

## **Ethical, Legal and Social Issues in Counseling Practice**

### Course Syllabus

**Professor:** George T. Davis, Ph.D. J.D.  
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**Class time:** Tues 4:10-7PM  
**Office hours:** Tues 7PM-8PM

**Professor:** Jill Baker, Ph.D.  
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**I. Purpose of the Course:** This course is designed to provide the prospective counselor with the knowledge of the professions' ethical and legal standards, as well as the social/community aspect of the profession. The course will explore the evolution of those standards, methods of change and applications to various professional activities.

#### **II. Objectives of the course:**

- Enhancing understanding of the legal and professional context within which ethical decision-making occurs.
- Learning how mental health practice is "regulated" through the passage and enforcement of licensing statutes by state legislatures and the development of voluntary ethical codes and credentialing and accreditation procedures by professional organizations.
- Increasing awareness of your own "ordinary moral sense" (i.e., personal values, attitudes, beliefs, and biases that effect your ethical decision making).
- Stimulating understanding of widely accepted ethical concepts, principles, and theories as they apply to the counseling practitioner.
- Developing an ethical decision-making model that you will use systematically and consistently in analyzing and responding to ethical issues.
- Becoming familiar with the current Ethics Codes of the American Counseling Association, The Association of State and Provincial Licensing Boards, and the Laws governing the state of Tennessee.
- To apply professional ethical standards in practical situations.
- To explain the relationship between professional preparation standards and current professional roles and functions.

#### **Required Text:**

Pope, K.S. & Vasquez, M.J. (2001). *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

#### **III. Method of Instruction:**

- Traditional experiences - class will be structured in a seminar/discussion format.
- Clinical experiences – group presentation: student is responsible for the presentation of one topic during the course of the semester in the form of a research paper and presentation of that paper to the class. That responsibility includes, but is not limited to finding journal articles, or legal rulings about the topic, or finding examples of ethical dilemmas posed by various aspects of the topic.

- Computer in Class: Prohibited to use computers in class

**IV. Evaluation and Grade Assignment:**

- The student will submit a disclosure statement. (10 points)
- Mid term exam (15 points)
- The student will participate in a group presentation on a portion of the ACA code. (15 points)
- Classroom participation including role-playing participation. (10 points)
- Final exam (50 points)

**Disclosure statement:** Each student will be required to prepare a disclosure statement similar to one you would give a client in a clinical setting. Examples will be provided. This is an opportunity for you to apply ethical thinking to your clinical practice.

The **mid-term** will be a clinical scenario and will test your knowledge and understanding of the ethical issues presented.

**Group presentation:** Presentation of a section of the ACA code. Presentations should take about thirty to forty minutes and include some method of evaluating the content learned. Presentation of relevant research, case law or new clinical thinking is expected. The groups comprise the following:

1. Client Welfare ACA Sec A1-4, A11 (Mitchell, Ramey, 3<sup>rd</sup> from group 5)
2. Boundaries ACA Sec A5-8 (Frantz, Raymond, Rickman)
3. Confidentiality ACA Sec B (Boyd, Jain, Sherbak)
4. Competence ACA Sec C (Partigton, Nordeen, Orbke)
5. Supervision ACA Sec F (3 of the following 4: Wilhelm, Mintz, Copeland, Stonebarger)
6. Resolving Ethical Issues ACA Sec H (Lee, Cole, Bost)

The **final exam** will be a short answer essay exam covering textbook, content papers and class lecture material.

**VI. Policy on Instructional Modification:**

Students who have a disability or condition, which may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the course instructor to identify, discuss and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. The student should notify the instructor no later than the end of the second week of the semester/term in which the course is offered or no later than the end of the second week latter such a disability or condition is diagnosed, whichever occurs earliest.

**VII. Grading Scale**

|             |            |            |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| A+ = 97-100 | B+ = 87-89 | C+ = 77-79 |
| A = 93-96   | B = 83-86  | C = 73-76  |
| A- = 90-92  | B- = 80-82 | C- = 70-72 |

### ***VII. Tentative Weekly Schedule***

Each week the class schedule will follow the following format:

- 4-5:30PM Review of the textbook with open discussion, role playing (Jill Baker)
- 5:45-7PM Review of additional content papers and readings that will be provided with class discussion (George Davis)

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Pope/Vasquez</b>          | <b>Content Papers**</b>                                   | <b>Assignments</b>            | <b>Readings*</b> |
|-------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------|
| 1/19/10     | Introduction                 |   |                               | Chap. 1          |
| 1/26/10     | Ethics and Critical Thinking | Recovered Memories  |                               | Chap. 2 & 9      |
| 2/2/10      | Therapist Self-Awareness     | Custody Evaluation  |                               | Chap. 3, 4, 5    |
| 2/9/10      | Record keeping, Diagnosis    | HIPPA; Kirchner v Mitsui                                  |                               | Chap. 12, TBD    |
| 2/16/10     | Informed Consent             | Disclosure papers, Tarasoff I, II (p. 1-11)               |                               | Chap. 11         |
| 2/23/10     | Codes and Complaints         | Statistics/freq of violations Tarasoff III, IV (p. 11-29) | <b>Disclosure paper due**</b> | Chap. 7, 8       |
| 3/2/10      | Confidentiality              | Jaffee  | Midterm*                      | Chap. 16         |
| 3/9/10      | <b>Spring Break</b>          |   |                               |                  |
| 3/16/10     | Crisis                       | MOVIE   | MOVIE                         |                  |
| 3/23/10     | Crisis                       | Suicide; Risk Factors                                     | Group 1*                      | Chap. 17         |
| 3/30/10     | Duty to Warn                 | Turner v Jordan<br>TCA Duty to Warn                       | Group 2*                      |                  |
| 4/6/10      | Child/Minor                  | Child Sexual Abuse  | Group 3**                     |                  |
| 4/13/10     | Boundaries                   | McMillian   | Group 4**                     | Chap. 13, 14     |
| 4/20/10     | Boundaries                   | TBD   | Group 5**                     | Chap. 10         |
| 4/27/10     | Integration                  | Final review**  | Group 6*                      |                  |
| 5/4/10      | Evaluation                   |   | <b>Final Exam</b>             |                  |

\* 4:10-5:30PM      \*\* 5:30-7PM