Ethical and Professional Issues in Clinical Practice
Christian Theological Seminary Course P-635
Pastoral Theology and Psychology
Spring 2013

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Catalogue Course Description
Discussion of moral dimensions of, and the ethical and professional issues relevant to, pastoral care, counseling, and marriage and family therapy.

Purpose of This Class
This class will create and deepen students’ abilities to reflect ethically, practice ethically, and create an ethical therapeutic culture. Professional identity and practice, faith identity and practice, credentialing associations’ codes, and legal statutes and regulations will inform and shape the directions of this class.

Desired Course Outcomes
1. Marriage and Family Therapy Core Competencies (2004) addressed by this course:
   Admission to Treatment
   1.3.4 Executive Explain practice setting rules, fees, rights, and responsibilities of each party, including privacy, confidentiality policies, and duty to care to client or legal guardian.
   1.3.5 Executive Obtain consent to treatment from all responsible persons.
   1.5.1 Professional Understand the legal requirements and limitations for working with vulnerable populations (e.g., minors).
   1.5.2 Professional Complete case documentation in a timely manner and in accordance with relevant laws and policies.
   1.5.3 Professional Develop, establish, and maintain policies for fees, payment, record keeping, and confidentiality.

   Treatment Planning and Case Management
   3.5.1 Professional Advocate with clients in obtaining quality care, appropriate resources, and services in their community
   3.5.2 Professional Participate in case-related forensic and legal processes.
   3.5.3 Professional Write plans and complete other case documentation in accordance with practice setting policies, professional standards, and state/provincial laws.

   Legal Issues, Ethics, and Standards
   5.1.1 Conceptual Know state, federal, and provincial laws and regulations that apply to the practice of marriage and family therapy.
   5.1.2 Conceptual Know professional ethics and standards of practice that apply to the practice of marriage and family therapy.
   5.1.3 Conceptual Know policies and procedures of the practice setting.
   5.1.4 Conceptual Understand the process of making an ethical decision.
5.2.1 Perceptual  Recognize situations in which ethics, laws, professional liability, and standards of practice apply.
5.2.2 Perceptual  Recognize ethical dilemmas in practice setting.
5.2.3 Perceptual  Recognize when a legal consultation is necessary.
5.2.4 Perceptual  Recognize when clinical supervision or consultation is necessary.
5.3.1 Executive  Monitor issues related to ethics, laws, regulations, and professional standards.
5.3.2 Executive  Develop and assess policies, procedures, and forms for consistency with standards of practice to protect client confidentiality and to comply with relevant laws and regulations.
5.3.3 Executive  Inform clients and legal guardian of limitations to confidentiality and parameters of mandatory reporting.
5.3.4 Executive  Develop safety plans for clients who present with potential self-harm, suicide, abuse, or violence.
5.3.5 Executive  Take appropriate action when ethical and legal dilemmas emerge.
5.3.6 Executive  Report information to appropriate authorities as required by law.
5.3.7 Executive  Practice within defined scope of practice and competence.
5.3.8 Executive  Obtain knowledge of advances and theory regarding effective clinical practice.
5.3.9 Executive  Obtain license(s) and specialty credentials.
5.3.10 Executive Implement a personal program to maintain professional competence.
5.4.1 Evaluative  Evaluate activities related to ethics, legal issues, and practice standards.
5.4.2 Evaluative  Monitor attitudes, personal well-being, personal issues, and personal problems to insure they do not impact the therapy process adversely or create vulnerability for misconduct.
5.5.1 Professional  Maintain client records with timely and accurate notes.
5.5.2 Professional  Consult with peers and/or supervisors if personal issues, attitudes, or beliefs threaten to adversely impact clinical work.
5.5.3 Professional  Pursue professional development through self-supervision, collegial consultation, professional reading, and continuing educational activities.
5.5.4 Professional  Bill clients and third party payers in accordance with professional ethics, relevant laws and policies, and seek reimbursement only for covered services.

2. Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs core content areas for MHC licensure (2009) addressed by this course:

Professional orientation and ethical practice:
- self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role;
- advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients;
- ethical standards of professional organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling;
- counselors’ roles in developing cultural self-awareness, promoting cultural social justice, advocacy, and conflict resolution, and other culturally supported behaviors that promote optimal well-being and growth of the human spirit, mind, or body.
3. **AAPC Body of Knowledge for professional certification (2011) addressed by this course:**
   
a. Counseling and psychotherapy: Theory and techniques:
   - Self-other awareness related to therapeutic and ethical boundary considerations
   - Ethical and legal considerations relevant to counseling and consultation.

   b. Couples and family systems: theory and techniques:
   - Ethical and legal factors.

   c. Social and cultural diversity:
   - Ethical and legal considerations as well as advocacy issues for clinicians that accompany the consequences of prejudice, racism and other forms of oppression which clients encounter.

   d. The function and ethics of professional identity as a counselor:
   - The role of advocacy on behalf of the profession regarding public and private policy issues as well as advocacy for clients in relation to institutional and social barriers that deny them access to or equity in resources.
   - The ethical standards of the profession and current legal considerations as well as developing skills in applying these in practice.

   e. Career development:
   - Ethical and legal factors.

**Course Methods and Requirements**

1. **Lectures** will develop core perspectives and offer general principles.

2. **Class discussions** will illustrate, amplify, and challenge basic perspectives and principles. Reading and reflecting upon assigned texts as scheduled will facilitate responsible discussion. Be prepared to respond to questions such as: What was the most significant idea you encountered? What would you like to challenge or to discuss more thoroughly?

3. **Required Readings** will provide broad theoretical and practical perspectives. The Corey, et.al. text includes a self-inventory at the beginning of each chapter. This inventory should be routinely completed since it will frequently provide one basis for class conversations. Each week a study guide will be provided for your assistance. The glossary and multiple choice questions are the bank from which exams will be drawn.

   Note that each student will select two Codes of Professional Ethics to be accountable for throughout the semester.

4. **Class attendance and informed participation is required.** Class participation will be evaluated based on your consistent, attentive presence in class. Verbal participation should give evidence of receptivity to the questions and ideas of others as well as effective articulation of one's own views. Completing assigned readings before class is essential to effective participation

   Students are to contact the professor if unable to attend due to illness or emergency. Three absences are maximum permitted by policy. Three tardy classes will comprise one absence.

   Attendance and participation may modify your final grade by 1/3 grade; e.g., a B could become a B+ or a B-.
Graded Assignments

1. Write one reflective paper based on your reading of *The Resilient Practitioner*. Answer the following questions: What two practices do you now engage in that you now intend to practice more? What two current practices do you intend to stop or modify? What two new practices do you intend to adopt? Connect each of your intentions to themes, statements, or principles in *The Resilient Practitioner*. How do these connect to your two Codes? Why do you believe your intentions to be important? Maximum length of 6 pages.
   Due: February 20
   Point value = Up to 10 points.

2. Two exams = These will include both “objective style” multiple choice questions taken from each chapter’s study questions and multiple choice questions based upon case summaries. More specific information will be available prior to each exam.
   Due: March 13 and May 8
   Point value = Up to 35 points each.

3. One class presentation. A group project (preferred) or individual. Select from Key Topics or Course Outcomes Lists. Use a case study methodology to amplify key topics. An average presentation will refer to codes of ethics, applicable laws, and reserve book resources. An excellent presentation will also utilize additional books, journals, and online resources. Appropriate creativity (role plays, movie clips, etc.) will be rewarded. Each presentation will provide a one page summary of definitions, key points, and key resources utilized. 15 to 30 minutes target length for presentation and discussion, depending on number of participants.
   Due: Submit preferred topic (from Chapter 5 following) on February 6.
   Due: As assigned.
   Point value = Up to 20 points.

Optional:

For “bonus credit,” you may add 4 or 5. Maximum length of 6 pages.

Due: May 1
Point value = Up to 10 points.

4. You may read and review a professional book on any topic related to our class. You must receive approval of the book from the professor before you submit your review. This should be a critical review similar to that found in professional journals. Include connections to your two Codes. Maximum length of 6 pages.

5. You may write a case study of a clinical ethical dilemma of which you have first-hand knowledge or of which you have second-hand knowledge through interview of the clinician directly involved in the case. How was it resolved or how is it being resolved? What is your assessment of the ethical adequacy of the resolution? Include connections to your two Codes. Maximum length of 6 pages.
Grading Methods
Each graded assignment will receive a numerical grade based upon that assignment’s total points. At the conclusion of the course, the points will be totaled and a letter grade computed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91 - 100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>81 - 90</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>71 – 80</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>61 – 70</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 61</td>
<td>F</td>
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The instructor’s evaluation of class participation and your attendance record may modify the final grade by a – or +.

a. Grading Criteria: Responsiveness to and focus on stated assignments is essential, especially focus on the moral and ethical dimensions. Writing skill (or speaking skill), conceptual clarity, and cohesive presentation are expected. Breadth and depth of understanding add to your grade, such as differing or conflicting perspectives. Critical analysis and synthesis of material moves toward “excellence.” Creativity and risk taking will be rewarded.

b. Due Dates: Any late paper or presentation will have its assigned grade reduced by 1 grade per class period late (e.g., an ‘A’ becomes a ‘A-’ after 1 class, a ‘B+’ after 2 classes, etc.). Any time after the conclusion of a class period is considered late. Grace may be extended due to crisis events that are not predictable or within the student’s control (e.g., your printer running out of ink is considered within your control; an appendectomy is not).

c. Format: Prepare all assignments in 12-point font, 1 to 1.5 inch margins, right margin unjustified. Prefer that quotes and references be documented via the in-line method (APA), but consistent use of another style is acceptable.

2. Texts
Required Texts
2. Codes of Ethics for the Helping Professions
4. Articles posted to class site on InsideCTS.

Supplemental Texts (on library reserve)

Key Websites
1. American Counseling Association (ACA) www.counseling.org
2. Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC) www.aservic.org
3. American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) www.aapc.org
4. American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) www.aamft.org
5. National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) www.nbcc.org
6. Indiana Professional Licensing Agency [www.in.gov/pla/social.htm](http://www.in.gov/pla/social.htm) and click 2012 Law Compilation near bottom of page. Other links are also interesting and important.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

Note: The following schedule may be amended due to student interests, availability of guests, or other emerging opportunities. Changes in required assignments (either content or due dates) should not be expected; if changes occur, these will be published in writing.

Class periods may consist of up to three segments. One will center on professor lecture and class discussion based upon the assigned reading. One may center on a class presentation(s). One may engage a case study or review a professional Code of Ethics.

**January 23**

Introduction to class and participants.
- 1. Overview of Key Agenda
- 2. Syllabus and Course Requirements
- 3. Participant introductions

**January 30**

The Disciplines of Ethics and Professionalism
- Corey, Chapters 1 and 2
- Keys: Ethics, Ethics codes, Ethical decision-making, Dealing with suspected unethical colleagues
- Keys: Self-awareness as core virtue, Professional stress and burnout, Transference and countertransference as ethical challenges, Dealing with suspected impaired colleagues

**February 6**

Values
- Wicks, Introduction through Chapter 3
- Corey, Chapter 3
- Keys: Values conflicts in counseling (choose a specific conflict to explore), Spirituality as a values conflict

Due: (a) Statement of 2 Professional Ethics Codes. (b) Intention for optional assignment. If class presentation, include two topic options; formed groups can submit proposal together.

**February 13**

Diversity and multicultural living
- Wicks, Chapter 4 through Appendix G
- Corey, Chapter 4
- Keys: Ethics codes interpreted cross-culturally, Sexual orientation as culture, Multiculturalism as an ethical possibility or impossibility

**February 20**

Rights and Responsibilities
- Corey, Chapter 5
- Keys: Informed consent, Negligence/malpractice/liability, Children and adolescent special ethical and legal issues, Record keeping, Involuntary commitment, Online counseling, Malpractice liability

Due: Reflection paper on Wicks.

**February 27**

No Class – Reading Week.
**March 6**  Confidentiality  
Guest Presenters: Legal and Risk Management Concerns for Therapists  
Corey, Chapter 6  
Keys: HIPAA, Privileged communication, Breaching confidentiality, Duty to warn, Duty to protect, Limits of confidentiality, HIV/AIDS issues

**March 13**  Rights and Responsibilities  
Returns

**March 20**  Confidentiality  
Returns

**March 27**  No Class – Easter Recess

**April 3**  Managing Relationship Boundaries Ethically  
Corey, Chapter 7  
Keys: Bartering, Dual / Multiple relationships, Gift giving and receiving, Managing sexual attraction, Social relationships with clients

**April 10**  Issues with Multiple Client Therapies  
Corey, Chapters 11 and 12  
Keys: Special considerations in marriage therapy … in family therapy … in group therapy, Confidentiality and multiple client therapies, Informed consent, Ethical issues in co-therapy, Special issues in ethical termination

**April 17**  Issues in Professional Training and Supervision  
Corey, Chapters 8 and 9  
Keys: Professional competence, State licensing regulations, Ethics and the training supervisor, Peer review and ethics challenges, Multiple relationships in supervisory setting, Consultation and professionalism  
Due: Book Review or Case Study Paper.

**April 24**  Issues in Theory and Practice of Therapy  
Corey, Chapter 10  
AESERVIC, “Competencies for Addressing Spiritual and Religious Issues in Counseling”  
Keys: Theory as an ethical challenge, Practice issues including diagnosis and insurance company relationships

**May 1**  Issues in Community Engagement  
Corey, Chapter 13  
Keys: Codes of ethics and community practice, Interface between private therapist and community mental health workers, Therapist as advocate in community or legislature or profession  
Due: Optional paper for bonus credit.

**May 8**  Final Examination Period  
Due: Exam 2 on Chapters 7-13.