CCP 515 Professional Ethics in Counseling and Psychotherapy  
Master's Program Fall 2014-15  
Institute for Clinical Social Work

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Course Description
This course examines contemporary legal and ethical issues in the practice of counseling and psychotherapy. The course includes a review of the professional standards and federal and state laws applicable to licensed counselors. With special emphasis on the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association, the course will develop a systematic framework ethical decision-making. In the process students will explore the ways their values, cultural background, and personal experience shape the therapeutic process, and hence the importance of self-knowledge to the ethical and competent conduct of psychotherapy. Key topics addressed in the course include: multiculturalism, client rights, confidentiality, dual-relationships, and informed consent.

Educational Objectives
1. To develop the ability to identify and assess ethical challenges in the practice of psychodynamic psychotherapy.  
2. To learn to respond to challenges using an ethical decision-making model.  
3. To distinguish among basic theories of ethics in clinical practice and their application (deontology, virtue ethics, consequentialism, justice as caring).  
4. To understand how personal values, beliefs, and experiences shape assessment of and response to ethical challenges.  
5. To examine the fit of individual practices of psychodynamic psychotherapy within the larger health care systems of which they form a part.  
6. To explore ideals of social and economic justice and their relevance for counseling practice.

Teaching Methodology
The course objectives will be achieved through a combination of lectures, class discussions, readings, individual and group experiential exercises, in-class presentations, weekly writing assignments, and a final paper

Institute for Clinical Social Work Classroom and Grading Policies

Respect for Diversity
Guided by the NASW and ACA Codes of Ethics and the mission of ICSW, students and faculty have a shared responsibility for championing social and economic justice for all members of society. This includes a commitment to eliminate personal and institutional
discrimination, ensure access to needed resources and opportunities for all persons, especially those who are disadvantaged or disenfranchised. Prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practices are examined. Students are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others while at the same time striving to attain the ideals of social justice.

**Students with Special Needs**
Students with special needs or difficulties in learning and completing courses assignments are strongly encouraged to notify instructors as soon as possible so that appropriate resources and accommodations can be provided.

**Student Evaluation and Grades**
Classroom instructors grade students on their course work and submit evaluations on the caliber of each student’s work. The purpose of grading is evaluative, as well as to provide a learning tool for students, i.e., to provide feedback on progress, strengths and weaknesses, and issues that need to be addressed. Cumulative grade point average is based on full letter grades, not plus or minus grades. Only letter grades are recorded in the students’ transcript. Instructors are required to submit full letter grades (not pluses or minuses) within two weeks after classes end.

**Grading Standards**
Grades are assigned according to the following standards:

- A - Superior Work (4.0 value)
- B - Satisfactory Work (3.0 value)
- C - Marginal Work (2.0 value)
- F - Failure* (0.0 value) - *Applies only to Field Placement/Practicum and Thesis Seminar
- P - Pass* (0.0 value)
- AU - Audit (0.0 value) - Auditing a course with approval of instructor
- INC - Incomplete (0.0 value)

**Grading Policy**

*Incompletes:* An incomplete can be granted only in cases of significant personal emergency and when the student has been in touch with the instructor in advance of the due date for the required work. Any incompletes must be resolved by the first day of the following semester (fall, spring, summer). If the work has not been completed by this date, the incomplete grade will convert to a failing grade. It is always the student’s responsibility to initiate the process for an incomplete. It is also the responsibility of the student to turn in the completed work by the following semester’s end.

*Late papers:* A late assignment is one that is submitted after the deadline but before grades are submitted. Approval for turning assignments in late is determined by individual instructors.

*Attendance:* Students are required to attend class every class session. The intimacy and intensity of our classroom environments make consistent attendance very important. Students who miss more than one class session may see that reflected in their grade. Missing more than two class sessions will result in either a withdrawal from the class or a
failing grade.

**Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct**

ICSW is committed to the support of the standards and ideals of the social work, counseling, and psychology professions. In accordance with these goals, each student at ICSW is expected to be bound by the code of ethics for their respective discipline. Students are expected to adhere to principles of academic honesty and integrity. Any student who engages in academic dishonesty, which includes giving or receiving unauthorized aid to any assignment or examination, plagiarism, or tampering with grades or irregularities shall be subject to disciplinary action. Such action may include a failing grade in the course, suspension, or dismissal from the program as determined by the Progression Committee and the Dean.

Students are expected, at all times, to respect the confidentiality of their clients and must, therefore, appropriately disguise client materials in all oral and/or written presentations to consultants, and/or to teachers and fellow students during class discussions.

**Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is unacceptable at any time, and constitutes a severe academic violation. When plagiarism is suspected, students may be asked to submit their papers electronically to a third party plagiarism detection service. If a student is asked to submit the paper and refuses to do so, the student must provide proof that all work is correctly cited and/or original. Papers that are determined to contain plagiarism will receive a failing grade, and the student will be referred to the Progression Committee and the Dean.

*Plagiarism Defined:* “Plagiarism takes many forms, but falls into three main categories: using a source’s language without quoting, using information from a source without attribution, and paraphrasing a source in a form that stays too close to the original” (Yale Writing Center, 2014). If a student has any question about what constitutes plagiarism, please contact the Associate Dean.

*Reusing Your Own Work:* Cutting and pasting from or resubmitting a paper written for an earlier purpose or class is a form of academic dishonesty commonly referred to as “self-plagiarism.” It is prohibited at ICSW to reuse your own written work. It is allowable to quote from your own earlier work, but the material is subject to the same rules of citation that govern all academic writing.

**Required Textbooks**

Additional readings of journal articles and excerpted book chapters will be available via the Blackbaud website and are listed below for each week of the course.

Course Requirements

Readings: Students are expected to read carefully all the assigned readings in sync with the syllabus and to be prepared to discuss them. Always bring the textbook and additional readings to class.

Class Attendance and Participation: Active discussion is the goal of every weekly meeting, and this includes critical questioning of the ideas presented in the readings and lectures. Unexcused absences will result in a deduction from the final grade. If you know that you won’t be able to attend a class, please email beforehand.

Case Presentations: Each student will make an in-class presentation of a case, taking into special consideration the scheduled weekly topic from the syllabus. As part of the presentation you will: 1) identify the ethical challenges present; 2) articulate appropriate goals of care; 3) assess and rank the goals of care; 4) discuss the personal values, beliefs, and attitudes that might challenge formulation and implementation of a proper plan; 5) identify and discuss the social and other structural challenges to implementation of a proper plan; 6) articulate the decision-making process and related necessary actions you would take to meet these challenges; and 7) guide the class in discussion of 1-6.

Weekly Self-Inventory Writing Assignments: Due Saturdays at 10 a.m. (weeks 2-13; 12 total assignments). For this assignment you will complete the pre-chapter self-inventory to clarify your attitudes and beliefs about the ethical issues discussed in the textbook reading (Chapters 2-13).

Start by choosing at least two statements/ratings that you want to explore more thoroughly. Using these statements as prompts for self-reflection, write a 2-3 page paper using the chapter material and additional assigned reading to examine how professional codes of ethics, legislative and regulatory frameworks, ethical principles, social and political context, and health care systems contribute to an understanding of your self-rating.

Questions to consider: Does the reading reinforce your views or lead you to consider revising them? What kind of client and/or situation would most challenge your ethical decision making in the particular area? How might you think or respond differently based on what you learned in the reading?

Format the papers using the APA Style Manual (6th Edition), including in-text citations as necessary and fitting to support your points. Include at the end a complete reference list.

Final Paper: In this paper you will address in depth one of the weekly assigned topics in
professional ethics. Students will choose their own topic and conduct a literature search in support of their exploration of the topic.

**Grading**
Participation 20%
Presentations 10%
Weekly Writing Assignments 50%
Final Paper 20%

**Weekly Course Schedule – Subject to Revisions**

**Class 1**
Sep 6
**Course Overview; Introduction to Professional Ethics**

Textbook: Chapter 1


**Class 2**
Sep 13
**The Counselor as a Person**

Textbook: Chapter 2


**Class 3**
Sep 20
**Values and the Helping Relationship**

Textbook: Chapter 3


Class 4  
Oct 11  
**Multicultural Perspectives and Diversity**

Textbook: Chapter 4


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Class 5  
Oct 18  
**Client Rights and Counselor Responsibilities**  Textbook: Chapter 5


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Class 6  
Oct 25  
**Confidentiality**

Textbook: Chapter 6


Additional Reading: *Tarasoff v. Regents of the University of California*

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Class 7  
Nov 1  
**Managing Boundaries I**

Textbook: Chapter 7


Class 8
Nov 8
Managing Boundaries II  -- Countertransference


Class 9
Nov 15
Professional Competence and Training

Textbook: Chapter 8


Class 10
Nov 22
Issues in Supervision and Consultation
Textbook: Chapter 9


Class 11
Dec 6
Issues in Theory and Practice

Textbook: Chapter 10


Class 12
Dec 13
Ethical Issues in Couples and Family Therapy

Textbook: Chapter 11


Class 13
Dec 20
Ethical Issues in Group Work

Textbook: Chapter 12


*Class 14*
Jan 10
**Ethical Issues in Community Work**

Textbook: Chapter 13


Additional Reading:

*Class 15*
Jan 17
**Professional Ethics and Social Justice**


*Class 16*
Jan 24
**Summary and Wrap Up**