

## **EDCP 310: Peer Counseling Theory and Skills**

### **Instructor**

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### **Meeting Times**

Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:00pm-5:15pm

### **Location**

Tydings Hall (TYD), 1108

### **Office Hours**

By appointment

### **Required Text**

Hill, C. E. (2014). *Helping Skills: Facilitating exploration, insight, and action*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.  
ISBN-13: 978-1433816789

### **Other Required Readings**

Articles are also assigned to help students better understand the application of theories in this class (see class schedule below). These readings are available electronically via ELMS, and they are also listed (with web links) at the end of this syllabus.

### **Required Equipment**

One of the main objectives of this course is to give students hands-on practice in developing helping skills. You will be responsible for obtaining a **functional** audio recorder to record helping sessions with a classmate; any type of digital or other audio recorder that allows you to transfer recordings to portable devices (such as USB, CD, etc.) is acceptable. Alternatively, you may use your laptop to record, as long as the quality of the sound is adequate and the internet connection is turned off. If sessions are recorded on your laptop/phone, you must password protect all recording files.

You will be listening back to your recording and taking notes on what you and your classmate discuss during the sessions, so ***please test your recorder before your sessions to ensure that voices are audible and play back at normal speed.*** If the recording is inaudible and you cannot transcribe the session, the session recording will have to be repeated outside of the designated session day. ***Keep recordings in a secure location to safeguard confidentiality! Audio files saved on your computers must be stored in a password-protected folder.***

## **Course Description and Objectives**

This course introduces students to the core helping skills in peer counseling settings as organized in the three-stage model (Hill, 2014), and explores the basic tenets of the three predominant theoretical frameworks used in the counseling field. Students will receive basic level training on theories and skills for use in peer counseling settings. Students will work toward the following learning outcomes:

- Identify and define the specific helping skills of the three-stage helping model (Hill, 2014), and demonstrate competence to execute these skills appropriate for beginning helpers.
- Summarize major tenets of the humanistic/person-centered, psychodynamic, and cognitive-behavioral theoretical frameworks of counseling, and how they inform the three-stage helping model.
- Analyze one's use of helping skills using scientific method and self-reflection, and evaluate the effectiveness of these skills in peer counseling settings.
- Identify and analyze factors influencing the implementation of helping skills including past experiences, biases, values, beliefs, and theoretical orientations.

Please note that, while counseling theories and strategies will be reviewed in this course, completion of this course **does not** qualify students to practice as counselors or therapists without additional training and supervision from a qualified professional.

### **Expectations for Students**

In this course, you will be expected to actively engage, collaborate and participate in both small and large-group discussions, interactive exercises, lectures, in-class videos, case examples, and clinical vignettes. In this class, you are expected to:

- Come to class regularly, on time, and ready to participate.
- Complete assigned readings **BEFORE** class.
- Turn in all assignments by the beginning of class on the specified due date.
- Raise questions, offer comments, and respond with openness, respect, and intellectual curiosity.
- Pose all questions, concerns, and comments about the course to the instructor directly, either through scheduled appointments or through written communication. The instructor will generally respond to emails within 24 hours. *Please note the instructor will not respond to emails containing questions sent within 24 hours before an assignment is due.*

Ultimately, come to class with an open mind and a willingness to take risks. This course is designed as a beginning level course in peer counseling. You are not expected to have prior counseling experience. Hopefully you will challenge your fears and push yourself to become an active and involved participant.

***A note on the use of electronic devices in class:*** In order to meet its objectives, this class requires face-to-face communication among the students and instructor. Technology use (e.g., laptops, cellphones) should generally be avoided in class because it can create barriers to our engagement with one another. Staring at a screen signals disengagement and is distracting to others. Where possible, note-taking should be done by hand. If laptops and related devices must be used, they should be used sparingly – and avoided altogether during group presentations, video demonstrations, class discussions, and practice sessions. Cell phones are not needed and I ask that they be turned off and stowed during class. Appropriate versus inappropriate use of technology will be a part of your participation grade in the class (see below).

## Course Requirements and Assignments

### **Class Participatory Activities (20% of final grade)**

*Active Engagement:* You are expected to engage actively in class discussions and to refrain from unnecessary use of electronic devices.

*Role Plays:* Along with reading and discussion, students are also expected to practice the specific helping skills in role-plays during class. The role-plays typically occur after presentation and discussion of the reading materials. The intent of such exercise is to help students have some hands-on experiences of using the specific helping skill(s) under discussion. Students do such role-plays in dyads (or triads), and each member should rotate to be both the helper and helpee (in the case of triads, the third one assumes observer). This activity is not graded in itself, but will be considered as class participation. It's important that you actively engage in these role-plays since they are crucial in building up your peer helping skills.

*Helping Skills Practice Sessions:* In order to have realistic helping sessions in which students can integrate and practice peer helping skills they have learned, all students are expected to participate in the helping skills practice sessions. Students sign up in dyads (or triads) to practice the analogue helping sessions (the dyads or triads will be fixed throughout the semester), and they rotate to be the helper and helpee (in the case of triads, there is an observer). The whole process lasts 40-45 minutes in the format specified in the table below, and is followed by a large-group class discussion of the experiences.

Group Size	Helping session arrangement
Dyads (A and B) Total: 40min	(1) A: helper; B; helpee (15min) & Processing, feedback, and discussion (5min) (2) B: helper; A; helpee (15min) & Processing, feedback, and discussion (5min)
Triads (A, B, and C) Total: 45min	(1) A: helper; B; helpee; C: observer (10min) & Processing, feedback, and discussion (5min) (2) B: helper; C: helpee; A: observer (10min) & Processing, feedback, and discussion (5min) (3) C: helper; A: helpee; B: observer (10min) & Processing, feedback, and discussion (5min)

Students will be asked to talk about a minor personal issue of their choice, such as (a) an interpersonal issue (examples include roommate problems, romantic relationship troubles, etc.), or (b) about their career goals and aspirations in life. Students should be prepared to disclose personal information that they feel comfortable sharing, but will never be required to disclose any personal information if they are not comfortable doing so, nor will they be evaluated on this dimension. In other words, students may choose to make up an issue. However, students often do choose to disclose personal concerns during participation in the practice of peer counseling skills.

*Self Reflection Assignments:* Self-reflection on one's beliefs about oneself as a counselor can be a positive experience and tool for improvement. Students will be asked to reflect on their experience as a student counselor, their thought on relevant articles, etc. **each Monday**. Course credit will be given for thoughtful responses to the prompts provided – specific answers will not be graded since the exercise is meant to be reflective.

Self-reflection assignments will be administered in the first five minutes of class on Mondays. Credit for a missed assignment will not be given unless documentation of a university-approved absence is provided. Completion of the assignments comprises one quarter of the class participation grade (in other words, 5% of the final grade).

### **Group Discussion Leadership (15% of final grade)**

Active involvement in class discussions, activities, and assignments is essential for maximizing learning and is therefore given appropriate consideration in the grading of this course.

There will be six classes throughout the course in which students are expected to deliver a topic presentation and lead the class discussion (see Class Schedule, below). Each student will be assigned into a group of 4 or 5 that will provide a 20-minute presentation and lead a 10-minute class discussion on the topics and readings for their designated day. The presentation should be a brief summary of the specific skills to be covered that day, plus the groups' thoughts about them (for example, critical comments, further elaboration, related interesting topics, etc.).

A successful presentation:

- 1) defines the specific skills
- 2) discusses how and why they would be used
- 3) demonstrates/provides examples of their use
- 4) discusses cultural considerations
- 5) incorporates group insight and reactions to the skills and how they might be used
- 6) connects the skills' relevance to the presenters' field of study
- 7) engages the audience through appropriate use of PowerPoint slides, videos and/or exercises/activities.

After the presentation, each member of the group will be responsible for coming up with at least one thoughtful question that can spur discussion in the class, and the whole group will lead the class to discuss these questions. The presentation PowerPoint and discussion questions should be sent to the instructor via email at least 24 hours prior to the start of the class.

All students not leading the discussion on these days are still expected to contribute to the conversation by **being present in class and taking an active role in the discussion.**

### **Quizzes (30% of final grade; each quiz is approximately 3% of final grade)**

**Each Wednesday**, you will take a quiz on material from the previous two classes. Of course, no one likes frequent tests, but research shows they are important for learning, not just assessing knowledge. The weekly quizzes will assess general knowledge of each Helping Skills theory, as well as your ability to apply the theory and think critically about it. I will provide more specific preparation guidelines during class before our first quiz. These quizzes will be given in the first five minutes of class. You are allowed to drop your two lowest quiz scores.

Of course, when a student is absent, s/he is responsible for the information missed in class to prepare for the quiz. If a student misses a quiz, it may be considered one of the dropped quiz scores. If you have special accommodations for test-taking, please see the note below on formal accommodations.

### **Audio-Taped Sessions: Post-Session Write-Up, Process Notes, and Web Form A (15% of final grade)**

You will complete three sessions: one as the counselor, one as the client, and one as the observer. You will act in each role for 15 minutes. You only need record the session when you are **acting as counselor**. Instructions for process notes, self-critique, and Web Form A are posted on ELMS.

Please email me your process notes before class on the day they are due. Late assignments will be penalized by 5% per business day.

Session #1 Notes: due via ELMS at the start of class on 2/22.

Session #2 Notes: due via ELMS at the start of class on 5/4.

### ***Final Exam (20% of final grade)***

There will be a final exam covering all course material on the last day of class. I like to call the final a "Quiz-Quiz," because our quizzes throughout the semester will be a good study guide for the final exam.

### **Overall Grade Breakdown**

<b>Overall Grade Breakdown</b>	
<b>Participation</b> (20%)	<b>Audio Taped Session 1: Post-Session Write Up and Process Notes</b> (15%, or 7.5% each)
<b>Group Discussion Leadership</b> (15%)	<b>In-Class Self Reflections</b> (5%; included in the Participation grade)
<b>Weekly Quiz</b> (30% total)	<b>Final Exam</b> (20%)

### **General Course Policies**

#### Attendance Policy

Attendance is of crucial importance for this course. Because this class involves interactive exercises, it's strongly advised that you attend every session with the best possible effort. To minimize disruption to the class, please arrive on time. Students are responsible for all material and announcements presented in class, including announcements about changes in the schedule and assignments.

The instructor will strictly follow the university policies on excused versus unexcused absences regarding requests to makeup graded class assignments that were missed (e.g., self-reflection assignments). It is the policy of the University to excuse student absences resulting from (a) illness of the student (or a dependent as defined by Board of Regents policy on family and medical leave); (b) religious observance (where the nature of the observance prevents the student from being present during the class period); (c) participation in university activities at the request of University authorities; and (d) compelling circumstance beyond the student's control. Students claiming excused absence must apply in writing and furnish documentary evidence that the absence resulted from one of these causes (exceptions noted below). Students are responsible for learning about any material or announcements missed and for initiating a process to make up missed work. Unless otherwise approved by the instructor, any work due on the missed day(s) must be submitted by the first class meeting after the absence.

*Absences Due To Illness & Injury:* University of Maryland policy dictates that a single absence during the semester due to illness or injury will be excused with a signed medical excuse form attesting to the date of the health problem and acknowledging that the information is true and correct (<http://www.health.umd.edu/sites/default/files/ClassExcuse1011.pdf>). The letter must be submitted by the first class meeting after the absence, and only one such letter is allowed in the class during the semester. This policy does not apply when the absence occurs on a major graded event (i.e., exam, paper due date) or is for more than a single class. Multiple absences, and those occurring on a major scheduled grading event, require written documentation of the illness or injury from the Health Center or an outside health care provider. The signed and dated letter must verify the dates of treatment and the time period during which you were unable to meet academic responsibilities. The letter must be provided on the first class meeting after the multiple absences. Accommodations for such absences will be arranged on a case-by-case basis.

*Scheduled Absences:* When the absence is due to a scheduled event (e.g., religious observances, jury duty), the student must provide written notice of the absence by the second week of the semester (or as soon as possible thereafter if the student learns about the scheduled absence after the second week) in order to have the absence excused. If an exam is given during this planned absence, this written notice must include a request for a make-up exam.

For more information on university attendance policies, please visit:  
<http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1540>

### Class Cancellations

Official delays and/or closures are announced on [www.umd.edu](http://www.umd.edu) and 301-405-SNOW. If a personal emergency forces the instructor to cancel class, the instructor will make every attempt to email students ahead of time and to post information on the classroom door.

### CourseEvalUM for Fall 2015

Your participation in the evaluation of courses through CourseEvalUM is a responsibility you hold as a student member of the academic community. Your feedback is confidential and important to the improvement of teaching and learning at the University. CourseEvalUM will be open for you to complete your evaluations for fall semester courses towards the end of the semester. Please go directly to the website ([www.courseevalum.umd.edu](http://www.courseevalum.umd.edu)) to complete your evaluations. By completing all of your evaluations each semester, you will have the privilege of accessing online, at Testudo, the evaluation reports for the thousands of courses for which 70% or more students submitted their evaluations.

### Confidentiality & Respect

Students are expected to respect their classmates at all times, particularly when practicing peer counseling skills. Acting professionally includes keeping everything you hear confidential, treating others with respect, and paying attention to your classmates. **Confidentiality with regard to peer disclosures heard in class is an absolute requirement. Disregard of this confidentiality will result in failure of this course.**

Differences in opinion, values, and attitudes are to be expected, and the expression of these differences is encouraged. Any student who experiences difficulty in participating for any reason is encouraged to speak with the instructor immediately.

For the sake of students' safety, there are two circumstances in which students should inform the instructor about peers' personal disclosures and under which the instructor must break student confidentiality:

- Student report of intent to harm self or other(s)
- Student report of having been abused as a child, or abuse of children, the elderly, or the disabled (past or present)

### Handling of Personal Concerns

Practice sessions in this course should *not* be used as a substitute for therapy. The purpose of self-disclosure is to offer learning opportunities to your peers. Students who are experiencing personal distress may consult with the instructor and/or contact the University of Maryland Counseling Center at **301-314-7651 (x47651)**. Another resource is the Health Center at UMD, which can be reached at **301-314-8180 (x48180)** or [health@umd.edu](mailto:health@umd.edu).

### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

In compliance with and in the spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), I would love to work with you if you have a documented disability that is relevant to successfully completing your work in this course. If you need academic accommodation by virtue of a documented disability, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss your needs. For more information about Disability Support Services, please visit:  
<http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/>.

## Course Schedule

DATE	LESSON	TOPICS	READING	DUE
M 1/25	Lesson 1	Course Overview Syllabus Introductions		
W 1/27	Lesson 2	Introduction to Counseling Introduction to 3-Stage Model Group Assignments for Discussion Leading	Hill, Ch.1, 2	
M 2/1	Lesson 3	Counselor Values and Ethics Cultural Awareness & Reflection Self-Awareness & Reflection	Hill, Ch. 3-5	
W 2/3	Lesson 4	Humanistic/Person-Centered Counseling Video: Carl Rogers Review Process Notes / Informed Consent	Rogers (1992)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (1/27 and 2/1 lessons)</li> </ul>
M 2/8	Lesson 5	Helping Session Day 1 Biopsychology Building 2150	Informed Consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Helping Session 1</b></li> </ul>
W 2/10	Lesson 6	Discuss First Helping Session Experience Discuss Articles Re-review Process Notes Assignment	Dunham (2014); Moezzi (2015)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Post-Session Notes</b></li> </ul>
M 2/15	No Class	No Class	Covey (1998)	
W 2/17	Lesson 7	Exploration Stage: Overview and Theoretical Basis Exploration Skills: Attending and Listening	Hill, Ch. 6,7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (2/10 lesson and Covey reading)</li> <li><b>DISCUSSION: GROUP 1 (Ch7)</b></li> </ul>
M 2/22	Lesson 8	Helping Skills Practice Big Group Processing and Discussion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Audio #1, Web Form A, Process Notes</b></li> </ul>
W 2/24	Lesson 9	Exploration Skills: Exploring Thoughts and Feelings	Hill, Ch. 8,9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (2/17 and 2/22 lessons)</li> <li><b>DISCUSSION: GROUP 2 (Ch8 or 9)</b></li> </ul>
M 2/29	Lesson 10	Helping Skills Practice Big Group Processing and Discussion		
W 3/2	Lesson 11	Integration of the Exploration Stage Video: Clara Hill	Hill, Ch. 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (2/24 and 2/29 lessons)</li> </ul>
M 3/7	Lesson 12	Psychodynamic Theory Insight Stage: Overview and Theoretical Basis	Shelder (2010) Hill, Ch. 11	
W 3/9	Lesson 13	Insight Skills: Challenges and Interpretations	Hill, Ch. 12,13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (3/2 and 3/7 lessons)</li> <li><b>DISCUSSION: GROUP 3 (12 or 13)</b></li> </ul>
M 3/21	Lesson 14	Helping Skills Practice Big Group Processing and Discussion		
W 3/23	Lesson 15	Insight Skills: Immediacy	Hill, Ch. 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (3/9 and 3/21 lessons)</li> <li><b>DISCUSSION: GROUP 4 (Ch14)</b></li> </ul>
M 3/28	Lesson 16	Helping Skills Practice Big Group Processing and Discussion		
W 3/30	Lesson 17	Integration of the Insight Stage Video: Clara Hill	Hill, Ch. 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quiz (3/23 and 3/28 lessons)</li> </ul>

M 4/4	Lesson 18	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Video: Albert Ellis	Gaudio (2008), CBT Factsheet	
W 4/6	Lesson 19	Action Stage: Overview Steps for Action I	Hill, Ch. 16, 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz (3/30 and 4/4 lessons)</li> <li>• <b>DISCUSSION: GROUP 5 (Ch17)</b></li> </ul>
M 4/11	Lesson 20	Helping Session Day 2 Biopsychology Building 2150		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Helping Session 2</b></li> </ul>
W 4/13	Lesson 21	Steps for Action II	Hill, Ch. 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz (4/6 lesson)</li> <li>• <b>DISCUSSION: GROUP 6 (Ch17)</b></li> </ul>
M 4/18	Lesson 22	Helping Skills Practice Big Group Processing and Discussion	Lukianoff & Haidt (2015)	
W 4/20	Lesson 23	Integrating Skills of the Action Stage Video: Clara Hill	Hill, Ch. 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quiz (4/13 and 4/18 lessons)</li> </ul>
M 4/25	Lesson 24	Helping Skills Practice Big Group Processing and Discussion		
W 4/27	Lesson 25	No Class – Watch Assigned Movies	National Geographic/TED	
M 5/2	Lesson 26	Integrating the Three Stage Model	Hill, Ch. 19	
W 5/4	Lesson 27	Termination Review Activities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Audio #2, Web Form A, Process Notes</b></li> </ul>
M 4/9		Final Exam (In Class)		

\*Note: Instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed



## Course Reference List

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