

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

EDCD 603.002 – Counseling Theories and Practice  
3 Credits, Spring 2022  
Tuesdays, 1:30 – 4:10 PM  
Fairfax campus – ACGC Building Room 1302A

**Faculty**

Name: Dr. Shekila Melchior  
Office Hours: By Appointment (email to schedule)  
Office Location: Krug Hall Suite, 202 (Counseling Office)  
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**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

Admission to Counseling program; EDCD 602 or concurrent.

**University Catalog Course Description**

Covers major theoretical approaches to counseling from a multicultural perspective and provides supervised introduction to basic skills.

**Course Overview**

EDCD 603 is an entry-level course for the Counseling and Development degree program. It is intended to offer counseling majors an introduction to counseling theories and the associated application of these approaches in practice. In addition, it affords those individuals who have an interest in counseling, but who have not yet made, and may never make, a commitment to enter the counseling profession, an opportunity to sample what this profession is about. Covers major theoretical approaches to counseling, including psychodynamic, Adlerian, existential, person-centered, cognitive-behavioral, systems, solution-focused and integrated. Provides practice in basic counseling skills through supervised practice. A lab is included. EDCD 603 is a prerequisite to EDCD 606 or EDCD 609 that focuses on advanced counseling skills and techniques. This series of courses will provide minimum necessary foundation for the rest of the curriculum relative to theories and how they are applied in the profession of counseling. EDCD 603 provides the foundation in the knowledge base for the M.Ed. degree in Counseling and Development for students seeking that degree whether they enter the profession in a school, or community settings. This foundation is built upon with other courses culminating in an internship in an appropriate setting.

**Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered using a lecture, lab, seminar and/or hybrid (2-75% online) format.

**Course Objectives**

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

1. Understand theories and models of counseling (CACREP 2.F.5.a)
2. Demonstrate a systems approach to conceptualizing clients (CACREP 2.F.5.b)
3. Understand the development of measurable outcomes for clients (CACREP 2.F.5.i)
4. Apply evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention (CACREP 2.F.5.j)

**Professional Standards**

**Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) 2016**

<b>CACREP Standard</b>	<b>Course Objective Coverage</b>	<b>Course Activities</b>
Understand theories and models of counseling (2.F.5.a)	This Standard is part of Course Objective #1, which is addressed in Classes 1-14 (given the nature of the Standard, it is infused throughout most classes)	Assigned readings that discuss this Standard include: Chapters 1-14 in <i>Counseling and psychotherapy theories in context and practice: Skills, strategies, and techniques</i> (given the nature of the Standard, it is infused throughout most readings)
Demonstrate a systems approach to conceptualizing clients (2.F.5.b)	This Standard is part of Course Objective #2, which is addressed in Classes 1, 3, 12, 13, 14	Assigned readings that discuss this Standard include: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 10, 12, 14 in <i>Counseling and psychotherapy theories in context and practice: Skills, strategies, and techniques</i>
Understand the development of measurable outcomes for clients (2.F.5.i)	This Standard is part of Course Objective #3, which is addressed in Classes 2, 4, 7-14	Assigned readings that discuss this Standard include: Chapters 13, 7, 8, 4, 11, 10, 12, 14 in <i>Counseling and psychotherapy theories in context and practice: Skills, strategies, and techniques</i>
Apply evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention (2.F.5.j)	This Standard is part of Course Objective #4, which is addressed in Classes 3, 4, 10-14	Assigned readings that discuss this Standard include: Chapters 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14 in <i>Counseling and psychotherapy theories in context and practice: Skills, strategies, and techniques</i>

**Additional professional standards addressed in this course:**

- This course fulfills the Virginia Board of Counseling Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) coursework requirement (18VAC115-20-51) for “Theories of counseling & psychotherapy”
- This course addresses the following Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) School Counselor Prek-12 Competency Topic requirements: 8VAC20-543-610.5.c
- This course addresses the following Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Professional Studies requirements for Prek-12 Endorsements: 8VAC20-543-140.5.a, 5.b, 5.c, 5.d

**Required Texts**

Sommers- Flanagan, J., & Sommers-Flanagan, R. (2018). *Counseling and Psychotherapy Theories in Context and Practice: Skills, Strategies, and Techniques* (3rd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

**Additional Reading**

Berne, E. (2011). *Games people play: The basic handbook of transactional analysis*. Tantor eBooks.

Gingerich, W. J., & Eisengart, S. (2000). Solution-focused brief therapy: A review of the outcome research. *Family process*, 39(4), 477-498.

Lega, L. I., & Ellis, A. (2001). Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) in the new millennium: A cross- cultural approach. *Journal of rational-emotive and cognitive-behavior therapy*, 19(4), 201-222.

Spruill, D. A., & Benschoff, J. M. (2000). Helping beginning counselors develop a personal theory of counseling. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 40(1), 70-80.

Wubbolding, R. E., Brickell, J., Imhof, L., Kim, R. I. Z., Lojk, L., & Al-Rashidi, B. (2004). Reality

therapy: A global perspective. *International Journal for the advancement of counselling*, 26(3), 219-228.

### **Course Performance Evaluation**

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

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

Basic theoretical approaches to individual counseling will be discussed, analyzed and applied in this course. Students are responsible for reading assigned material in the theories text, and reading/viewing other supplemental material prior to class, and should come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussion and activities. Class activities will include lecture, skill demonstrations, role-playing, small group work, experiential exercises, videos, and the analysis of recorded counseling sessions.

During the practice sessions, students will have the opportunity to practice skills that are fundamental to effective counseling. Practice activities will focus primarily on practicing skills through role-plays in dyads and triads in which students will take a role. The instructor will critique role-plays and provide feedback on skill development.

1. **Attendance, In-Class Participation & Skill Work** 15 points  
(CACREP Standard: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Active participation and high levels of performance in all class and practice activities is expected. Students are expected to attend all face to face class meetings and come to class prepared having completed all reading, video, and written assignments. *Technology Competence*: Students are expected to be able to use a computer, send and retrieve email, open attachments, gain access to access the Internet, and conduct a library search on-line. All of the course documents will be available on Blackboard, the course management system. Students will need to log onto Blackboard regularly and be able to use the Blackboard resources. Face to face class meetings will be conducted using Zoom.

**In-Class Skill Work**

Skill work activities include but are not limited to: demonstration of counseling skills through demonstration, role-play, and case studies, as well as the critique of another student's counseling tapes. Students will also be expected to participate in activities in class that help them to better understand themselves, their clients, and major counseling theories.

2. **Reflection - Case Conceptualizations (11 @ 5 points each)** 55 points  
(CACREP Standard: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Students will complete a weekly case conceptualization. You will write no more than a one page reflection conceptualizing your client, how the currently theory fits or doesn't fit, how you plan to incorporate said theory in the session and what counseling skills do you anticipate using. Counseling theory and appropriate techniques associated with the chosen theoretical approach should be discussed.

3. **Video-recorded Session & Reflection on Skills**  
(CACREP Standard: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

The student counselor will conduct two, 20-minute counseling sessions with a classmate utilizing a range of counseling skills learned throughout the course. For each

recording, the student will select a **ten-minute section of the recording for the instructor to review**. An assignment checklist for recordings one and two can be found on Blackboard under *Assessments*. Please complete and submit the checklist with your recordings.

### Recording 1

15 points

Students will conduct a recorded counseling session using another student from class. Students will provide the limits of confidentiality at the start of the session and then conduct a twenty (20) minute first session. Please choose a **ten-minute section of the recording for the instructor to review**. Review and critique your performance on recording one and write a two-page (double-spaced) overview and assessment of your counseling skills. The counseling skills overview and assessment will include: a personal reflection on the session, basic skills, relationship development, and areas for growth and improvement. **Due 3/1**

### Recording 2

15 points

Students may use the same student client from Recording #1 for this assignment. You will conduct a 20-minute counseling session utilizing a range of counseling skills learned throughout the course and **choose a ten-minute section of the recording for the instructor to review**. The student counselor will review and critique recording two and will write a two-page (double spaced) overview and assessment of their counseling skills. The counseling skills overview and assessment will include: areas of skill development and student growth throughout semester, areas for future growth and improvement, as well as theoretical areas of interest. **Due 4/19**

### Appropriate content for practice counseling sessions

Practice counseling sessions are used to teach relationship building and to facilitate personal growth and development, rather than to explore serious mental health concerns. It is important to remember that student **counselors-in-training are not licensed professional counselors and lack the expertise to handle serious mental health concerns**. Information shared in practice counseling sessions that raises concerns regarding the safety of the student-client should be shared immediately with the course instructor via in-person communication (if disclosed in class) or via phone call to the number on the top of this syllabus. Student-clients should recognize that any disclosure that indicates a danger to themselves or others will be disclosed (as appropriate per CEHD policy) to the police and GMU Student Academic Affairs. Disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking must be reported to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202.

### **Other Requirements**

**Expectations for Online Counseling Courses: *Cameras on!*** The practice of counseling is relational in nature. As practitioners, we use our eyes, ears, voice, face, and body to communicate presence and understanding to our clients. In order to effectively train you in the practice of counseling concepts and skills, we need to see you to gauge your understanding and reaction to the material being presented. To this end, we ask that you turn on your camera during class meetings.

APA Format: Students in Counseling & Development courses are expected to use APA style (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.) for written papers.

Electronic Devices: **Turn off and put away all electronic communication devices not needed for participation during class.** Cell phones and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. 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. Late arrival to class will be considered an absence. Two or more unexcused absences will result in loss of course credit. Attendance on the first day of class is required. 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 and/or to the instructor as a hard copy as assigned.

**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.”

### Grading

<b><u>GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:</u></b>	
Attendance, In-Class Participation & Skill Work	15 points
Case Conceptualizations ( <i>11 @ 5 points each</i> )	55 points
Video-recorded Counseling Sessions & Reflection on Counseling Skills ( <i>2 @ 15 points each</i> )	30 points
<b>Total Points</b>	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/>

Students must adhere to program professional dispositions:

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

## Professional Dispositions Assessment

Professional Dispositions Assessment are completed by instructors in all courses except electives and field experience courses (Practicum: 750/751; Internship 1: 792/793; and Internship 2: 794/795). In electives and field experience courses, instructors or supervisors may choose to complete a Professional Disposition Assessment should the need arise. In field experience classes, University and Site Supervisors will assess students on a Student Evaluation that is specific to P&I.

A developmental approach to PD Assessment is used, understanding that students are developing in their awareness, skills, and abilities throughout the course of the Counseling Program. In general, students in “basic or pre-practicum level” courses may demonstrate the disposition sometimes or inconsistently. Students in “intermediate or practicum level” courses should demonstrate the disposition more often or frequently. The courses are assigned to levels as follows:

<i>Course Level</i>	<i>Courses</i>
<b>Basic (Pre-Practicum)</b>	<i>Core:</i> 602, 601, 525, 603, 609, 606, 604, 656 <i>CMHC:</i> 654, 652, 658 <i>SC:</i> 613, 611, 626
<b>Intermediate (Practicum)</b>	<i>Core:</i> 608, 660, 628, 619, 610, 797

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

Week	Readings	Topics	Assignment(s) Due	CACREP
1: 1/25	Ch. 1&2	Introductions and Course Overview The Counselor: Person and Professional Micro skills		1,2,3,4,5
2: 2/1	Ch. 4	Psychoanalytic Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>		1,2,3,4,5
3: 2/8	Ch. 5	Adlerian Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #1	
4: 2/15	Ch. 6	Existential Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #2	1,2,3,4,5
5: 2/22	Ch. 7	Person Centered Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #3	1,2,3,4,5
6: 3/1	Ch. 8	Gestalt Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	<b>DUE: Recording #1</b> Reflection Paper #4	1,2,3,4,5
7: 3/8	Ch. 9	Behavior Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #5	1,2,3,4,5
8: 3/15		<i>Spring Break</i>		
9: 3/22	Ch. 10	Cognitive Behavior Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #6	1,2,3,4,5
10: 3/29	Ch. 11	Reality Therapy	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #7	1,2,3,4,5
11: 4/5	Ch. 12	Feminist Therapy <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #8	1,2,3,4,5
12: 4/12	Ch. 13	Postmodern Approaches <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #9	1,2,3,4,5
13: 4/19	Ch. 14	Family Systems Theory <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	<b>DUE: Recording # 2</b> Reflection Paper #10	1,2,3,4,5
14: 4/26	Ch. 15	An Integrative Perspective <i>Counseling Skills Practice</i>	Case Conceptualization Reflection Paper #11	1,2,3,4,5

15: 5/3	Ch. 13, 14	<i>Office Hours/Individual meetings Course Evaluation</i>		
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Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

### **Counseling Program 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*



- 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 703-993-3686, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380, or the 24-Hour Sexual and Interpersonal Violence Crisis Line at (703) 380-1434. 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/>.**