

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
Counseling & Development Program**

EDCD 797 B01: Building Resilience in Children, Families, and Communities  
1 Credit, Summer 2014  
Tuesday & Thursday 7:20P-10P Krug Hall 107

**PROFESSOR(S):**

Name: Joseph M. Williams, PhD  
Office hours: Tuesdays 3:00P - 4:30P or by appointment  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

**A. Prerequisites/Co-requisites**

None

**B. University Catalog Course Description**

Provides an introduction to resiliency-based counseling. Topics include strength-based assessment and intervention to help individuals, families, schools and communities to cope with stress, overcome adversity or adapt positively to change. Areas of emphasis include multicultural and social justice issues in trauma counseling.

**C. Expanded Course Description**

This course uses a risk and resilience ecological framework to illustrate how practitioners such as school and mental health counselor can better address the needs of individuals and families living in high-risk environments. Students will leave with research-based, practical, and effective strategies for providing children, youth, and families what they need to succeed. Over the course of the semester, students will examine conceptual, empirical, and applied work on resilience, including new and sometimes controversial applications of resilience theory to counseling practice with individuals, families, schools, and communities.

**LEARNER OUTCOMES or OBJECTIVES:**

This course is designed to enable students to:

1. Gain an understanding of the meaning of resilience as it applies to personal, family, school, and community life.

2. Understand key tools and practices of fostering resiliency and experience the use of tools in a class setting.
3. Understand the key principles of resilience theory and practice.
4. Describe personal attributes that influence the odds of resilient functioning.
5. Explain how the contexts in which individuals are embedded may shape their adaptation to adversity.
6. Understand resilience as involving mutually beneficial, reciprocally influential relations between a person and his or her context.
7. Reflect on your life history in order to become more aware of the risk and protective factors contributing to your personal resilience as a pre-service counselor. Develop strategies, which will increase your adaptation in the face of a changing life environment.
8. Begin to apply a risk and resilience framework to counseling practice (clinical and macro) with and on behalf of children, adolescents, adults, families, and communities.

#### **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS:**

1. EDCD 797 is a special topics course and meets the requirement that all masters' students take 2-3 credits of special topics course work. This 2-credit course will contribute to counseling students' knowledge of a particular population of clients.
2. EDCD 797 fulfills the requirements of the following professional organizations:
  - Virginia Department of Education requirement for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the knowledge, skills and processes of individual counseling.
  - Virginia Department of Health Professions requirement that Licensed Professional Counselor candidates complete graduate study in theories and techniques of counseling and psychotherapy.
  - Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core requirement described in Section II.K.e: Helping relationships: An understanding of counseling and consultation processes.
  - American Counseling Association Code of Ethics requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Henderson, N. (2007). *Resiliency in action: Practical ideas for overcoming risks and building strengths in youth, families, and communities*. Resiliency in Action.

Henderson, N. (2012). *The Resiliency Workbook: Bounce Back Stronger, Smarter and with Real Self-Esteem*. Resiliency In Action.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS:**

**Course Assignments:** Grading on written work will take into account the following factors: quality of written work, knowledge of content area, APA 6th edition format, 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. If an assignment is accepted at a later date, it is subject to a penalty of 10% of the award for every day it is overdue. Assignments are considered late after 10 minutes of the class session in which they are due. If you are absent, you are responsible for the information missed in class, including but not limited to assignments, change in due dates, content of discussion and/or lecture, and handouts. All assignment should be uploaded via Blackboard, as well as turned into class, at the start of class via hard copy on the day the assignment is due.

Students are expected to be able to use a computer, send and retrieve email, open attachments, access the internet, participate in online discussions, use Blackboard, and conduct a library search online. In addition, students should check Blackboard and their GMU email for course updates on a daily basis. All course documents will be available on Blackboard. Email messages sent using Blackboard need to be forwarded to your GMU email. **Please note that all assignment rubrics are available on Blackboard.**

#### **Assignment 1: Class Attendance and Participation (10 points)**

Students are expected to attend all schedule classes and will be assessed by their preparedness for class and involvement in class discussions and activities. It is expected that you will have done the readings prior to the class and are prepared to participate in the class discussions. Much of your learning will take place as a result of your interactions and participation in class. As a graduate student, you are expected to attend class, arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. One unexcused absence will automatically result in failing the class. Excused absences may be allowed or declined entirely at the discretion of the instructor on a case by case basis. Finally, lateness to or leaving early from class can count towards someone's absence and/or participation grade. If you must miss a class or arrive late, please call and notify the professor before the class meeting. A rubric will be provided on Blackboard.

Contacting the instructor for absences, late arrivals or early dismissals is a courtesy and does not necessarily mean exemption from attendance and participation responsibility; this means points may be deducted as stated in the syllabus. If there is a scheduling conflict that interferes with attendance during any portion of the class; students should see the instructor during the first class to discuss continuing in the class or taking the course during another semester.

#### **Assignment 2: Weekly Reading Questions (20 points)**

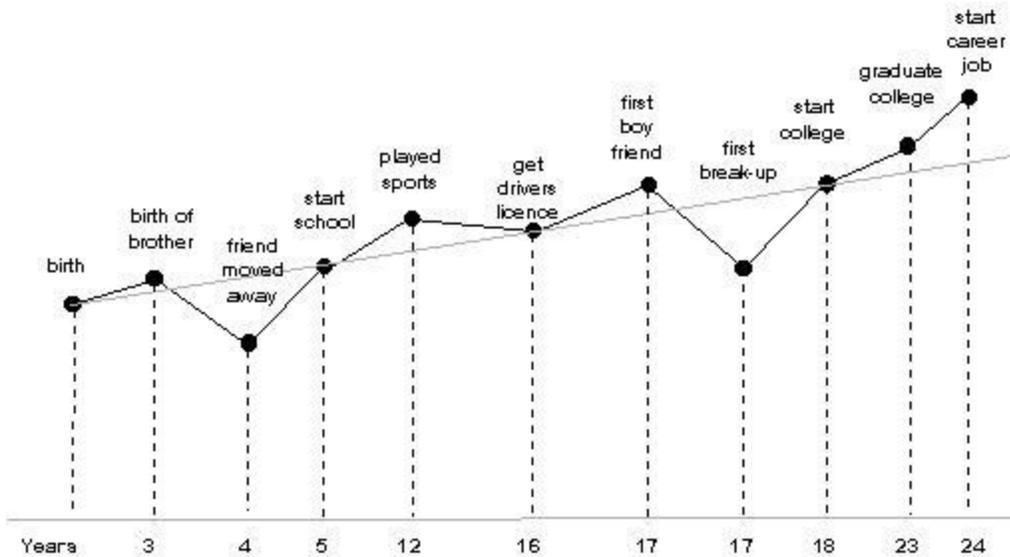
In order to help students complete their reading assignments, students will hand in at least **one** multi-level question (typed) prior to each class meeting. The multi-level question will form the basis of class discussions. The professor will not accept late questions. Students will not be allowed to make up Reading Comments and Questions points under any circumstance (with the exception of an excused absence). Each set of questions not handed in on time will receive the score of zero (0). A rubric will be provided on Bb.

### **Assignment 3: Charting Your Lifeline (35 points)**

Students will create a lifeline to identify the major life challenge/adversity you have gone through in your life (e.g., divorce, dropping out and returning to school, losing a child or another close loved one, facing a severe illness, having a parent or spouse deployed in war, traumatic events, the break-up of a significant relationship in our lives, the death of a loved one, moving away from home, changing jobs, retiring, discovering your sexuality or gender identity, etc.) and what helped you successfully manage and overcome that adversity. Think of both characteristics within yourself and anything or anyone outside yourself that helped. You may choose any medium (draw, weave, collage, PowerPoint, etc.). Use images and/or symbols to illustrate your successful adaptation to these events. The final work to be turned in for this assignment is the Life Line drawing and the summary paragraphs (6 -10 pages).

Directions:

1. Draw a line that represents your life and the major events in it. Mark the lineup for events that represent high points in your life and mark the line down for events that represent low points or adversity. Write the names of significant people or events at different stages of your life. Write a brief description of the challenging life event and note what helped you successfully manage and overcome that adversity. Think of both characteristics within yourself and anything or anyone outside yourself that helped. You may want to do a few trials rough sketched on a scrap of paper before you draw your completed lifeline. **The final work to be turned in for this assignment is the Life Line drawing and the summary paragraphs (6 - 10 pages).**



2. When you have completed your lifeline write a few paragraphs about the following viewpoints:

- a. How did you “get through” these adversities?
  - i. What qualities within you (e.g., personality, temperament, self-regulation of emotion, behavior, thoughts, problem-solving skills, intelligence, mental health etc.) helped? How did they help?
  - ii. What beliefs held by you helped? How did they help?
  - iii. Who helped you? How did they help?
  - iv. What else helped (e.g., family, friends, schools, neighborhood, culture, organization, activity, place, religion, social networks, etc.)?
  - v. How, if at all do you use these same things (personal characteristics and environmental supports) in dealing with other problems?
  - vi. What else do you think would have helped you?
  - vii. What advice would you give anyone else facing these same types of adversities?
  - viii. What strength or life lessons have you developed or learned from the process of encountering and going through these adversities
  - ix. What about *now*? Is there a person, group, or organization that you realize you need to connect with more *now* that would help grow your resiliency?
    1. Who is it or what group is it?
    2. What do you need to do to create a greater connection?
    3. What do you hope to gain that will help you *now* from this person or group?
  - x. What about *now*? Identify a personal problem or challenge you are now facing. How can you use your individual and environmental protective

factors (listed above) to help you overcome, learn, and grow from this situation?

**You are free to add to these questions.**

**Assignment 4: Family, School, Community, or Organizational Resilience Assessment Project (35 points)**

Students will research a family, school, community, organization or identified group that has overcome significant and overwhelming challenges to demonstrate successful adaptation. The selected family, school, community, organization, or identified group may be one in which the student lives or works, a case study that has adequate data for the assessment, or a school, community, or organization that can be assessed by conducting at least two key informant interviews or one focus group discussion with participants from the school, community, organization, or identified group. Models of family, school, community, and organizational resilience presented in the course will provide the basis of the analysis. The primary objective of the analysis is for the student to learn how to assess current strengths and weaknesses of school, community, or organizational resilience and to design recommendations for how to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability over a given time period. Students will submit a 6 – 10 page paper that provides both an assessment of current resilience and recommendations for increasing resilience for the selected family, school, community, group, or organization.

For additional clarification and explanation about course requirements and assignments, please make necessary arrangement to speak with me.

**Grades**

George Mason University policies prohibit instructors from issuing a grade of A+. The following grading scale will be used for this course:

- A 97—100
- A- 94—96
- B+ 91—93
- B 87—90
- B- 84—86
- C 80—83
- F 0—79

**Course Requirements and Evaluation**

Assignments	Points	Due Dates

Class Attendance and Participation	10	Evaluation throughout semester
Weekly Reading Questions	20	Evaluation throughout semester
Charting Your Lifeline	35	June 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
Family, School, Community, or Organizational Resilience Assessment Project	35	June 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2014
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	<b>100</b>	

### **TASKSTREAM REQUIREMENTS**

Every student registered for any Counseling and Development course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment, to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

### **GMU POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

- a. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>).
- b. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- c. 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.
- d. 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/>).

e. 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/>).

f. Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

g. 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/>).

### **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

### **CORE VALUES COMMITMENT**

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

**For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website <http://gse.gmu.edu/>.**

**PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**EDCD 797– Tentative Class Schedule**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic(s)</b>	<b>Readings Due</b>	<b>Assignment(s) Due</b>
1	June 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Introduction & Overview Foundations of Resiliency Resiliency and Counseling: Part I	Henderson 2007 Part 1: Chapters 1-5 Part 4: Chapters 1-4  Henderson 2012 Chapter 1	
2	June 12 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Resiliency and Counseling: Part II Resiliency and Youth Development	Henderson 2007 Part 4: Chapters 5-12 Part 5: Chapters 1-8 Henderson 2012 Chapters 2 & 3	<b>Charting Your Lifeline</b>
3	June 17 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Resiliency and Families	Henderson 2007 Part 6: Chapters 1-9  Henderson 2012 Chapters 4 & 5	
4	June 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Resiliency and Schools	Henderson 2007 Part 2: Chapters 1-12  Henderson 2012 Chapters 6 & 7	
5	June 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2014	Resiliency and Communities	Henderson 2007 Part 3: Chapters 1-8	<b>Family, School, Community, or Organizational Resilience Assessment Project</b>

			Henderson 2012 Chapters 8 & 9	
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**Notes:**

**Course Agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the professor based on the unique characteristics of the class and course content.**

**ASSESSMENT RUBRIC(S):**

**Attendance and Participation- Sample Rubric**

CATEGORY	3	2	1 – 0.5	0
<b>Attendance</b>	Attends all classes, arrives on time and stays for the entire class. Student has perfect attendance and punctuality in class	Attends all classes, arrives 10-15 minutes late or leaves 10-15 minutes early for 1 classes	Misses 1 class with an excused absence. Or arrives 10-15 minutes late or leaves 10-15 minutes early for 2 or more classes	Misses 1 class with unexcused absence and must withdraw from the course.
<b>Peer Interaction</b>	Actively supports, engages, and listens to peers (ongoing)	Makes a sincere effort to interact with peers (ongoing)	Limited interaction with peers	Virtually no interaction with peers
<b>Participation</b>	Plays an active role in discussions (ongoing). Comments advance level and depth of dialogue	Participates constructively in discussions (ongoing). Relevant comments are based on assigned material	When prepared, participates constructively in discussions. When prepared, relevant comments are based on assignments	Comments vague if given; frequently demonstrates lack of interest. Demonstrates a noticeable lack of interest on occasion
	<b>1</b>			<b>0</b>
<b>Group Dynamics</b>	Group dynamic and level of discussion are often better because of candidate's presence			Group dynamic and level of discussion are often disrupted by candidate's presence

**TOTAL POINTS:**

**10**

**YOU MAY POSITIVELY AFFECT YOUR PARTICIPATION GRADE BY:**

1. Becoming more active and/or making more effective comments that raise overall level of discussion and set examples for others.
2. Asking thoughtful questions that will enhance discussion and engage peers.
3. Listening carefully to, supporting, and engaging your peers in discussion. This will essentially improve others' learning experience.

**YOU MAY NEGATIVELY AFFECT YOUR PARTICIPATION GRADE BY:**

1. Missing class or arriving late. Even though you may have submitted assigned work, your contribution will not have added to class discussion.
2. Dominating class discussions, thereby restricting others' participation.
3. Disrupting others' opportunity to listen and/or participate.
4. Making negative, offensive, and/or disrespectful comments during discussions that do not fit with the Counseling and Development dispositions policy.
5. Using electronic devices such as but not limited to a cell phone, iPod, or computer for personal or other coursework reasons during class unless instructed to do so. Each violation reduces the final course grade by  $\frac{1}{2}$  grade (e.g., B becomes B-). There are no exceptions.