

EDCD 797: COUNSELING YOUTH AT-RISK
Summer 2010 Tuesdays (5/24, 5/31, 6/7) and Thursdays 5/26, 6/2) 3:45-6:50 p.m.
Class Location: Robinson A 207

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Fred Bemak
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Class location: Robinson A 349

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to familiarize students with theory and practice related to counseling at-risk youth. A review of the ecological issues related to youth at-risk will be discussed and examined including issues of school failure and drop-out, teenage pregnancy and sexuality, substance abuse, violence, and juvenile delinquency. Cross-cultural factors related to youth at-risk will be explored as well as issues of social justice. The course will include a component on skill development to more effectively work with problems of youth identified as being at-risk.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Gain increased awareness of the psychological, sociological, and ecological factors affecting at-risk youth.
2. Gain an increased understanding of the scope of the problems experienced by at-risk youth.
3. Understand the interrelationship of school and community agency counseling in providing effective interventions with at-risk youth.
4. Acquire awareness about the importance and development of prevention programs to address the problems of at-risk youth.
5. Gain skills to more effectively work with at-risk youth.
6. Understand the issues of multiculturalism as it applies to working with various at-risk youth populations.
7. Understand the issue of social justice as it applies to working with various at-risk youth populations.
8. Understand the issues of advocacy and leadership as a counselor as it applies to working with various at-risk youth populations.
9. Achieve a sense of personal awareness that promotes more effective counseling with at-risk youth populations.

RELATIONSHIP TO COURSES AND PROGRAM GOALS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Counseling youth identified as being at-risk is essential in being an effective school or community agency counselor. This course necessitates adherence to the program goals and mission and provides information and skill development about how to more effectively work with youth identified as being at-risk. The course will enhance self awareness, and understanding of ecological factors contributing to the problems of youth at-risk, counseling skills, system skills, and advocacy and leadership skills that will be important in practicum and internship.

CACREP standards that are met through this course include: foundations of counseling, contextual dimensions of counseling, knowledge and skill requirements, and clinical instruction.

TEXTBOOK:

Bemak, F. & Keys, S. (2000). *Violent and aggressive youth: Intervention and prevention strategies for changing times*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press Inc.

Readings as Assigned

ASSIGNMENTS:

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 1. | <u>Literature Search Critique</u> | 20% |
| 2. | <u>International Intervention/Prevention Program Search</u> | 15% |
| 3. | <u>Website Youth Investigation Paper</u> | 25% |
| 4. | <u>Youth Interview Paper</u> | 25% |
| 5. | <u>Attendance and Participation</u> | 15% |

NOTES ON ASSIGNMENTS:

- The deadlines for papers are strictly observed. Late papers without prior permission from the instructor will not be accepted.
- Adherence to page specifications is mandatory.

EVALUATION:

Grading Scale

| | | |
|----|---|----------|
| A | = | 97-100 |
| A- | = | 94- 96 |
| B+ | = | 91- 93 |
| B | = | 87- 90 |
| B- | = | 84- 86 |
| C | = | 83- 80 |
| F | = | Below 79 |

GRADING POLICY:

Written Work: Please note that grading on written work will be based on the quality of the written work, knowledge and review of the content area, accuracy, relatedness, logic and organization of the paper, degree to which the points are effectively supported, following, deadlines in submitting the assignment (late assignments will be penalized), maintaining the page limit, and adherence to the requirements of the assignment.

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS:

The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students abide by the following:

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior and dispositions. See gse.gmu.edu for a listing of these dispositions, as well as, the Counseling & Development website for the professional dispositions.

PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 25, 2003)

As posted on C&D homepage: http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional_performance.ht

The American Counseling Association code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. Therefore, the Counseling and Development Program in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University requires its students to exhibit the following:

Communication Skills

- Clear presentation and demonstration of multicultural competencies in counseling skills
- Clear oral communication
- Clear written communication
- Clear ability to demonstrate effective and supportive helping skills
- Clear ability to demonstrate effective listening skills

Collaboration

- Respect for the opinion and dignity of others
- Ability to collaborate with others
- Ability to demonstrate effective interpersonal skills
- Ability to participate as a colleague and team member in all aspects of professional training

Professionalism

- Commitment to multiculturalism and diversity
- Commitment to social justice as it relates to counseling
- Respect of multiculturalism and diverse cultures
- Demonstration of openness, willingness to learn, and positive attitude about multiculturalism and diverse cultures
- Commitment to the psychological well-being, health, and wellness for all people
- Sound judgment
- Integrity and honesty
- Ability to accept personal responsibility
- Ability to receive and reflect upon constructive criticism
- Positive attitude
- Ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to maintain confidentiality with clients, students, and colleagues
- Appropriate assertiveness
- Ability to manage stress
- Ability to meet requirements as stated in course syllabi
- Adherence to ACA ethical guidelines

HONOR CODE:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of George Mason University and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the members of George Mason University, have set forth the following code of honor. Any individual who is caught in the act of cheating, attempting to cheat, plagiarizing, or stealing will be brought forth before a council of peers. In the event that the individual is found guilty, he or she will be punished accordingly. Students must follow the guidelines of the University Honor Code. See http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/#TOC_H12 for the full honor code.

Students must agree to abide by the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. See <http://mail.gmu.edu> and click on Responsible Use of Computing at the bottom of the screen.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the GMU Disability Resource Center (DRC) and inform the instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester. See www.gmu.edu/student/drc or call 703-993-2474 to access the DRC.

CELL PHONES AND PAGERS: Students should turn off their pagers and/or cell-phones before class begins.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Topics and Assignments*</u> | <u>Reading Assignments</u> |
|--------------------|--|---|
| 5/25 | Introductions and Overview of the Course, Who are Youth At-Risk, Problems and Behaviors with Youth At-Risk, Contemporary Issues | |
| 5/27 | Socio-Political Context, Contemporary Issues, Goals, Skill Development <i>Website Youth Investigation Paper Due</i> | Bemak & Keys 1-2 Readings as Assigned |
| 6/1 | Multicultural Perspectives, Current Trends in Counseling, Group Work, Skill Development, Case Studies, Discussion of Article Review <i>Literature Search Critique Due</i> | Bemak & Keys 3-4 Readings as Assigned |
| 6/3 | Case Studies, Skill Development <i>Youth Interview Paper due</i> | Bemak & Keys 5-6, A Final Thought, Readings as Assigned |
| 6/8 | Discussion of Final Papers, Case Studies, Skill Development <i>International Intervention/Prevention Program Search Due</i> | |