

EDCD 797: COUNSELING YOUTH AT-RISK
Summer 2013
Tuesdays (5/21, 5/28, 6/4) and Thursdays 5/23, 5/30) 4:00-6:10 p.m.
Class Location: Hanover L002

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Fred Bemak
Office Location: Krug 202
Office Phone: 703-993-3941
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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:

Readings as Assigned

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Literature Search Critique 20%
Refereed journal articles have significant literature about youth identified as being at-risk. Students should investigate through PsychINFO three articles, each one from a different journal, that relate to problems of at-risk youth and then find and read the article. A one-half page critique for *each* article will be due on *May 28th*. The one and one-half page summary should be copied for distribution to other classmates.
2. International Intervention/Prevention Program Search 15%
There are many programs throughout the world that provide innovative programs to work with youth at-risk. This assignment is to undertake a website search and find a program in another country around the world that is undertaking one unique and different intervention for youth at-risk. A one page summary of this program will be due on *June 4th*.
3. Website Youth Investigation Paper 25%
Given the usage of technology by youth today it is important to understand the world on-line and the impact it has on youth. Students will be required to research three youth websites where there is communication and activities that are conducive to at-risk behaviors. The websites should emphasize an area of interest to you regarding at-risk problems and behaviors and should be ones that you have not visited on previous occasions. A one paragraph reaction to each one of the three websites (3 paragraphs in total that is not longer than 1 page in length) will be due on *May 23rd*.
4. Youth Interview Paper 25%
There will be an interview of a youth between the ages of 12 and 18 to discuss a peer they know (someone outside their own extended family) who is at-risk. Under no circumstances should the interviewee be identified as the subject of the interview. In addition, the interviewee *can not* be someone who is in your own immediate or extended family. The interview should focus on what issues the interviewee believes that their peer who is at-risk is facing, what contributed to their problems, what cross-cultural issues, if any, play a factor in their problems they are having, any behaviors that are a result of their problems, reactions of their peers, family and school personnel, what hope is there for the identified peer, and what interventions, in their opinion, might work. This should be a two page paper with a one paragraph summary at the end of the paper with your reactions to the interview. The interview is due on *May 30th*.
5. Attendance and Participation 15%
Attendance and participation are essential in a group counseling class and therefore is one fifth of the grade. This requires that all students are present and actively participate in *all* classes, including class discussions, exercises, and group experiences. If there is a scheduling conflict that interferes with attendance during any of the 5 classes students should see the instructor during the first class to discuss whether to continue or discontinue the class this semester. It should be noted that any absence for this 1 credit course (5 class meetings) will result in not receiving credit for the course.

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 the APA 6th edition guidelines, 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/>].
- 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.
- 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.
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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/>].
- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.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

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

CELL PHONES AND PAGERS: Students must turn off their pagers and/or cell-phones before class begins. Text messaging is not permitted during class. Cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Given the nature of the class laptops or tablets (e.g. iPads) are not permitted in this class. 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>
5/21	Introductions and Overview of the Course, Who are Youth At-Risk, Problems and Behaviors with Youth At-Risk, Contemporary Issues	
5/23	Socio-Political Context, Contemporary Issues, Goals, Skill Development <i>Website Youth Investigation Paper Due</i>	Bemak & Keys 1-2 Readings as Assigned

5/28	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
5/30	Case Studies, Skill Development <i>Youth Interview Paper due</i>	Bemak & Keys 5-6, A Final Thought, Readings as Assigned
6/4	Discussion of Final Papers, Case Studies, Skill Development <i>International Intervention/Prevention Program Search Due</i>	