

**The George Mason University**  
**Graduate School of Education**  
**EDCD 755 002: Supervised Practicum in Community Agency Counseling**  
**Mondays 7:20 – 10:00 PM – Thompson Hall L014**  
**Fall 2012**

**Instructor: Stephanie McMahon, Ph.D.**  
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**Office Hours: By appointment**

### **Course Description**

**Catalog - Prerequisites:** *Completion of Counseling and Development Program except for EDCD 610, 628 or electives [total credits cannot exceed three credit hours]; permission of advisor; overall GPA of 3.00; no grade lower than B in skills courses EDCD 603, 606/609, and 608; no more than two grades of C in any other graduate course work required by Counseling and Development Program.*

This course provides supervised practice in a counseling setting similar to the setting in which the student may work. This is a weekly graduate class with an emphasis on the counseling process.

The practicum course is an arranged, supervised experience in counseling. The course aims to provide skills in working towards social justice, developing advanced multicultural counseling intervention skills, developing skills in leadership and advocacy in order to effectively design and implement community prevention programs, and develop ways to improve theoretical conceptualizations of applied interventions. Thus the focus of the course will be on providing professional counseling within the parameters of the George Mason University Counseling and Development Program mission, e.g., multiculturalism, advocacy, leadership, and social justice.

During the semester, students will present, discuss, and conceptualize their counseling work, explore culturally specific interventions, explore applications of social justice to their counseling work, examine countertransference as it relates to the counseling process, and plan and develop required activities which include an evaluation of their practicum site. Students will be required to see **at least two (2) clients** for a **minimum of four (4) sessions** each during the semester. Clients should consist of individual, family, and group cases. Class seminars will consist of role-plays, case processing, discussion of professional issues, personal reactions to clients, and program evaluation and development.

Because of the serious nature of this work, it is essential that students discuss their reactions and feelings. Such discussions, however, cannot take place outside the context of a supervised class or appropriate site circumstance. You may not discuss cases in other classes, with friends or relatives, or in social situations since it is essential to maintain confidentiality. Violations of this principle in *any* form will be treated as a serious ethical/legal infraction. It is also imperative that you discuss cases with your on-site supervisor. If you have questions or concerns that need immediate attention, please call or email the instructor.

### **Course Materials**

All practicum materials are located on the Blackboard Community website (<https://gmucommunity.blackboard.com>) under the Counseling and Development Organization page. You can access this website by using your GMU id and password. You should print out copies of the CA Practicum/ Internship Sheet, site contract, your mid-semester and final evaluation forms for your site supervisor, and any other relevant materials.

### **Course Objectives**

The objectives of this course are:

- To provide an opportunity for practicing competencies developed throughout the graduate training program.

- To provide an orientation to organizational structure, protocol, relationships, and working conditions in community agency counseling settings.
- To explore counseling strategies for individuals, groups, and families within a culturally diverse framework.
- To more effectively understand the nature of the changing role of the professional counselor that includes advocacy, leadership, multiculturalism, and social justice.
- To stimulate the formulation of, and identification with, a professional role.
- To inculcate high standards of professional ethics; to give experience involving ethical decision-making and practice related to counseling.

### **Course Requirements/Assignments**

Each student will:

1. Attend each class and complete any assignments or readings for class. As per department requirements, **more than one unexcused absence will result in course failure. Late arrivals to class count towards an unexcused absence.**
2. Participate and contribute to class discussions and activities.

All written assignments must be typed and must follow APA format unless indicated by instructor. Grading on written work will take into account the following factors: quality of written work and adherence to requirements of assignment. As a graduate student, it is expected that all of your work will be turned in on the assigned dates. A late assignment will be subject to a grade penalty.

**1. A minimum of 300 (Agency) hours in the field placement.** If you entered the C&D program after summer 2007 and/or are planning to pursue licensure as an LPC in the state of VA, you will need to complete 300 site hours per semester, 120 hours of these hours should be direct (face-to-face) client hours. *Given that this is your first semester at your site, the program will allow a minimum of 85 face-to-face hours, however, you will need to accumulate additional hours in your internship to reach the 240 direct client hour requirement.* **Hours spent in class or at home preparing GMU assignments may not be counted toward the hours requirement. Site contract will be due by Monday, September 10<sup>th</sup> or after I have met with you and your supervisor at your site.**

**2. Two individual transcripts and tapes** (one from an individual session, one from a group or family session if possible). You must include a signed "permission to tape" form [See P&I Bb]. Tape 1 is the entire session. Tape 2 is a 15-20 minute segment. You will turn in the tape and the write-up to your instructor for review. Both tapes must include a typed transcription with:

- client/counselor statements,
- counseling themes and interventions, and
- process comments with strengths/weaknesses [see 755 course Bb].

**NOTE: Instructor may request additional counseling tapes from the student based on requests from On-Site Supervisor and/or University Supervisor.**

**3. Program Evaluation Project.** This assignment is designed to encourage an in-depth evaluation of a site program (or project) that is aligned with the C&D mission statement and will be developed in conjunction with your on-site supervisor and university supervisor.

This project will consist of:

- data collection from your site through the use of interviews, surveys, observations, etc;
- data analysis; and
- a summary of your findings and recommendations.

You will turn in a written paper to the instructor (no more than 5 pages, not including title page and reference pages) will include description of the problem or need, evaluation methodology, summary of findings, and recommendations based on findings. You will also present your project.

**4. Case Processing Presentations.** You will make at least two presentations during the semester. For each presentation, you will bring in a tape (and tape recorder) from a session with your client and cue it up to an area where you want feedback from your counseling interventions. You will also provide copies of your case conceptualization and treatment plan to members of the class (see 755 course Bb). The presentations and discussion will provide you the opportunity to discuss your client's concerns, personal reactions to your client, difficulties with your client, etc. You will have the opportunity to receive feedback and assistance from your peers and instructor for both personal and professional growth. Presentation dates will be assigned during the first night of class.

**5. Case Analysis.** You will be required to complete an individual case analysis during the latter half of the semester. This case analysis assignment has been designed to serve as a comprehensive assessment of your academic experiences in our program, and will require you to provide a written comprehensive case analysis/conceptualization of a client. Further instructions will be given in class. Failure to pass this assignment may result in your inability to continue on with your internship.

**6. Class Readings/Reaction Papers.** This course will include the reading and discussion of *An Unquiet Mind* by Kay Redfield Jamison. You will also be asked to submit short 1-2 page reaction papers that incorporate a discussion of the reading as well as your response to the reading in regards to your current practicum experience(s).

**7. Class Participation.** You are expected to be involved during class discussions. You will be asked to give feedback and discuss each other's case presentations, discuss the course reading(s), and be active in other class discussion.

### **Grading**

EDCD 755 is a graded course. Students must achieve a "B" or higher in order to successfully complete/pass the requirements of the Practicum and move on to Internship. Included in the assignments is the requirement that the following must also be met to receive a passing grade:

- Completion of all assignments of acceptable quality, turned in by date due.
- Attendance at all classes and at practicum site. Absences must be pre-arranged, unless due to an emergency. Please call instructor and on-site supervisor, as appropriate. More than one unexcused absences will result in course failure. Late arrival will be considered an absence.
- Active classroom participation, including providing constructive feedback and suggestions for classmates.
- Completion of required site hours (no less than 85 hours face-to-face hours – no exceptions).
- Satisfactory mid-term and final evaluation from on-site supervisor. Supervisors will submit an informal written evaluation midway through the semester and a final formal evaluation at the end of the semester.

### **Summary of Grading System & Course Requirements**

Two Tapes – analyses of transcripts 10 points (5 each)

Program Evaluation Project 20 points

Case Analyses 10 points

Class Participation and Case Presentations 20 points

Reaction Papers 10 points

On-site Supervisor Evaluation 30 points

Due at the Last Class (Required to complete practicum):

Log of Activities (Signed by Student and On-site Supervisor)

On-Site Supervisor Evaluation (Signed by On-Site Supervisor)

### **Grading**

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved:  
A [100-97]; A- [96-94]; B+ [93-81]; B [90-87]; B- [86-84]; C [83-80]; F [79 and below]

### **Counseling & Development Program Professional Dispositions**

**Professional Performance Criteria** (Effective February 25, 2003).

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. The Counseling and Development Program in the Graduate School of Education at George Mason University has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to the dispositions found on the C & D Homepage at:

[http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional\\_performance.htm](http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/professional_performance.htm)

### *Student Expectations*

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>].
- 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/>].

### **Plagiarism Statement**

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do

need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (Statement of English Department at George Mason University)

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### COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	DUE
<b>August 27</b>	Introduction to Course / Practicum Expectations Exploring the C&D Mission Statement and Site Culture Review of Ethics Review of Assignments, including Site Program Evaluation Project	
<b>September 3</b>	Labor Day Holiday – No class	
<b>September 10</b>	Review of Theories/First Interviews	<b>Site Contract</b>
<b>September 17</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students) Discussion of Site Evaluation Projects	<b>Site Program Evaluation Project Proposal</b>
<b>September 24</b>	Case Processing (Assign students) Discuss <u>An Unquiet Mind</u> Part 1: <i>The Wild Blue Yonder</i> & Part 2: <i>A not so fine Madness</i>	<b>Reaction paper #1</b>
<b>October 1</b>	Case Processing (Assign students)	<b>Site Hours Log – to be checked and signed</b>
<b>October 8</b>	Columbus Holiday – No Class	No Class
<b>October 15</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students)	<b>Hand in transcript/ 1<sup>st</sup> tape; Mid-term written evaluation by on-site supervisor*/**</b>
<b>October 22</b>	Individual supervision meeting (60 minutes) with Dr. McMahon (to be scheduled in advance) in lieu of class***	
<b>October 29</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students)	<b>Case Analysis Reaction paper #2</b>
<b>November 5</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students) Discuss <u>An Unquiet Mind</u> Part 3: <i>This Medicine, Love</i>	<b>Site Hours Log – to be checked and signed</b>
<b>November 12</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students) Review of Case Analyses	<b>Hand in transcript/2<sup>nd</sup> tape</b>
<b>November 19</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students) Discuss <u>An Unquiet Mind</u> Part 4: <i>An Unquiet Mind</i>	<b>Reaction paper #3</b>
<b>November 26</b>	Case Processing (Assign Students)	<b>In class: Site Evaluation Presentations Turn in: Site Program Evaluation Papers</b>
<b>December 3</b>	Closing/Class Evaluations	<b>Log of hours &amp; activities**** Final On-site supervisor evaluation**</b>

\*On-site supervisors will be asked to provide a **written mid-term evaluation** of your progress at the site. This evaluation must be written and signed by your direct supervisor and should consist of a brief written statement indicating whether or not you are displaying appropriate professional and counseling skills at your site.

\*\*Please check the Counseling and Development Blackboard page for forms such as the mid-term evaluation and final evaluation forms for your supervisor.

\*\*\*Prior to individual supervision meetings, a sign-up sheet will be passed around in class to schedule your meeting time.

\*\*\*\***Final signed log of hours** must be submitted to Dr. McMahon by **7pm, Monday, December 10<sup>th</sup>**.