

**EDCD 797: COUNSELING YOUTH AT-RISK  
Summer 2012**

**Tuesdays (5/22, 5/29, 6/5) and Thursdays 5/24, 5/31) 4:00-6:40 p.m.  
Class Location: Thompson Hall 2021**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Fred Bemak  
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**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.

### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

#### *Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- Core Values Commitment: The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles.
- Professional Dispositions - The Graduate School of Education (GSE) expects that all students maintain professional behavior and dispositions. See [gse.gmu.edu](http://gse.gmu.edu) for a listing of these dispositions, as well as, the Counseling & Development website for the professional dispositions.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at *the beginning of the semester* [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### *Campus Resources*

- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

### **PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA (EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 25, 2003)**

As posted on C&D homepage: [http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional\\_performance.ht](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

#### **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

### 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

**CELL PHONES AND PAGERS:** *Cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g. iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but you must submit a request to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in your participation grade. \*\*\*\*\*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>
5/22	Introductions and Overview of the Course, Who are Youth At-Risk, Problems and Behaviors with Youth At-Risk, Contemporary Issues	
5/24	Socio-Political Context, Contemporary Issues, Goals, Skill Development <i>Website Youth Investigation Paper Due</i>	Bemak & Keys 1-2 Readings as Assigned
5/29	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
5/31	Case Studies, Skill Development <i>Youth Interview Paper due</i>	Bemak & Keys 5-6, A Final Thought, Readings as Assigned
6/5	Discussion of Final Papers, Case Studies, Skill Development <i>International Intervention/Prevention Program Search Due</i>	