

**Nova Southeastern University  
Center for Psychological Studies**

**Course Outline**

**Course # & Title:** PSY 511 – Introduction to Mental Health Counseling Techniques

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Location/Section:** Tampa/TP1

**Dates:** May 2, 3, 4, 2008  
May 16, 17, 18, 2008

**Instructor:** Tom Mabee, Ph.D.  
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**Class Meeting Times:** Fridays 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM  
Saturdays 8:30 AM - 6:00 PM  
Sundays 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM

**Required Texts:**

Evans, Hearn, Uhlemann, & Ivey (2008). Essential interviewing: A programmed approach to effective communication. (7th Edition). Brooks/Cole. ISBN: 0495095117

Small, Jacquelyn (1989). Becoming naturally therapeutic: A return to the true essence of helping. Bantam Books. ISBN: 0-553-34800-0

Jacobs, Ed (1992). Creative Counseling Techniques: An Illustrated Guide. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources. ISBN: 0-911907-06-8

**Course Description:**

This course is an overview of the field of mental health counseling. Students will address professional roles, functions, credentialing, and general ethics of mental health counselors. The major focus will be on the development of fundamental counseling skills, including listening, empathy training, and basic interviewing issues regarding the development of the therapeutic relationship, cultural diversity, and mental status assessment will be covered. **Prerequisite: PSY 502.**

**Course Competencies:**

1. Describe the roles, functions, and professional identity of mental health counselors.
2. Describe the historical, philosophical, societal, cultural, economic, and political dimensions of current trends in mental health counseling.
3. Describe the elements of the therapeutic alliance, how to establish it in diverse contexts, and how to recognize ethnic and cultural diversities that affect that relationship.
4. Demonstrate the following skills:
  - a. Active listening
  - b. Attending
  - c. Structuring and reframing that illustrates the acquisition and organization of clinical data
  - d. Client self exploration, problem focusing, goal setting (including rank ordering of goals in terms of importance and workability)
  - e. Rapport building
  - f. Empathy
5. Demonstrate ability to recognize elements of diversity that impact therapeutic relationship and identification of criteria for outcome evaluation.
6. Conduct an interview utilizing attending, listening, probing, challenging, confrontation, and interpretation.
7. Demonstrate organization of clinical information from role plays into written format such as psychosocial history, a clinical evaluation, and student self critiques.
8. Describe personal and interpersonal styles in relation to family of origin's development, structure and communication patterns.
9. Demonstrate effective writing skills.
10. Demonstrate appropriate professional functioning as outlined in evaluation of students.

### **Course Objectives:**

Skills will be taught by presentation, demonstration, practice, follow-up discussion, and assignments designed to promote generalization. It is expected that by the end of the course a student may:

1. Develop and utilize basic communication and helping skills (attending, listening, reflection, rapport building) as well as treatment plans.
2. Implement counseling skills that facilitate self exploration and problem solving.
3. Learn the ingredients of a successfully structured clinical interview including presenting problem, relevant social, psychiatric and medical histories, mental status examination, diagnostic impressions, and treatment recommendations.
4. Write a clinical evaluation including the above key elements.
5. Describe the elements of a therapeutic alliance.
6. Recognize elements of diversity that impact the therapeutic relationship.
7. Conduct a clinical interview utilizing the above counseling skills.

### Evaluation

1. Observation of role-playing and demonstration of interviewing skills
2. Written clinical evaluation to include detailed interview and commentary regarding a client
3. Written self-appraisal relating to personal traits deemed important to the development of counseling skills and awareness
4. Written examination of social and cultural variables as they contribute to personal development as a counselor
5. Exam will include true-false, multiple choice, and essay questions over course material inclusive of reading assignments, lecture, and discussion.

### **Calendar of Assignments:**

#### Prior to Weekend One

1. Read Essential Interviewing
2. Read Becoming Naturally Therapeutic

Friday

Course Overview

Lecture and Discussion: The Context of Change

Saturday

Attending Skills, Contracting, and Stages of Therapy

Sunday

Attending Skills and Contracting continued

Written assignments discussed

Exam over readings, lecture, and discussion

Prior to Weekend 2

1. Carefully review Creative Counseling Techniques
2. Prepare written assignments due Friday, January 28

Friday

Turn in written assignments

Saturday

Skill Practice continued

Sunday

Additional Interventions

**Grading Criteria:**

Exam	25%
Written Assignments	50%
Participation	25%

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 70 - 79

### **Bibliography**

Baldwin, Michele & Satir, Virginia (1987). The use of self in therapy. New York: The Haworth Press.

O'Hanlon, William & Weiner-Davis, Michele (1989). In search of solutions. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Walter, John L. & Peller, Jane E. (1992). Becoming solution-focused in brief therapy. New York: Brunner/Mazel, Inc.