Master’s Program in Clinical Counseling and Psychotherapy

The Institute for Clinical Social Work

CCP 520: Professional and Life Span Development

Spring 2014

Wednesday: 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Instructor: Jan Wolff Bensdorf, LCSW
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ICSW Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description:
This course will provide an introduction to career and professional development theory, practice and resources. Emphasis is given to developmental considerations and the role of testing, educational and career development planning, and the application of technology-based career development strategies. Particular attention will be paid to the inter-relationships of work, family, gender, diversity and life role factors, the relationship between career and self identity, and what influences of work values, occupational choices, and decision making styles.

Specific Course Objectives:
• Exploring the professional self through the lifecycle.
• Understanding the dynamics of supervision in clinical counseling practice.
• Successfully making the transition from student to professional through understanding the process
• Working with difficult clients in hard times, exploring issues such as death of clients, illnesses, environmental stress, and traumatic events. This will include secondary traumatization, and global events such as the aftermath of natural disasters and terrorist attacks.
• How to handle burnout and boredom.
• Mapping a professional future

Respect for Diversity, Confidentiality, and Fellow Students: Discussing patients, clinical material, and patients’ impact on clinicians can be intense; students are expected to be sensitive to
their colleagues’ during class discussions, and to protect confidentiality of clinicians and their patients. In addition, students are expected to be respectful of the opinions of others while at the same time striving to support the values of clinical counseling.

**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 written evaluative reports on the caliber of each student’s work. Practicum consultants/supervisors grade students and submit reports each semester evaluating their work. Students’ overall performance will be monitored each semester by the Student Progression Committee.

**Grading:** The purpose of grading is to provide a learning tool for students, i.e., to provide feedback on progress, strengths and weaknesses, and issues that need to be addressed.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Superior Work</td>
<td>4.0 value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Satisfactory Work</td>
<td>3.0 value</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Marginal Work</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failure*</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass*</td>
<td>0.0 value</td>
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<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>0.0 value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
<td>0.0 value**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Decision**

- **A grade of INC (incomplete) requires the instructor’s written approval. Incomplete grades should be reserved for extenuating circumstances. If an incomplete grade is given, the student must finish any work required to complete the course requirements by the end of the semester. If the course is not completed by this deadline, the student automatically receives an F (Fail) grade for the course.**
- Instructors are required to submit full letter grades (not pluses or minuses) within two weeks after the end of each semester. A written evaluation of each student’s performance accompanies the grade.
- All papers submitted for class requirements are to conform to the style guide in the “Institute for Clinical Social Work Style Manual,” which is located on the ICSW website in the academic resources section. Insofar as is practicable, ICSW style follows the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, commonly referred to as the “APA style manual.”

**Academic Dishonesty:** 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.
Plagiarism Policy: 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.

Electronic Devices:

All electronic devices should be turned off during class. That includes lap tops, I phones, Blackberries, and other cell phones. If you are on call please be sure your device is on vibrate. Other devices such as computers and recording devices must be discussed with the professor.

Course Requirements and Assignments: Since this is a seminar class, there will be an emphasis on class participation. In addition, students will be expected to use their clinical experience to highlight aspects of learning as presented in the syllabus. (25% of grade)

There will be weekly writings reflecting on the readings for the week, the class discussions, and personal reactions. They should be 3-4 pages each. These are to be turned in at the beginning of the following class weeks 3-12. (35% of grade)

A final paper elaborating one of the course topics will be required. (40% of grade) Rubric to follow.

Readings: Students are required to read all assigned material and should be prepared to discuss the reading material assigned for each class.

Class Attendance and Participation: Active discussion of the ideas contained in the readings and lectures as well as class attendance and participation in class exercises are central to the success of this course. Excessive absences (more than a total of TWO classes) may result in a lowered grade. The instructor always appreciates being notified in advance by email if you will not be attending class.

Required Textbooks:


Weekly Course Schedule:

Class 1 – 2/15  
**Introduction to course, readings and assignments**

• Real and Ideal worlds of counseling therapy.
• Interaction between the personal and professional self
• Personal and professional goals – where will I be in 5 years?

Class 2 – 2/12  
**The Student Phases of becoming a clinical counselor/therapist**
• Early cues
• Student as learner
• Defining moments
• What did you get from your training/ what more would you like?


**Class 3 –2/19 Supervision and Consultation**

• Parallel process
• Transference and countertransference in supervision
• Supervision/consultation through the developmental stages


**Class 4 – 2/26 Client and therapist, Power and Influence.**

• Therapists as consultants? As idols? As mentors?
• Portrayals of therapists by the media and their impact on client and therapist
• Use of power in the therapeutic relationship


**Class 5 – 3/5 Entry into the profession: Early stages of professional development**
• Novice phase
• Mistaken Beliefs and dreams
• Psychodynamic Psychotherapists


MTM- Chapter 5 Novice Professional Phase 173-220.

Class 6- 3/12  **Composing a Life: Personal and Professional Lives**

• Role confusion
• Maintaining boundaries
• How the professional self influences personal relationships
• You can’t leave it at the office or at home

K: Chapter 3 Personal and professional lives 43-68.

S: Chapter 1: Composing a Life, 3-17.

Additional Readings TBA

Class 7 – 3/19  **Counseling across the life Course**

• Difference in the experience of being a therapist at different stages of professional competence and development.
• How we learn and grow, from whom?
• Self-awareness a necessary tool


S: Chapter 3, Pp. 35-52.

Additional readings TBA

Class 8 – 3/26  **Developmental Tasks and Themes**

• Growth and Development of the therapist.

Class 9 – 4/2  
**Transitions and Turning Points**

- Defining your own journey
- Psychotherapists personal psychotherapy


S: Chapter 4, Pp. 53-68.

Additional readings TBA

Class 10 – 4/9  
**Hardships of the Therapeutic Process**

- Dealing with Death
- How trauma affects the therapist and client
- Terminations


Class 11 – 4/23  
**Patients who try our patience**

- Resistance
- Mandated clients
- Premature terminators
- Clients with multiple therapists (past and present)


K: Chapter 7, 141-168.

Additional readings TBA

**Class 12 – 4/30**  
**Experienced Professional**
- Role models
- What determines when a professional becomes “experienced?”

MTM Chapters 56, 7 &8: 199-260

Additional Readings TBA2/2

**Class 13 – 5/7**  
**Boredom and Burnout**
- Too many recurring stories
- How to rejuvenate the professional self
- Soothing vicarious traumatization


K: Chapter 8: 169-208

K: Chapter 11: 255-296


**Class 14 5/14**  
**Lies we tell ourselves**
- People terminate because it is mutually determined due to improvement
- We are experts at listening and remembering that which is said and that which isn’t
- Ethics aren’t negotiable


K: Chapter 10, 229-254

S: Chapter 7 261-266

S: Chapter 8: 267-

**Class 15- 5/21**  
**Licensing and Future Plans**
• Review of licensing
• PhD programs
• Private practice - group or individual
• Teaching