included:

Outcome I: Academic Excellence & Critical Inquiry and Reflection

Demonstrate knowledge of how to represent content accurately and competently by affectively applying strategies and techniques in their field of study. Engage in reflective activities, critically analyze their practice and apply higher order thinking skills to a wide array of investigative pursuits.

Through written assignments, in-class experiential learning activities, taping, and discussion, candidates will:

- Engage in and demonstrate initial understanding of basic skills of the interview, including listening, influencing, and structuring an effective session with individual and cultural sensitivity.
- Demonstrate an initial understanding of assessing dysfunctional elements of human experience such as mind-sets, internal behaviors, ways of acting, discrepancies between thinking/saying and acting, and the impact of others' behavior and attitudes.

Outcome II: Community and Service

Demonstrate the ability to create and support collaborative learning communities in their professional fields of practice. Bridge theory and practice by experiencing various dimensions of the community through active service engagements.

Through written assignments, in-class experiential learning activities, taping, and discussion, candidates will:

- Demonstrate initial understanding of counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes including age, gender, and ethnic differences, verbal and nonverbal behaviors and personal characteristics, orientations, and skills. (CACREP, Sec. IIK.5.a)

In group debriefings and self and peer assessments, candidates will:

- Address counselor hypotheses concerning possible multicultural and pluralistic trends affecting problem-management and opportunity-development scenarios presented by counselees in sample cases and/or live sharing. (CACREP, Sec. IIK.2.b)

Outcome III: Ethics, Values and Diversity

Understand and adhere to the values and ethical codes of the university, of schools they work in, and of their professional organizations. Create inclusive, unified, caring and democratic learning communities that value all individuals regardless of background or ability, and equitably support their learning and development.

In group debriefings and self and peer assessments, candidates will:

- Address counselor hypotheses concerning possible problem-management and opportunity-development strategies for working with counselees that demonstrate a beginning understanding of the counselors' roles in social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, cultural self-awareness, the nature of biases, prejudices, processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination, and other culturally supported behaviors that are detrimental to the growth of the human spirit, mind, or body. (CACREP, Sec. IIK.2.d)

In an in-depth reflective essay, candidates will:

- Address their developing understanding of the counselors' roles in social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, cultural self-awareness, the nature of biases, prejudices, processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination, and other culturally supported behaviors that are detrimental to the growth of the human spirit, mind, or body.
- Demonstrate their developing self-awareness regarding values in the helping relationship, the nature of the counselor-counselee contract, and shadow elements in the helping relationship and helping in general. (CACREP, Sec. IIK.2.f)

Students are responsible for seeking clarification of any aspects of the course goals and objectives that they are not clear about. The instructor will address your questions as fully as possible. Students also are encouraged to ask questions regarding any aspect of the course.

Note on Adjunct Experience in Individual and/or Group Counseling or Psychotherapy. The USD Counseling Program requires candidates for the master's degree in counseling to have experience as recipients of counseling or therapy. We believe that those intending to become counselors and therapists have an ethical and professional responsibility to experience counseling or therapy before they practice it with others. The USD Program requires that students complete 25 hours of personal counseling prior to enrolling in the Counseling Practicum (COUN 588). The experience of being helped with one's intrapersonal and/or interpersonal conflicts and struggles by a caring, skilled and knowledgeable professional counselor or psychotherapist can be a growth-promoting and life-enhancing experience.

Course Requirements. What follows are descriptions of the core requirements of the course. For some of the items, additional handouts will provide students with fuller descriptions and assignment prompts, including grading criteria for these assignments.

1. Participation

Quality of participation is evaluated based on the instructor's assessment of the student's active involvement in class exercises and discussions. A professional counseling disposition must be consistently evidenced in relationship to all course activities, exercises, and assignments – including class attendance and reading assignments.

2. Manual Exercises

Students are expected to complete specific exercises from the Egan manual.

3. Recorded practice sessions

Students will complete three video-tape/DVDR interviewee and counselor role-plays during the semester. The role-plays must clearly demonstrate the skills associated with the assigned readings for that particular segment of the course. The sessions must be recorded and critiqued by one other counseling 504 student and yourself. Students will be paired up with a partner in the class to conduct mock counseling sessions. **Under no conditions should students assume that actual counseling, therapy or therapeutic interventions are being administered.** The recorded sessions are for counseling skills learning purposes only. Some recordings will be reviewed in class by the instructor and fellow students. Others will be reviewed in individual feedback meetings with the instructor. All reviews are conducted for the purpose of furthering skill development and providing constructive feedback to improve student practice. When specified, **tapes/DVDRs are to be submitted at the beginning of announced due dates.** Recordings vary in length, with the length of each assigned taping announced in class by the instructor.

The goals of the taping are to:

- 1) Demonstrate competence in the use of the basic counseling skills
- 2) Evaluate performance in using these skills
- 3) Obtain feedback from the instructors and peers for improvement of skills

Test the taping equipment and review a sample of recording before turning in a completed tape or DVDR. You may want to practice making tapes of five minutes' length to familiarize yourself with the taping process, if you are not already knowledgeable about this process. Yes, you may use one tape or DVDR to sequentially record for all of your sessions. The DVDRs must be clearly marked for the specific session and cued to the relevant session or parts.

General issues as to what is required for the tapes:

Number of recorded sessions required: **three.**

For the recording, critique forms will be provided in class. Critique forms must be completed and signed by the interviewer (you) and one classmate with the submission of your recording.

It is expected that you will spend time inside and outside of class practicing interviewing skills and taping your practice sessions. It is probably wise to actually practice (many times in advance of taping) using the specific interview techniques before completing the recorded session you intend to submit.

Since you are graded on the recorded sessions, you need to make sure your name is on the tape or DVDR submitted and that the recording is of good quality. Grading will be based on evidence of mastery of the specific interviewing techniques covered for that particular tape. Course handouts will provide specific criteria for evaluation. No late tapes/DVDRs will be accepted.

4. Session Transcription

Students submit a transcribed version of a portion of one of the recorded counseling sessions completed for the course. To complete this assignment, students select approximately 10 minutes of one of their interview tapes/DVDRs and transcribe it into a word document format. You can choose the portion you feel is the best example of your developing skills or represents an area with which you are struggling with and would like feedback. The typescript will include verbatim dialogue.

Pick out enough dialogue on the tape that contains at least eight (8) of your responses to the interviewee. If necessary, go beyond 10 minutes to include at least 8 of your responses.

The Session Transcription assignment is due in hard copy on the date indicated in the course schedule. Detailed instructions for this assignment will be handed out in class.

5. Self & Peer Assessments

The course requires completion of self and peer assessments. These assessments are used as a form of feedback. In counselor training, feedback has three purposes: to identify discrepancies in what a candidate thought she or he was doing in an interaction and how others experienced her or his efforts, to offer support and reinforcement in skill development, and to modify interview-related behavior that is not in keeping with best practices in the field. In COUN 504 we utilize self and peer assessment forms to provide feedback. In general, we will observe the following guidelines for giving feedback:

1. Describe observations – don't evaluate.
2. Be specific -- not general.
3. Consider feedback appropriateness - Whose needs are being met?
4. Consider the usability of the feedback - Can the helper behavior be changed?
5. Consider the accuracy of the feedback. Allow for the possibility that your feedback may be off-target. Explore if this may be the case and why.

6. Final Reflection Paper

The course requires submission of a final reflection paper in which the student examines her or his experiences in the class regarding the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions associated with the practice of basic counseling interviews. Further information about this assignment will be distributed in class.

Basically, this requirement involves writing a 6-8 page paper. The paper is to be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font. When references are included, APA format in citations and in the reference list are to be followed with minimum errors (one or two). The paper should be written in a first-person voice in response to written probes distributed by the instructor. In general, the essay will address issues related to counselor self-awareness in helping relationships and counselor understanding of social and cultural diversity and human growth and development in the context of conducting counseling interviews. In this type of writing students reflect on: **1)** experiences (in the case of COUN 504 that would include in-class learning experiences, out-of-class experiences with communication and communication skills, and life experiences in general); **2)** reflections on experiences (in order to better understand such things as your emotional reactions to, and thoughts about, activities, interactions, life experience, etc.); and, **3)** notes about ideas, questions, or discoveries that you would like to consider further (Baird, 1996).

In its final form, the paper is to consist of three clearly marked sections: 1) an introduction that addresses the content and structure of the paper; 2) a body of the paper that contains well-organized written responses to probes provided by the instructor; and, 3) A summary and conclusion that summarizes the author's work in the paper and draws conclusions related to how the learning in this course will be carried forward into future courses and into practice as a counselor.

The grading criteria for the assignment include: (1) Evidence that the student has engaged in reflection on the assigned elements; (2) Evidence of Graduate level writing skills including an effective introduction and conclusion, evidence that main points are clearly identified and adequately developed; (3) A consistent and genuine first-person voice appropriate for a graduate course in counseling.

7. Additional Assignments

Other assignments may be given during the class to meet training needs. The instructions will be provided at that time. For example, students will role-play a series of counseling scenarios in which they will demonstrate the integration of basic counseling skills.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Procedures. The course involves a variety of assignments. Students are urged to carefully review the assignments and grading policies in preparation for a detailed discussion during the second meeting of the class.

Grading

Grades are based on performance in relationship to the above course requirements.

In general, the grading policy for the course follows some simple distinctions. A grade of A is reserved for coursework of exceptional quality that exceeds the high standards expected of masters students. A grade of B is reserved for coursework that reflects the high standards of graduate coursework in counseling. A grade of C, or lower, is reserved for coursework that is not of sufficient quality for master's level.

Grading

Class Participation	25%
Exercises	10%

Recorded Practice Sessions	25%
Session Transcription Exercise	10%
Self and Peer Assessments	10%
Reflection Paper	20%

Attendance: Participation in the class meetings is mandatory. If you anticipate any events interfering with this requirement, inform the instructor as soon as possible. Missing more than one class session may affect your final grade.

Grade of Incomplete:

The grade of Incomplete (“I”) may be recorded to indicate (1) that the requirements of a course have been substantially completed but, for a legitimate reason, a small fraction of the work remains to be completed, and, (2) that the record of the student in the course justifies the expectation that he or she will complete the work and obtain the passing grade by the deadline. It is the student’s responsibility to explain to the instructor the reasons for non-completion of work and to request an incomplete grade prior to the posting of final grades. Students who receive a grade of incomplete must submit all missing work no later than the end of the tenth week of the next regular semester; otherwise the “I” grade will become a permanent “F.”

Requests for Accommodation:

Reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act will be made for course participants with disabilities who require specific instructional and testing modifications. Students with such requirements must identify themselves to the University of San Diego Disability Services Office (619.260.4655) before the beginning of the course. Every effort will be made to accommodate students’ needs, however, performance standards for the course will not be modified

Academic Dishonesty Policy: Academic dishonesty is a basis for disciplinary action. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, activities such as cheating, using or purchasing “ghost-written” papers, and plagiarism (presenting as one’s own the intellectual or creative accomplishments of another without giving credit to the source[s]). The faculty member, in whose course or under whose tutelage an act of academic dishonesty occurs, has the option of failing the students for the academic hours in question and may refer the case to other academic personnel for further action. Penalties for academic dishonesty may include expulsion from the university.

Text: Egan G. (2009). *The skilled helper: A problem-management and opportunity-development approach to helping*. Belmont, CA: Cengage.

Handout: Goleman (1995). *Emotional Intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam

Course Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	Assignment	Assignment Due
-------------	-----------------	-------------------	-----------------------

September 1	Introductions and Class Overview		
September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to Helping & the Helping Relationship • Emotional Intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 1 & 2 • Goleman (1995) Emotional Intelligence – Page 33 - 77 • Manual Exercises 	
September 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the Egan Model • Emotional Intelligence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 3 • Goleman (1995) Emotional Intelligence – Page 78 – 126. • Manual Exercises 	
September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Exercise 	Conduct Recorded Practice Session	
September 29*	The Current Picture And Recorded Practice Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recorded Practice Session (1) Assessment
October 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuning In and Actively Listening • Review recorded Practice Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 5 • Manual Exercises 	
October 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathic Responding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 6 Exercises 	
October 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probing and Summarizing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 7 • Manual Exercises 	
October 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitating client self-challenge • Conduct 2nd Recorded Practice Session • Overview of Transcript Analysis Assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 8 Exercises 	
November 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search for Value – Review recorded Practice Sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 9 Exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recorded Practice Session (2) Assessment
November 10*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions, goals, outcomes, and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 10 • Manual Exercises 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Session Transcript Analysis
November 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Preferred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) 	

	Picture	Chapter 11 Exercises	
December 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Way Forward & Action Arrow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egan (2009) Chapter 12 & 13 • Recorded Practice Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recorded Practice Session (3) Assessment
December 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Reflections • Review recorded Practice Session 		
December 15			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reflection Paper