



## College of Education and Human Development

Counseling & Development  
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<http://gse.gmu.edu/counseling/>

**EDCD 797.X03:**  
**Building Resilience in Children,  
Families, and Communities**  
**1 Credit, Summer 2015**  
**7:20pm – 10 PM**  
**Meeting dates: 6/16, 6/18, 6/23, 6/25, 6/30**  
**West 1007**

**PROFESSOR:** Joseph Williams, PhD  
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A. Prerequisites/Co-requisites

Admission to CNDV program, EDCD 603

B. University Catalog Course Description

Provides an introduction to strength and resilience based approaches to counseling. Topics include assessment and intervention strategies for working with children, adolescents and families from high risk environments. Areas of emphasis on ecological risk and protective factors.

C. Expanded Course Description

This course will provide an introduction to strength and resilience based approaches to counseling. Readings, discussions and course activities will be used to explore the following topics: the foundations of resiliency, resiliency and youth development, resiliency and counseling, resiliency and families, resiliency and schools, resiliency and communities, and resiliency and the brain. Students will leave with research-based, practical, and effective strategies for assessing and utilizing client strengths and resources in school-based and community-based counseling.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES /LEARNER OUTCOMES**

1. Understand the meaning of resilience as it applies to personal, family, school, and community life.
2. Understand the differences between client strengths and resources
3. Create a helping framework for resolving client treatment needs based on utilizing their identified strengths and resources
4. Understand the administration and uses of strength-based assessment and intervention strategies.
5. Evaluate the practical application of the resilience-based perspective by assessing your own strengths and resources.
6. Gain an understanding of how the contexts in which people are embedded can shape their adaptation to adversity.
7. Understand advocacy and its role in building resilience among individuals, families, schools, and communities.

### **PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

EDCD 797 is a special topics course and meets the requirement that all masters students take 2 credits of special topics course work. This 1-credit course will contribute to counseling students' knowledge of a particular population of clients.

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.

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

List of recommended readings are available on Blackboard.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMINATIONS

### Course Structure:

Students should come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussion and activities. Class activities will include lecture, small group work, experiential exercises, counseling labs, and videos. Students are expected to attend all classes, to come on time and to stay for the entire class.

### Course Assignments/Requirements:

- **Assignment 1: Active Participation [10 points]** is expected in all class activities. Students are expected to attend all classes and come to class prepared having completed all reading and written assignments. Active participation is based on your presence in the class—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.

- **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 Discussion 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 (5 pages maximum). Instructions are available on Blackboard.

- **Assignment 4: 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 resources of school, community, or organizations and to design specific recommendations for how to increase resilience and reduce vulnerability over a given time period. Students will submit a 5 – 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.

**SUMMARY OF GRADING SYSTEM AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Class Participation	10 points
Weekly Reading Questions	20 points
Resilience Assessment Project	35 points
<u>Charting Your Lifeline</u>	<u>35 points</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100 points</b>

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved:

A	97-100 points
A-	93-96 points
B+	88-92 points
B	84-87 points
C	75-83 points
F	74 points and below

**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

APA Format: Students in Counseling & Development courses are expected to use APA style (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) for written papers.

Electronic Devices

**Turn off and put away all electronic communication devices during class.** 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 in writing to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, text, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in your participation grade. **Notify the instructor prior to class if you have an emergency situation that requires accommodation.**

### Attendance

In accordance with the policies of the Counseling and Development Program, on-time attendance at every class meeting is expected. Late arrival to class will be considered an absence. Due to the short nature of this class, **any unexcused absences will result in class failure.** Attendance is required for all classes. Excused absences are permitted for illness, religious holidays, or emergency situations only; documentation is required for the absence to be considered excused. Work-related absences are not considered excused.

### Course Requirements

Each student is expected to: (1) attend each class, (2) complete all reading assignments before class, (3) arrive on time and stay for the entire class period, (4) participate in discussions and in-class work groups, (5) regularly check GMU email, and (6) submit or access documents via Blackboard as assigned.

### Assignments

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 20% 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 assignments 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.

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of both the George Mason University code of honor and the expected professional dispositions of the Counseling & Development Program. The GMU English Department has developed the following statement regarding plagiarism: "Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinion, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; 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 to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writer's own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious, and 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 and establishes credibility, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism."

## **TASKSTREAM REQUIREMENTS: Not applicable for this course**

### **George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students**

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>].
- Mason Email – 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, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – 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/>].
- Office of Disability Services – 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 <http://ods.gmu.edu/>.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – 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/>].

### **PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS**

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

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 George Mason University Counseling & Development Program has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to these dispositions, which may be found at <http://gse.gmu.edu/counseling/policies-resources/>.

### **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**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC(S)</b>	<b>READINGS DUE</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE</b>
1	June 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	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 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	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 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2015	Resiliency and Families	Henderson 2007 Part 6: Chapters 1-9  Henderson 2012 Chapters 4 & 5	
4	June 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	Resiliency and Schools	Henderson 2007 Part 2: Chapters 1-12  Henderson 2012 Chapters 6 & 7	
5	June 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2015	Resiliency and Communities	Henderson 2007 Part 3: Chapters 1-8  Henderson 2012 Chapters 8 & 9	<b>Resilience Assessment Project</b>

**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**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1 – 0.5</b>	<b>0</b>
<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
<b>TOTAL POINTS: 10</b>				

**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.