

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling and Development

EDCD 611.003 – Introduction to Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling
2 Credits, Spring 2019
Monday 7:20 – 10:00 PM – Krug Hall Room 242 – Fairfax

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Co-requisites

Admission to CNDV program, and successful completion of EDCD 603: Counseling Theories and Practice and successful completion of or concurrently enrolled in EDCD 626: Principles and Practices of School Counseling.

University Catalog Course Description

Introduces principles, practices, and application of ethical and legal issues in school counseling.

Course Overview

This course is designed for counseling students in the school counseling track. It is designed to be taken midway through the curriculum so students should be familiar with basic counseling skills and applications that can be used effectively across a diverse range of ethnic, socioeconomic, geographic, and cultural school communities. Students should also have an understanding of school counseling programs and the developmental needs of children at both the elementary and secondary level.

The course also addresses requirements for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the legal, ethical, and professional issues and standards of the counseling profession. The primary goal of the course is to help students become more ethical and culturally competent counselors.

Course Delivery Method

This course is taught through a combination of lectures, class discussions, small group discussions, group presentation, assigned readings, experiential exercises, research, multi-media presentations, guest speakers, examinations and online learning formats to advance and evaluate students' knowledge and skills.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the theory and practice of ethical principles and standards.
2. Describe differences between ethical principles and legal standards.
3. Demonstrate an awareness of the potential ethical dilemmas school counselors face.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between personal/cultural values, beliefs and ethical actions as professionals
5. Demonstrate an understanding of how racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, ability, and other forms of stereotyping are ethical issues.
6. Demonstrate a working knowledge of various Codes of Ethics to their daily practice.
7. Demonstrate an ethical decision-making process.
8. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the laws that pertain to school counseling in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
9. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the child abuse intervention and report laws that pertain to all educators in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
10. Become familiar with effective intervention strategies.
11. Demonstrate an understanding of the legal exceptions to confidentiality and privileged communication.
12. Demonstrate an understanding of the legal requirements and qualifiers for records, technology, and subpoenas.

Professional Standards (CACREP):

At the end of this course, students will demonstrate the following CACREP specialty area requirements for school counseling programs.

Section II.K.a. An understanding of all aspects of professional functioning, to include: Ethical standards of ACA/ASCA and related entities, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling

Section SCP.A. An understanding of professional functioning in School Counseling.

ASCA SCHOOL COUNSELOR COMPETENCIES:

At the end of this course, students will demonstrate the following ASCA School Counselor Competencies.

II-B-4. Applies the ethical standards and principles of the school counseling profession and adheres to the legal aspects of the role of the school counselor.

II-B-4a. Practices ethical principles of the school counseling profession in accordance with the ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors.

II-B-4b. Understands the legal and ethical nature of working in a pluralistic, multicultural, global, and technological society.

II-B-4c. Understands and practices in accordance with school district policy and local, state and federal statutory requirements.

- II-B-4d. Understands the unique legal and ethical nature of working with minor students in a school setting.
- II-B-4e. Advocates responsibly for school board policy, local, state and federal statutory requirements that are in the best interests of students.
- II-B-4f. Resolves ethical dilemmas by employing an ethical decision-making model appropriate to work in schools.
- II-B-4g. Models ethical behavior.
- II-B-4h. Continuously engages in professional development and uses resources to inform and guide ethical and legal work.
- II-B-4i. Practices within the ethical and statutory limits of confidentiality.
- II-B-4j. Continually seeks consultation and supervision to guide legal and ethical decision making and to recognize and resolve ethical dilemmas.
- II-B-4k. Understands and applies an ethical and legal obligation not only to students but to parents, administration and teachers as well.

Required Texts

Stone, C.B. (2017). *School counseling principles: Ethics and law* (4th. ed.). Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association. ISBN: 978-1-929289-41-7

*Additional readings are available on the course's Blackboard page.

RECOMMENDED Reading:

Hermann, M. A., Remley, T. P., & Huey, W. C (Ed), (2010). *Ethical and legal issues in school counseling* (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: American School Counselor Association.

American School Counselor Association
<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/>

American Counseling Association
<http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

Assignments and/or Examinations

Assignment 1: Participation and Attendance (*10% of total grade*)

As a skill-based class, we will spend a great deal of time processing information through class discussion, group work, and participating in experiential activities. Because the class will be so interactive and experiential, there is no way to “get the information” from a missed class—the class experience cannot be replicated. For these reasons, your class attendance and active participation is vital not only to your learning, but to your classmates’ learning as well. Several factors will go into your participation grade, including:

- a. **attendance** (every student is expected to be at every class),
- b. **punctuality** (every student is expected to be ready to go when class begins, and to stay for the duration of class time),
- c. **active participation** in class exercises (key is *active*, contributing ideas, giving feedback, participating in group discussions)
- d. **substantive contributions** to class discussions (not quantity of contributions, but contributions that demonstrate thoughtful analysis of information; comments that move discussion forward; comments based on knowledge and experience, not just opinion; and a demonstrated ability to propose new ideas and/or build on others’ ideas in a meaningful way). A rubric will be provided on Bb.

Assignment 2: Weekly Reading & In-Class Case Studies (*15% of total grade*)

Reading: Students are expected to read all of the assigned course content. *Unannounced* reading review quizzes may be given throughout the semester.

In Class Case Studies (2): Students will work with their family group members to apply the STEPS model to an ethical decision making case study related to the weekly readings. Students will use the STEPS nine step model to consider the emotional influences of a problem, the chronological and developmental appropriateness of the solution, the setting, and the parent’s rights. The case studies will be completed in class and submitted to the instructor at the end of the class.

Working as a group, students will:

1. Define the problem emotionally and intellectually
2. Apply the ASCA and ACA Code of Ethics and the law
3. Consider the chronological and developmental levels of the students involved
4. Consider the setting, parental rights, and minors’ rights
5. Apply the moral principals
6. Determine the potential courses of action and their consequences
7. Evaluate the selected course of action
8. Consult
9. Implement the course of action

Assignment 3: Ethical Quizzes (*45% of total grade – 15% each*)

Students are required to complete **three** quizzes during the course. In each ethics quiz you will be asked to answer true/false, multiple choice, or short answer essay questions and apply the concepts from the text, lectures and readings to a hypothetical ethical case studies. Ethics Quizzes will be in an open-book and open-note format. Quizzes will be posted on Blackboard

one week prior to the due date. Answers and responses to the essay questions must be more than a repeat and rewrite of the material contained in each chapter (recommended that you review the plagiarism policy). Students are expected to write responses that also capture their own thoughts and ideas about the content and thrust of each question.

Each quiz is worth a maximum of 15 points. The following evaluation criteria will be applied to cases:

- Understanding of how laws and ethical standards apply to the case
- Accurate interpretation of the facts of the case
- Knowledge of the relevant aspects of research and scholarship on the subject
- Capacity to apply standards and material from assigned readings to a specific case
- Ability to express ideas clearly...

Assignment 5: Final Case Study Examination (*30% of total grade*)

The Final will be in an open-book and open-note format and will be completed in work groups during the last class meeting. Students are required to analyze an ethical/legal dilemma by applying the STEPS decision making model. Groups will be asked to apply the concepts from the text, lectures and readings to a hypothetical ethical case study. Student groups are expected to write responses that capture their own thoughts and ideas about the content and thrust of each question.

The following evaluation criteria will be applied to cases:

- Understanding of how laws and ethical standards apply to the case
- Accurate interpretation of the facts of the case
- Knowledge of the relevant aspects of research and scholarship on the subject
- Capacity to apply standards and material from assigned readings to a specific case
- Ability to express ideas clearly

- **Other Requirements**

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 reduction 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. **Any unexcused absence will result in failing the course** (<http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/resources/>). Excused absences can only be arranged with instructor on a case by case basis. 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 your attendance during any portion of the class; students should see the instructor in the first class to discuss continuing in the class this semester or taking the course during another semester.

Assignment Policy

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 15 minutes of the class session in which they are due. When 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 via hard copy on the day the assignment is due.

- **Grading**

- **Assignment weights**

Participation and Attendance	10%
Weekly Reading & In Class Case Studies	15%
Ethical Quiz #1	15%
Ethical Quiz #2	15%
Ethical Quiz #3	15%
Final Case Study Examination	30%
Total	100 %

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

Professional Dispositions

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

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Proposed Class Schedule

Week	Date	Topic(s)	Reading(s) Due	Assignment(s) Due
1	1/28/19	Introduction to Legal and Ethical Issues <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 1	Bring: ASCA & ACA code of ethics
2	2/4/19	Professionalism Negligence <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 2 & 5	
3	2/11/19	Cyberspace Individual & Group Counseling <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 3 & 8	
4	2/18/19	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Obligations to the Court <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 4 & 6	Ethics Quiz #1 Submit to BB by Sunday, 2/24/19
5	2/25/19	Child Abuse Sexual Harassment <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 7 & 11	
6	3/4/19	Working with Homeless Students <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Rd Homelessness articles in Journal Articles folder Bb	Ethics Quiz #2 Submit to BB by Sunday, 3/10/19
	3/11/19	No Class Spring Break		
7	3/18/19	Sexually Active Students Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Questioning Students <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 9 & 10	
8	3/25/19	Bullying, Cyberbullying & Sexting Violence and Criminal Activity <i>In Class Case Study</i>	Stone, Ch. 12 & 13	
9	4/1/19	The Ethics of Advocacy	Stone, Ch. 14	Ethics Quiz #3 Submit to BB by Sunday, 3/31/19
10	4/8/19	Final Class Meeting Final Case Study Examination (In Class) Course Evaluation		

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason 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 with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students>.

Assessment Rubric(s)
EDCD 611 Final Case Study Exam

The Steps Model For School Setting Rubric	
<p>Step 1: Define the Problem Emotionally and Intellectually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do your emotions or instinct tell you about the problem? • What does your intellect tell you about the problem? • What are the facts? <p>Summarize the logic behind whether your emotional, intellectual, and/or factual perceptions should be considered to assess this impending dilemma.</p>	4
<p>Step 2: Apply the ASCA and ACA Ethical Codes and the Law:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the ASCA or ACA codes offer directives about how to respond to this dilemma? If so, which ones? • Do the laws direct you to proceed in a certain direction to mitigate this dilemma? If so, which ones? 	4
<p>Step 3: Consider the child’s developmental stage, beyond chronological age?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should consider Piaget, Erikson, maturity, disability, autism, or intellectual delays in the student’s role in this dilemma? If so, which ones and why? 	4
<p>Step 4: Consider the Setting, Parental Rights, and Minors’ Rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you considering the rights of the student’s parents as the guardian? Is there a duty to breach confidentiality? • Do you have limited confidential guidelines in the school setting? 	4
<p>Step 5: Apply Moral Principals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess whether you are not upholding to beneficence (promoting good to others), non-maleficence (avoiding harm), justice (providing equal treatment to all regardless of differences), and loyalty (staying connected to students)? • Which moral principles can be compromised by this dilemma? • Are any moral principles in conflict with the others? 	2
<p>Step 6: Determine your potential courses of action and their consequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you created several scenarios? Exhaust several options (at least 3) and denote the pros and cons of each decision. 	4
<p>Step 7: Evaluate the Selected Action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the options and determine which 2 option fits the desired outcome. • Apply whether the decision would be fair amongst many groups. • Apply publicity and determine if this decision could appear in the press and you would be comfortable. • Apply universality and decide if you could apply this to another counselor in the same situation? If the dilemma cannot be applied universally you must reassess options. The solution should produce the maximized good across similar scenarios. 	2

<p>Step 8: Consult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you consult with a colleague, lead counselor, school counselor supervisor, school site administrator, student services supervisor, superintendent office, school legal department, ASCA ethical representative, ACA ethical representative, Liability Insurance Consultant, union, officer, or attorney? • Who would you consult with for this dilemma? And Why? 	4
<p>Step 9: Implement the course of action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make certain that you are mindful of the law, ethics, and regulations of your school system? Try to minimize problem areas although you might not eliminate all. 	2
<p>Total</p>	(30)