Introduction to Clinical Psychology: Professional Issues and Ethics

CLP 7934 Section 2722

Fall 2013

Instructor: Stephen R. Boggs, Ph.D., ABPP

Time: Fridays 8:00 am – 8:50 am

Place: HPNP 3170

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide an initial educational experience that introduces the student to the profession of clinical psychology. Course topics assure that the student understands critical issues in the professional activities of clinical psychologists, ethical standards, legal issues, issues related to clinical service delivery and to supervision, professional social responsibility, and issues of diversity in clinical psychology. The course is also intended to assist first year students as they begin to assume a more active role in shaping the profession of psychology in their research, clinical, and professional activities and to integrate their professional contributions with other important life activities.

Course Format

The course is designed in seminar format. The instructor will present information, focus topics for discussion, and provide suggestions for further reflective study. Students are expected to participate actively in the course topics and discussions.

Grading and Attendance

Attendance and participation are expected. Students who must miss a class meeting should inform the instructor beforehand if at all possible. During the course, two short papers are required that will assess the student’s analysis of specific issues. The course grade is determined by an average of the two reaction papers (each graded on a 100-point scale). Due dates are detailed below. Papers are limited to five, double-spaced pages (12-point font), plus references, written in APA format and should reflect high professional standards of presentation. A = 93 – 100; B+ = 90 – 92; B = 83 – 89. Borderline grades will be determined by class participation.
Additional Expectations

Students are expected to attend regularly scheduled departmental Teaching Conferences (Friday, 11:40pm-12:40pm, HPNP G301) and to attend laboratory meetings held by faculty with whom they are working. Additional research meetings, held by the Department’s Areas of Concentration, are available to students. Each of these provides information about the research and clinical activities available in the department. Students are also expected to attend additional departmental meetings as scheduled by the Program Director. Each of these meetings should be thought of as resources that assist students in orienting themselves to departmental programs and that help them develop personal goals and interests. Attendance at these meetings will not be formally considered in determining the course grade, but is advantageous to the student in many ways as they become familiar with the department and its programs.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students, Office of Student Disability Services. That office will provide documentation to the student regarding allowable accommodations. The student must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. The instructor will work together with the student to insure that appropriate accommodations are available to maximize participation and learning.

Course Schedule

The schedule of course topics is listed below. For your convenience, most of the required readings, in .pdf format, have been placed in a folder on the student share drive labeled "Intro Clin Psych" (2013 folder). Students are expected to read appropriate materials prior to class in order to participate in and benefit maximally from class discussion.

August 23: On Becoming a Clinical Psychologist: Common milestones, multiple outcomes

This initial session will focus on what aspiring to be a "professional" in the area of clinical psychology involves. We will discuss the defining characteristics of "professionalism", characteristics of professionals who have been socialized into the science and profession of clinical psychology, the common milestones on the paths to the development of diverse careers, and the importance of self-care.


**August 30: Careers in Clinical Psychology**

This class session is spent discussing various career options and outcomes of training in clinical psychology, including a discussion of critical experiences and characteristics of students that led to their choice of career.


**September 6: Training Models in Clinical Psychology**

This session familiarizes students with the various conceptual models that programs use to train clinical psychologists in the 21st century. How do educators conceptualize and measure the goals and outcomes of clinical training?


September 13: No Class

September 20: Ethical Principles I

This session, and the one that follows, addresses the APA code of conduct and ethics that must guide all activity within professional psychology. Students will develop both knowledge of the ethical code and an appreciation of how to apply it to case scenarios.

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. American Psychologist, 57, 1060-1073. (This is reproduced in your student handbook…please bring to class for reference).


September 27: Ethical Principles II

Consideration of ethics vignettes and continued discussion of ethical principles in clinical practice, research and teaching.

October 4: Legal Issues I

Psychological practice takes place within a legal environment, and it is often the case that ethical, professional and legal issues conflict. These issues, and the ways that psychologists address them, are discussed in this and the next session.


Florida Statutes, Chapter 490: Psychological Services Act. This is reproduced in its entirety in the readings folder.

Florida Statutes, Chapter 394: Mental Health Services Act: This is reproduced in its entirety in the readings folder.
October 11: Legal Issues (continued): Case Vignettes, Discussion on appropriate action


October 18: Supervision and Consultation I

The development of skills, competencies, and capabilities by students in training in clinical psychology programs depends on the program’s ability to provide them with access to competent and thoughtful supervision of research, clinical, and professional development activities. This section of the course reviews extant models and concepts of supervision and is intended to provide the student with tools to be a competent consumer of supervision at all levels of the program.


October 25: Supervision and Consultation II

We will continue discussion of supervision and consultation models.

November 1: Diversity and Multicultural Competence I: Guest Presenters – Dr. Steven Anton and Dr. Vonetta Dotson

The workforce in clinical psychology is not nearly as diverse as the clients we serve. For this reason, psychologists need training and experience in issues that relate to the provision of psychological services to patients from diverse cultures and backgrounds. This knowledge and expertise is built upon didactic knowledge, experience, and personal exploration. The two sessions devoted to this topic lay the groundwork for the
development of multicultural competency, with the knowledge that attainment of such competencies is an ongoing process that continues through a process of lifelong learning on the part of every professional psychologist.


**November 8: No Class – Homecoming**

**November 15: No Class – Fall Research Symposium**

**November 22: Diversity and Multicultural Competence II: Guest Presenters: Dr. Steven Anton and Dr. Vonetta Dotson.**


**November 29: No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Reaction Papers**

**Paper 1:** Present and discuss an ethical dilemma you have experienced/observed in your psychological activities, and how it was resolved, OR, discuss limitations and
potential problems you see with one or more aspects of the APA ethics code. This paper is due October 18 in class.

**Paper 2:** If you were a program director charged with designing a curriculum in diversity education, what didactic, clinical, and research experiences would you employ to insure that your graduates both appreciated and understood diversity issues as they related to clinical practice and/or public policy? This paper is due December 2. Please place in my HPNP mailbox by 5 p.m.