

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

EDCD 611.001 – Introduction to Ethical and Legal Issues in School Counseling  
3 Credits, Spring 2020  
Monday 4:30 – 7:10 PM – Robinson Hall B Room B124 – Fairfax

**Faculty**

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**Prerequisites/Co-requisites**

Admission to CNDV program, and successful completion of EDCE 603: Counseling Theories and Practice and successful completion of or concurrently enrolled in EDCE 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.

## **CACREP Standards/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. (5.G.2.n)
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 ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling (2.F.1.i)
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. Demonstrate an understanding of the procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide. (2.F.7.c)
11. Become familiar with effective intervention strategies, community resources and referral sources. (5.G.2.k)
12. Demonstrate an understanding of the legal exceptions to confidentiality and privileged communication.
13. Demonstrate an understanding of the legal requirements and qualifiers for records, technology, and subpoenas.
14. Demonstrate an understanding of the school counselor's roles and responsibilities in relation to the school emergency management plans, and crises, disasters, and trauma (5.G.2.e.)
15. Provide theories, models, and strategies for understanding and practicing consultation. (2.F.5.c.)

## **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 (10% 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:** 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 (*60% of total grade – 20% each*) (5.G.2.n, 2.F.1.i)

Students are required to complete **three** quizzes during the course. In each 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. Students are expected to write responses that capture their own thoughts and ideas about the content and thrust of each question and should cite the relevant ethical codes when appropriate.

Each quiz is worth a maximum of 20 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
- Capacity to apply standards and material from assigned readings to a specific case
- Ability to express ideas clearly

### **Assignment 5:** Final Case Study Examination (*20% of total grade*) (KPI A.1.a.1)

Students are required to analyze an ethical/legal dilemma by applying a decision making model. You will be asked to apply the concepts from the text, lectures, and readings to a hypothetical ethical case study. The Final will be in an open-book and open-note format. The Final exam 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. It is recommended that you review the GMU plagiarism policy and APA Publication Manual guidelines. Students 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
- 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.

Students must have their own audio/digital recording equipment. Digital recorders are recommended. Students are expected to be able to use a computer, send and retrieve email, open attachments, access to the internet, participate in online discussions, use Blackboard, and conduct a library search on line. 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.

For more information on checking-out audio/digital recording equipment, please visit STAR- Multimedia ([http://doit.gmu.edu/staffSection.asp?page=video\\_checkout](http://doit.gmu.edu/staffSection.asp?page=video_checkout)) or call

(703) 993- 8990. The STAR lab is located on the second floor of the Johnson Center, Room 229. Please note that the C&D program has video equipment available for check-out. Please speak with the instructor for more information.

- **Grading**

Assignment weights

Participation and Attendance	10%
Weekly Reading & In Class Case Studies	10%
Ethical Quiz #1	20%
Ethical Quiz #2	20%
Ethical Quiz #3	20%
Final Case Study Examination	20%

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

**A [100-97]; A- [96-94]; B+ [93-91]; B [90-87]; B- [86-84]; C [83-80]; F [79 and below]**

**Professional Dispositions**

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

Students must adhere to program professional dispositions:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/assets/docs/forms/Professional%20Dispositions.pdf>

**Professional Dispositions Assessment**

Professional Dispositions are assessed in all required courses. The minimum score (benchmark) is based on the level of the course, as described below.

Level of Assessment	CMHC	SC	Minimum Score
<b>Basic</b>	602, 609, 601, 525, 603, 604 654, 652, 656, 658	602, 606, 601, 525, 603, 604 613, 611, 626, 615	2
<b>Intermediate</b>	608, 750, 660, 628, 619, 621, 610, 797	608, 751, 660, 628, 619, 621, 610, 797	3
<b>Advanced</b>	792, 793	794, 795	4

Professional Dispositions assessments are scored as follows:

- **4: Consistently Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition all or almost all of the time. This rank is considered exceptional, particularly for students who are at the beginning of their program. Students who are advanced in the program (i.e., in their last year of the program and enrolled in Internship I or II) should expect to achieve this rank.

- **3: Frequently Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition often or most of the time. It is expected that students in the middle of the program (i.e., usually the second year for full time or third year for part time students) will achieve this rank. This reflects that they have moved beyond the initial phase of counselor training and are developing well towards being a professional counselor.
- **2: Sometimes Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition sometimes or inconsistently. It is expected that students at the beginning of the program (i.e., first year for most students) will achieve this rank. Students at the beginning of the program are expected to be developing towards these professional dispositions as a part of their counselor training and preparation for their future as a professional counselor.
- **1: Seldom Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition rarely or not at all. In some instances this may also indicate a harmful demonstration of professional disposition(s). Students at the beginning of their program may achieve this rank, which can be developmentally appropriate as they learn the expectations for students and future professional counselors. Should this occur, students should expect to meet with their advisor, who will assist them in addressing the area of concern.
- **N/A: Not Applicable** – An instructor or supervisor may use this to note that they did not have the opportunity to observe the disposition or that it was not relevant in the given context. This is most likely to occur at the beginning of the program when some dispositions may not be germane to the particular class.

### Class Schedule

Class	Date	Topic(s)	Reading(s) Due	Assignment(s) Due	CACREP Standard(s)
1	1/27/20	Introduction to Legal and Ethical Issues	Stone, Ch. 1	<b>Bring:</b> ASCA & ACA codes of ethics	1, 6, 15
2	2/3/20	Professionalism Negligence <i>Guest Speaker</i>	Stone, Ch. 2 & 5		1, 6, 15
3	2/10/20	Cyberspace	Stone, Ch. 3		1, 6
4	2/17/20	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	Stone, Ch. 4		1, 6
5	2/24/20	Obligations to the Court	Stone, Ch. 6	Quiz 1 on Bb	1, 6
6	3/2/20	Children Experiencing Homelessness	Article Readings	<b>Ethics Quiz #1 Due</b>	1, 6
	3/9/20	<b>Spring Break</b>			
7	3/16/20	Child Abuse	Stone, Ch. 7		1, 6, 11, 14
8	3/23/20	Individual and Group Counseling <i>Guest Speaker</i>	Stone, Ch. 8		1, 6, 10, 15
9	3/30/20	Sexual Harassment	Stone, Ch. 11	Quiz 2 on Bb	1, 6, 11
10	4/6/20	Sexually Active Students	Stone, Ch. 9	<b>Ethics Quiz #2 Due</b>	1, 6, 11
11	4/13/20	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Students	Stone, Ch. 10		1, 6, 11
12	4/20/20	Bullying, Cyberbullying, Sexting	Stone, Ch. 12	Quiz 3 on Bb	1, 6, 10, 11
13	4/27/20	Violence and Criminal Activity <i>Guest Speaker, Threat Assessment</i>	Stone, Ch. 13	<b>Ethics Quiz #3 Due</b> Final Case Study on Bb	10, 11, 14
14	5/4/20	The Ethics of Advocacy	Stone, Ch. 14	<b>Final Case Study Examination Due</b>	1, 6

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



## **Counseling and Development Mission Statement**

The Counseling Program is committed to preparing counselors who promote the social, psychological, physical, and spiritual health of individuals, families, communities, and organizations in order to contribute to the advancement of global well-being. The program strives for national and international excellence in implementing a counseling perspective which provides a foundation in basic counseling skills and focuses on social justice, multiculturalism, international, advocacy and leadership. It is our belief that a global perspective on development across the life span, and an understanding and appreciation of multiculturalism, diversity, and social justice are integral to the preparation of professional counselors, requiring that professional counselors are prepared to assume leadership roles, be proactive change agents and become advocates for social, economic and political justice. The program is committed to accomplish this mission by working through interdisciplinary teams as well as promote the interconnectedness of teaching, research, service and professional practice. Through this mission faculty will facilitate a continued tradition of international, national and regional leadership through the development of collaborative partnerships and projects, research, publications, presentations, consultation, and training.

## **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 <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> ).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

### *Campus Resources*

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to [tk20help@gmu.edu](mailto:tk20help@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard

should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

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

**Assessment Rubric(s)**

***A.1.a.1 – SC: Ethical Decision-Making Case Study in 611***

		4	3	2	1
Standard	%	Exceeds Standards	Meets Standards	Approaching Standards	Below Standards
1. Define ethical issues, violations, or concerns identified in the case and as relate to the professional roles of school counselors KPI A.1.a.1; CACREP 2.F.1.i; 2.F.1.b; and 5.G.2.n (SC)	25	All central ethical issues, violations and concerns in the case are identified and used as a basis for ethical evaluation	Some central ethical issues, violations and concerns in the case are identified and used as a basis for ethical evaluation	Some central ethical issues are identified, but not explained or evaluated	Central ethical issues are not defined appropriately or completely. Misunderstanding of the issues related to the case
2. Identification of relevant laws and ASCA Ethical Standards KPI A.1.a.1; CACREP 2.F.1.i and 5.G.2.n (SC)	25	Student thoroughly connects information from the case study to applicable ethical codes and/ or laws	Student adequately connects information from the case study to applicable ethical codes and/ or laws	Connection of information from case study to applicable ethical codes and/or laws is limited, or is only tangentially relevant	Student does not connect information from case study to applicable ethical codes and/or laws
3. Identify consequences of each possible course of action KPI A.1.a.1; CACREP 2.F.1.i and 5.G.2.n (SC)	25	All critical consequences are identified and connected with actions. More minor consequences are also considered. Relative weights of the various consequences are explicitly articulated with rational thought	All critical consequences are identified, but some minor consequences are missed. Consequences are related to actions, but relative weights are not clearly articulated	Some critical consequences of actions are identified, but some minor consequences are missed or not clearly articulated	Critical consequences of all actions are missing. Actions are not connected with consequences, but are instead random and illogical. Relative weights of actions and consequences are not identified.

<p>4. Decide on an ethical course of action based on the professional role and function of school counselors KPI A.1.a.1; CACREP 2.F.1.i; 2.F.1.b; and 5.G.2.n (SC)</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>Solution and ethical analysis is logical and clearly presented at a level that demonstrates extensive consideration, insight and understanding of applicable ethical codes and laws</p>	<p>Solution and ethical analysis is somewhat logical and presented at a level that demonstrates some consideration, insight and understanding of applicable ethical codes and laws</p>	<p>Solution and ethical analysis is somewhat illogical and does not clearly demonstrate thoughtful consideration, insight and understanding of applicable ethical codes and laws</p>	<p>Student fails to present a reasonable ethical course of action.</p>
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