

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School Psychology Program

SPSY 692 Counseling in the Schools
3 Credits, Spring 2021
Mondays 7:20 – 10:00 PM – Synchronous Online

Faculty

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Prerequisites/Corequisites

EDCD 603 or with permission of instructor.

University Catalog Course Description

Examines theories, techniques, and counseling issues relevant to children and adolescents. Develops basic and advanced counseling skills, and provides experience receiving verbal and written feedback on simulated counseling sessions. Explores range of community agencies providing mental health services. Counseling practice provides an emphasis on process and culturally competent counseling strategies.

Course Overview

This course focuses on advanced counseling skills and techniques relevant to children and adolescents and builds on the knowledge and skills learned in the beginning counseling course. The course is designed to help students develop basic and advance counseling skills and experience receiving verbal and written feedback on simulated counseling sessions in order to prepare you for your internships and a professional career in school psychology. The course will also provide insight into role of multicultural factors in the development of counseling relationships.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using a hybrid synchronous/ asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on Monday, January 25^h at 7:20pm.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers
To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Log-in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 2 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- Participation:
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

- Instructor Support:
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Students can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:
Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Course Objectives

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

1. Explore and describe evidence-based strategies for prevention/wellness and intervention/counseling to address developmental and mental health issues commonly facing children and adolescents.
2. Understand and apply intervention strategies to effectively counsel children and adolescents individually and in groups.
3. Develop culturally competent counseling skills.
4. Discover and understand community mental health agencies that commonly collaborate with schools.
5. Understand ethical obligations and guiding principles of School Psychologists as outlined by the National Association of School Psychologists.

Professional Standards

This course contributes to the development of knowledge and skills in the following National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) professional standards (2020):

- Domain 3: Academic Interventions and Instructional Supports
- Domain 4: Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Interventions
- Domain 5: Services to Promote Safe and Supportive Schools
- Domain 9: Research and Evidence-Based Practice

Required Texts

Cook-Cottone, C. P., & Kane, L. S. (2019). *Elements of counseling children and adolescents*. New York, NY: Springer Publications.

De Lucia-Waack, J. (2006). *Leading psychoeducational groups for children and adolescents*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Professional articles will be assigned and distributed via Blackboard or as indicated on the course Schedule; further articles may be assigned at any time during the semester.

Course Assignments

The following assignments are designed to guide you in accomplishing the course objectives. Late assignments, if not arranged otherwise with me, will be penalized 10% for each day not submitted. All papers must be type written in APA (7th ed.) format. Papers that are not in APA format and/or are over the page limit will be penalized and result in a grade reduction. The page limit does not include title page, abstract or references. All assignments are due on their scheduled date by the start of class (i.e., 7:20pm).

Participation and Attendance (15 points total)

As a skills-based class, we will spend a great deal of time processing information through class discussion and role-play. Because synchronous class sessions will be experiential, the class experience cannot be replicated. For these reasons, your attendance and class participation are vital to not only your learning, but to your classmates' learning as well. Several factors will go into your participation grade, including:

- a. participation (every student is expected to make every attempt 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 the class).
- c. active participation in class exercises (contributing ideas, giving feedback, and participating in group discussions)
- d. substantive contributions to class discussions (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).

Case Studies (15 points total)

Three case study assignments will be posted on Blackboard on their scheduled class date and will be due by the end of that class period (i.e., 10:00pm). Each case study assignment will be worth 5 points (for a total of 15 points). Students should review the case studies and respond in a thoughtful, substantive manner. Appropriate counseling strategies and techniques should be discussed along with multicultural considerations.

- **Case Study 1 Due: 2/1/21**
- **Case Study 2 Due: 3/1/21**
- **Case Study 3 Due: 3/22/21**

Counseling Recordings (30 points total)

Two counseling recordings and self- evaluations constitute the performance-based assessments for this course. Students will record and transcribe two role play counseling sessions. Each individual session should be between 20-30 minutes. Students are encouraged to incorporate strategies and approaches learned throughout the semester into their sessions Along with the counseling recordings and transcriptions, students will submit self- evaluations. Additional details about this assignment will be located on Blackboard.

- **Counseling Recording #1 and supplemental docs Due: 2/15/21**
- **Counseling Recording #2 and supplemental docs Due: 4/5/21**

Community Agency Paper (10 points total)

In order to gain a better understanding of mental health and coaching services that are provided in the community, students will complete a short overview (2 page maximum) of a community agency to whom referrals may be made. Additional details about this assignment will be located on Blackboard. **Community Agency Paper Due: 3/15/21**

Group Counseling Presentation (20 points total)

Students will work in small groups (2-3) to plan a 4-6 session group counseling intervention. The group counseling plan must include at least 3 creative therapy activities and/or interventions (e.g., biblio-therapy, games/board games, science experiments, mind-body awareness, computer-based resources, expressive arts –art, music, play, etc.) to use with children and/or adolescents. Students will record their group counseling plan and upload to Blackboard on the scheduled class date. **At least two creative therapy activities must be demonstrated in the group counseling plan.** Non-presenting students will be required to review their peer’s group counseling plans and make substantive comments on a discussion thread (for participation points). Additional details about this assignment will be located on Blackboard. **Group Counseling Presentations will be uploaded to Blackboard on 4/12/21 & 4/19/21 by the start of class time (i.e., 7:20pm).**

Grading

<u>Graded Assignments:</u>	
Participation/Attendance	15
Case Studies	15
Counseling Recordings	40
Community Agency Paper	10
Group Counseling Presentation	20
Total Points	100

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

A [100-94]; A- [93-90]; B+ [89-87]; B [86-84]; B- [83-80]; C [79 - 70]; F [69 and below]

Professional Dispositions

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

Ethical Obligations

All school psychologists and school psychology students, to include University Supervisors, Students, and On-Site Supervisors, are bound by the professional ethical standards and practices of the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). University and On-Site Supervisors must also adhere to NASP’s Code of Ethics, Section on Supervision: Supervision, Training and Teaching. See the NASP Ethical Codes (2020) for detailed information.

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

Class Schedule

Date	Topic(s) <i>Activities</i>	Readings Due	Assignment(s) Due
1/25/21	Introductions, Ethics & Syllabus	NASP Ethical Guidelines	
2/1/21	Basic Counseling Skills Review	Cook-Cottone et al.; Ch.1 & Ch2	Case Study 1 Due
2/8/21	Expressive and Creative Counseling Techniques Evidence-Based Counseling Curricula <i>Skill Work Counseling Recording #1</i>	Cook-Cottone et al.; Ch.3	
2/15/21	Solution Focused Counseling	Cook-Cottone et al.; Ch.5	Counseling Recording # 1 and supplemental docs Due
2/22/21	Counseling At-Risk Children and Adolescents Motivational Interviewing <i>Skill Work</i>	Cook-Cottone et al.; Ch.4 Article on Blackboard	
3/1/21	Small-Group Counseling	DeLucia-Waack Ch. 1-2	Case Study 2 Due
3/8/21	Counseling Children from Diverse Backgrounds <i>Advanced Skills Review</i>	DeLucia-Waack Ch.5-7	
3/15/21	Counseling in Schools: Anxiety	DeLucia-Waack Ch.8	Community Agency Paper Due
3/22/21	Counseling in Schools: Crisis Intervention (Suicide)/ Mandated Reporting	Cook-Cottone et al.; Ch.6	Case Study 3 Due
3/29/21	Counseling in Schools: Non- Suicidal Self-Injury <i>Skill Work Counseling Recording #2</i>		
4/5/21	Preparation for Group Counseling Presentations	Resources on Blackboard	Counseling Recording # 2 and supplemental docs Due
4/12/21	Group Counseling Presentations Groups A, B, C		

4/19/21	Group Counseling Presentations Groups D, E, F		
4/26/21	Class Summary/Reflection Course Evaluation	Cook-Cottone et al.; Ch.7	

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 <https://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/>