

CNS 737 – Basic Skills and Techniques <i>Wake Forest University</i> Fall 2008	
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Course Description:

Counseling 737 focuses on foundational counseling skills development and personal growth. In this course, emphasis will be placed on the systematic integration of basic techniques essential to the counseling process.

Goals of this course include:

- 1) Learning and practicing basic counseling/interpersonal skills including, but not limited to:

Attending	Minimal Encouragers	Opening and Closing	Providing Feedback
Active Listening	Interview	Invitational Skills	Rapport Building
Reflecting Skills	Paraphrasing	Reflecting Feelings	Empathizing
Reflecting Meaning	Summarizing	Reflection of Content	Noting Discrepancies
Self-Disclosure	Reframing	Playing a Hunch	Use of Silence

- 2) Discuss **counselor** characteristics and behaviors that influence the helping process including age, gender, cultural differences; verbal and nonverbal behaviors; ethical and legal issues; personal characteristics, orientation and skills.
- 3) Discuss **client** characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes including age, gender, and cultural differences; verbal and nonverbal behaviors; personal characteristics, traits, capabilities and life circumstances.
- 4) Recognize the attitudes, values and beliefs which according to selected theories facilitate change and growth.
- 5) Understand, recognize and implement counseling techniques necessary for an effective interview.
- 6) Identify and apply major techniques a problem solving process.
- 7) Describe the conditions under which particular theoretical models and techniques can be utilized most effectively.

- 8) As a counselor, assess personal assets, limitations and reactions to theories and develop an initial personal philosophy of counseling.

COUNSELOR DEVELOPMENT:

As opposed to teaching students how to “do counseling”, we prefer to think of the developmental process of “becoming a counselor”. As such, this course is designed as a didactic and experiential course intended to provide students with theoretical and practical counseling knowledge, awareness and skills in the area of client growth, research findings and the developmental stages of counseling dynamics. Furthermore, this course is designed, in the broadest sense, to involve discussion on multicultural, legal and ethical implications of counseling. Students will be encouraged to participate in discussions, role plays and class exercises with appropriate choice of self-disclosure and respect for self and others.

COURSE OBJECTIVES (incorporating CACREP Standards):

This course is designed to meet the competencies of CACREP standard II.K.5 a,b,f & g (Helping relationships).

Upon the completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Understand and implement counseling techniques necessary for an effective interview.
2. Integrate and apply major techniques a problem solving process.
3. Describe the conditions under which particular theoretical models and techniques can be utilized most effectively.
4. Assess personal assets, limitations and reactions to theories as a potential counselor and develop an initial personal philosophy of counseling.

Required Texts:

Learning the Art of Helping, 3rd Edition by Mark E. Young

Course Requirements:

1. **Attendance & Participation (15% of grade)** – Attendance is necessary in order to develop the requisite knowledge and skills of a professional counselor. The more involved you become the more you will learn. Influenced by a constructivist paradigm, we recognize that each class member brings a wealth of ideas, questions and perspectives based on their life experiences. Thus, your participation is valued and honored as part of the learning process. Given the experiential nature of this course students are expected to attend each and every class prepared to contribute to class discussion. Your attendance and participation will be reflected in your overall course grade. Two absences will result in a 5% reduction to your participation grade. Three absences will decrease your grade by 10%. More than three absences for the semester may result in being asked to withdraw from the course or receiving a failing grade.

2. **Practice Sessions in Class (25% of grade)** - A portion of most classes will be devoted to simulated or “practice” counseling sessions in which students will work in triads rotating among the following three roles: *counselor, client and observer*. Some of these sessions may be videotaped and/observed by the professor and class. Peer feedback will be offered on strengths and areas for further development. Given the nature of this assignment, the importance of maintaining confidentiality will be stressed. Some of the ideal characteristics of each role are described below.

Counselor: This role calls for practice and demonstration of skills learned in assigned readings and class discussions. A student in this role should exhibit genuineness, openness, empathy, congruence; engagement with the process, person and task; willingness to take risks in the spirit of learning; acceptance of positive feedback and constructive criticism.

Client: A student in this role should exhibit genuineness, openness and present orientation. In the role of client, students are asked to draw upon real life experiences, the content of which is totally within the student’s discretion. Students should take responsibility for determining and monitoring the level of self-disclosure that they contribute to the learning experience. Students may also choose to role play the part of “client”, with the understanding that such simulation may detract from the realism and quality of the learning experience. Also in this role, students will be expected to provide feedback to the individual in the “counselor” role.

Observer: This role calls for close attention to the process occurring between the counselor and the client and an ability to relate what occurs in the practice session to the learned material. It also calls for a development of the ability to give constructive feedback. The person in this role may take notes as needed.

To facilitate this process each person in the group will identify an area of their life they would like to change or improve upon. This will serve as a basis for having a first-hand experience with attempting to engage in self-reflection and change to better understand the process your clients will be entering with you. Please select an issue you are comfortable talking about and presenting with your classmates and instructor.

3. **Video Tapes or DVD’s (first one 20%, second one 30%)**

During the semester you will be asked to prepare two (2) videotapes or DVD’s with written transcripts utilizing the counseling lab taping equipment. Dyads for this requirement will remain consistent throughout the semester. This assignment will afford you opportunities to gain familiarity and comfort with various theories and techniques we will cover during the course of the semester. Each person in the dyad will assume both the counselor and client roles. As such in the client role, you will be asked to identify an area in your life you would like to change or improve upon. This will serve as a basis for having a first-hand experience with attempting to engage in self-reflection and change to better understand the process your clients will be entering with you. Please select an issue you are comfortable talking about and presenting with your classmates and instructor.

The first video, **due Wednesday, September 23, 2008**, is a practice video for which you will receive full credit for its on-time submission (20%).

The video should be 15 minutes in length with a peer. Please transcribe your video in its **entirety** as outlined in the guidelines.

Your counselor response/ Statement e.g. ,“Tell me more about your reasons for coming in today”	Skill Demonstrated e.g., Opening Skill	Your critique & alternative Response that could be more helpful e.g., I think this skill was effective & I also could've reflected a feeling instead like, “You seem both anxious & relieved about coming in today”
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- Each student should also provide a brief, written evaluation of his/her tape/dvd (1-2 pages, see guidelines)
- It should demonstrate basic relationship building skills, such as attending and listening, with 1 opening skill.

The 2nd video accompanied by a written transcript is **due Wednesday, November 12, 2008** will be worth 30%. You are strongly encouraged to conduct extensive practice sessions and review your video before submitting it to be graded. Additionally, your tape/dvd will be reviewed by the faculty to help inform appropriateness for practicum placement.

- The tape should be made with one of your peers and be 30 minutes in length. It should demonstrate basic relationship building skills, such as attending, listening, responding, and empathy as well as appropriate use of silence and identification of appropriate feelings, opening & closing responses.
- Review the tape in its entirety & select a 15 minute segment that best demonstrates your counseling responses (maximum of 2 segments totaling 15 min.)..
- The 15 minute portion needs to be transcribed & the transcript must include a verbatim account of all your responses. You may summarize the “client’s” comments.
- After each counselor response you should include a critique of your response.(i.e.what you were doing, why, and how effective it was with attention to type of response, focus, & intent) Note that counter settings on the tape for these 15 minutes so we will be able to review them in particular (cue the tape to the beginning of this section before turning it in).
- Use the same transcription format as for the first video noted above.
- Keep in mind that transcribing is a time intensive activity-**leave yourself plenty of time** to do this. Students will receive personal feedback.

- All tapes must clearly show the counselor and client and must have satisfactory sound quality.
 - Be sure to check that the equipment is recording accordingly.
 - Please be sure to put your name on the **tape and transcript**.
3. **Journal: (10 % of grade)** You should write each week in a journal about your experience in your triads from all three perspectives. Primarily, we want you to use this opportunity to express your reaction to being in each role (client, counselor, observer) during the triad sharing. You will be asked to submit your journal at three points during the semester. We do not grade each journal entry in a quantitative way, but want to see evidence of self-awareness and development throughout the semester.

Confidentiality:

All personal material shared both verbally and in writing will be treated confidentially by all Department of Counseling faculty and students. Remember these are practice sessions, **not** full counseling sessions.

Please try to allow yourself time and practice with awkward & new skills-the learning works best without additional performance pressure to “do it all” in one session. That will come much later in your learning.

Academic Integrity:

The tenants of Wake Forest University’s Academic Integrity Code will be enforced throughout this course including but not limited to assignments and activities (in and outside of class).

Inclement weather policy: In the event of inclement weather, class will be cancelled only if WFU is closed.