

**Peru State College**  
**SOWK 310 – Techniques of Counseling**  
**Syllabus – Fall 2011**



**Instructor:** James R. Nevitt, Ph.D.  
**Office Hours:** 8:30- 10:00 AM and 3:15-4:00 PM Monday through Thursday  
Fridays by appointment only 9:00 AM – 3:00PM  
Office - Room 243, T.J. Majors Building  
**Office Telephone:** (402) 872-2293  
**Email Address:** jnevitt@peru.edu  
**Course Meets:** 9:30 – 10:45 AM Mondays and Wednesdays, T.J. Majors Rm 301  
**Credit Hours:** 3 credit hours – 45 instructional hours

**Required Textbooks:** *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy* by Gerald Corey (8<sup>th</sup> Edition), Thomson-Wadsworth Publishing, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0-495-10208-3

**Optional Text** *The Gift of Therapy* by Irvin Yalom, Harper-Collins Publishing, 2002.

### **Course Description and Objectives**

The course will study the fundamental theories, principles, and techniques of counseling as applied to education, psychology, and social work practices. Practical experience in the use of these techniques will also be provided. Additionally, the instructor will “bottom-line” messages contained in over thirty classic works in the field of psychology with emphasis on messages young “counselors-in-training” need to hear and examine.

- A. Students will demonstrate an understanding both in writing and through classroom exercises of the following counseling micro-skills: establishment of rapport, paraphrasing, summarizing client statements, noting and reflecting feelings, supporting while challenging clients (confrontation), focusing the narrative, self-disclosing, and eliciting and reflecting meaning
- B. Students will demonstrate in writing and through classroom discussion an understanding of the following counseling theories: Psychoanalysis, Adlerian Therapy, Rational-Emotive Behavioral Therapy, Existential Therapy, Person-Centered Therapy, Gestalt Therapy, Reality Therapy, Transactional Analysis, and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy.
- C. Students will explore each of the previously cited therapies and discuss applications in counseling simulation exercises.
- D. Students will demonstrate in writing and in class discussion aspects of the American Counseling Association’s ethical code as it applies to counseling simulations and exercises offered in class.

- E. Students will be able to discuss and demonstrate their understanding in writing of the following multicultural topics in counseling: Age, Gender and Ethnicity, and Gay/Lesbian Issues.

## **Expectations and Instructional Approach**

Classes will include lectures supplemented with power point presentations, guided discourse, recording attendance, unit exams, and related homework assignments. Student attendance and participation is vital to the learning experience. Consequently I expect students to attend each class, to have read the material of the day, and to be ready to participate in the day's discussion and learning experience. Do not bring a radio or CD player with or without headphones to class. Please place pagers on silent mode.

## **Class Attendance and Participation**

It is important that students attend each session as scheduled. Class time is important. Attendance will be taken and will count as a significant part of the student's grade (see section on Final Grade). Attending a lecture/Discussion or DVD presentation is defined as "being present throughout the entire period"; as such, attendance will be taken during the first ten minutes of class. Late arrivals will be counted on the attendance roster at the discretion of the instructor if the reason seems valid.

There are only two kinds of absences: excused and unexcused. An excused absence is due to five possible reasons: (1) illness of student or serious illness of a member of the student's immediate family; (2) death of a member of the student's immediate family; (3) attendance on a sponsored University trip; (4) major religious holidays; and (5) any other circumstance which the instructor finds reasonable cause for nonattendance. Any absence that cannot be verified as excused will be considered unexcused. Make-up work will not be allowed for an unexcused absence. For example, "I overslept" or "My roommate turned off the alarm clock" are examples of situations that are your responsibility, not mine.

Students may miss the equivalent of **one week of class (2 day sessions)** without an adverse effect on their grade; thereafter, the student's grade will be reduced by 5 points per absence off of the total points for the semester. If you are absent for an 'excused' reason, such as an athletic event or a field trip for another class, **it is your responsibility to acquire documentation, provide me with same documentation and inquire about any make up work to remediate for your absence. Absences for medical reasons will be excused if a student can provide documentation that they have seen a doctor. Regular unit exams must be taken at the scheduled time unless excused in advance by Dr. Nevitt, with the exception of a medical emergency verified by a doctor's confirmation.**

## **Homework**

You will complete approximately ten (10) **homework assignments** related to topics of study and outside readings. Worksheets related to the homework assignments will be given to students the day of the assignment or materials will be posted electronically on the course BlackBoard site

after the appropriate materials have been presented in class. Homework is due the next class meeting and will be worth ten (10) points each. Homework will be graded on the merit of content, creativity, and promptness of completion. **Homework that is turned in late is worth half (5) of the assigned points at the most. Homework over a week (7 days) late is worth zero points.**

**Students will also be evaluated on their willingness to participate in role playing situations and in class discussions related to Discussion Board assignments.**

## Exams

There will be **four (4) exams** during the semester. Most will cover lecture materials and PowerPoint presentations, readings in your textbooks and related outside reading materials. Each exam will be worth 100 points. **The final exam will be comprehensive** and will cover not only the last materials studied after the third exam but materials offered previously in the course as well! It will be given during the time assigned in the finals week schedule.

Unless directed otherwise, students are expected to do their own work on assignments and exams. Academic dishonesty will result in actions in accordance with the **College's disciplinary policy. Students with special needs are encouraged to make them known to the instructor during the first week of class.**

## Research Paper

A ten-page research paper utilizing electronic and conventional library resources will be required as part of this course. Guidelines for writing this paper will be covered in a future session. The paper will be written according to American Psychological Association (APA) writing style. The topic selection will be formalized by contract and determined in a student/instructor meeting prior to midterm. The topic must relate to course content in some meaningful way.

## Your Final Grade

The total number of points possible this semester can be seen below:

Homework/Discussion Board Assignments	100 points
4 Unit Exams @ 100 points each	400 points
1 Research Paper	<u>50 points</u>
	550 points

Your final grade will be based on a straight percentage of the points earned to the total possible. The scale used for grading is:

100 – 90%	A
89 – 88%	B+
87 – 80%	B
79 – 78%	C+
77 – 70%	C
69 – 68%	D+

67 – 60%	D
Below 60	F

The instructor reserves the right to modify any aspect of the course syllabus or course content. Any modifications will be communicated to students in advance. A tentative course schedule will be printed separately.

### **Academic Honesty:**

Academic honesty and the submission of a student's own work is expected, required and designed to assist a student in developing his or her ability to perform. Unless otherwise directed, students are expected to do their own work on assignments and exams. Academic dishonesty will result in actions according to the college's disciplinary policy.

Academic misconduct is a serious offense at PSC because it diminishes the quality of the scholarship and learning experience for everyone on campus. An act of academic misconduct, including cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation, and classroom disruption, (e.g. cell phones) may lead to penalties such as a reduction in grade, probation, suspension, or expulsion.

### **Incomplete Coursework:**

To designate a student's work in a course as incomplete at the end of a term, instructors record the incomplete grade (I). Students may receive this grade only when serious illness, hardship, death in the immediate family, or military service during the semester in which they are registered prevents them from completing course requirements. In addition, to receive an incomplete, a student must have completed a majority of the course's major requirements. Unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, students must initiate requests for an incomplete by filling out an Incomplete Grade Completion Contract, which requires the student and faculty signature.

The Incomplete Grade Completion Contract cites the reason(s) for the incomplete and details the specific obligations the student must meet to change the incomplete to a letter grade. If students agree to complete required work prior to the normal deadline for making up an incomplete – the end of the subsequent semester – this date must appear in the contract. The division chair, the instructor, and the student receive signed copies of the Incomplete Grade Completion Contract.

Even if the student does not attend Peru State College, all incomplete coursework must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester. Unless Faculty Senate approves an extension, if the student does not fulfill contract obligations in the allotted time, the incomplete grade automatically becomes an "F". Students who have filed an application for graduation are not eligible for a grade of Incomplete.

### **Accommodation Statement:**

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (public law 93-112) Section 504, provides that "no otherwise qualified disabled individual the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any special circumstances that would affect

his/her ability to compete equally in the college environment. Learning disabilities must be appropriately documented. While students are encouraged to self-identify at the earliest possible time, students may not know of choose to self- identify, but can still receive services at any time once they self-disclose and document. Students should contact the office of Student Support Services, Vice President for Student Affairs or the Director of Admissions for further advisement. Students with special needs are encouraged to make them known to the instructor.

#### A Final Word:

Like a good mattress, these policies are firm, but not rock-hard. I am aware that individual circumstances may arise warranting a change in some of these procedures or policies, but you should not count on that being the case. If you have any questions regarding where you stand in the course, then I strongly recommend that you come and talk to me. I want to emphasize the importance of consulting with me as soon as possible should any difficulties arise in your life that might interfere with your performance in the course. Waiting until the last two weeks of class or when final grades are distributed to talk to me is altogether too late!