Course Objectives

This course is designed to provide an initial educational experience that socializes the student to the science and profession of clinical psychology. Course topics assure that the student understands critical issues in the professional activities of clinical psychologists, standards of ethics, issues related to clinical service delivery, legal issues, supervisory arrangements, social responsibility, and issues of diversity in clinical psychology. The course is also intended to assist first year students as they begin to assume a more active role in shaping the profession of psychology in their research, clinical, and professional activities.

Course Format

The course proceeds first in lecture/presentation format, then in discussions of relevant topics as students become more familiar with the knowledge base. The instructor will present information, focus topics for discussion, and provide suggestions for further reflective study. Students, by their nature, are expected to participate actively in the course topics and discussions.

Grading and Attendance

Attendance is expected as it reflects professional commitment. Students who must miss a class meeting should inform the instructor beforehand if at all possible. During the course, three “reaction papers” are required that reflect the student’s analysis of specific issues they are asked to confront. The course grade is determined by an average of the three reaction papers (each graded on a 100-point scale). Due dates are detailed below. Papers are limited to five, double-spaced pages (at least 11-point font), plus references, written in APA format.

Additional Expectations

Students are expected to attend regularly scheduled departmental Teaching Conferences (Friday, 12:00pm-1:00pm, in the HPNP Building) and to attend laboratory meetings held by faculty with whom they consider working. Additional research meetings, held by the Department’s areas of concentration, are available to students, each providing information about the research and clinical activities available in the department. Students are also expected to attend additional meetings as scheduled by the Program Director. These meetings should be thought of as resources that assist students in orienting themselves to departmental programs and that help them develop personal goals and interests. Attendance at these meetings will not be formally considered in
determining the course grade, but is advantageous to the student in many ways as they become familiar with the department and its programs.

**Students with Disabilities**

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students, Office of Student Disability Services. That office will provide documentation to the student regarding allowable accommodations. The student must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation. The instructor will work together with the student to insure that appropriate accommodations are available to maximize participation and learning.

**Course Schedule**

The schedule of course topics is listed below. A reading packet will be made available to students in the CHP Mail Room in the HPNP Building. Many students may want to copy the article packet for their personal use and they are encouraged to do so but are asked to return the packet in a timely fashion so that other students can have access to it. Students are encouraged to read appropriate materials prior to class in order to benefit maximally from class discussion.

**August 25: Careers in Clinical Psychology**

This class session is spent discussing various career options and outcomes of training in clinical psychology, including a discussion of critical experiences and characteristics of students that led to their choice of career.


**September 1: Theoretical Foundations and Training Models in Clinical Psychology**

This session familiarizes students with the various conceptual models that programs use to train clinical psychologists in the 21st century. How do educators conceptualize and measure the goals and outcomes of clinical training?


**September 8: Ethical Principles I**

This session, and the one that follows, addresses the code of conduct and ethics that must guide all activity within professional psychology. Students develop both a knowledge of the ethical code and an appreciation of how to apply it to case scenarios.

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. *American Psychologist, 57*, 1060-1073. (this is reproduced in your student handbook…please bring to class for reference)


**September 15: Ethical Principles II**

Ethics Vignettes and continued discussion of above articles

**September 22: The Concept of “Practice Standards”**

Standards of practice are key guideposts for assisting psychologists in understanding what is expected of them, the kinds of competencies and capabilities they should attain, and how they should develop lifelong methods for insuring that they are on the leading edge of science and practice.

September 29: Legal Issues

Psychological practice takes place within a legal environment, and it is often the case that ethical, professional, and legal prolegomena conflict. These issues, and the ways that psychologists address them, are discussed in this and the next session.


Florida Mental Health Standards (Florida Statutes). You can get the entire statutes online at http://www.flsenate.gov/statutes/index.cfm. I will reproduce relevant sections as handouts.

Florida Statutes, Chapter 490: Psychological Services Act. This is reproduced in its entirety in your reading packet.


October 6 – No class – University Homecoming

October 13: Legal Issues, Continued

Case Scenarios, Discussion on appropriate action


October 20: Specialties and Proficiencies in Clinical Psychology

The science and practice of clinical psychology has diversified over the past decade, and many psychologists, while generally trained in clinical psychology, focus their practice on particular areas that require special skill and training. The recognition of specialties, the manner in which students of psychology can attain specialty skills, and the process of board certification in specialties are discussed in this session.

Read material on APA website pertaining to specialties and proficiencies. The homepage for the Commission on the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP) is located at http://www.apa.org/crsppp/homepage.html. This material is not reproduced in your reading packet.

October 27: No Class – Bauer at ABPP Exam
November 3: Supervision and Training in Practice

The development of skills, competencies, and capabilities by students in training in clinical psychology programs depends on the program’s ability to provide them with access to competent and thoughtful supervision of research, clinical, and professional development activities. This section of the course reviews extant models and concepts of supervision and is intended to provide the student with tools to be a competent consumer of supervision at all levels of the program.


November 10: No Class – Veteran’s Day

November 17: Diversity and Multicultural Competence

The workforce in clinical psychology is not nearly as diverse as the clients we serve. For this reason, psychologists need training and experience in issues that relate to the provision of psychological services to patients from diverse cultures and backgrounds. This knowledge and expertise is built upon didactic knowledge, experience, and personal exploration. The two sessions devoted to this topic lay the groundwork for the development of multicultural competency, with the knowledge that attainment of such competencies is an ongoing process that continues through a process of lifelong learning on the part of every professional psychologist.


November 24: No Class, Thanksgiving Holiday

December 1: Issues of Diversity, Continued

**Reaction Papers**

**Paper 1:** Discuss an ethical dilemma you have experienced/observed in your psychological activities, and how it was resolved, OR, discuss limitations and potential problems you see with the new APA ethics code. *This paper is due September 22 in class.*

**Paper 2:** Discuss your thoughts about conflicts you might encounter between legal prolegomena (e.g., a plaintiff’s right to discovery) and ethical constraints you encounter as a psychologist (e.g., the need to protect tests and other psychological procedures from public domain release). When legal standards and ethical guidelines collide, which wins out? Why? *This paper is due October 20 in class.*

**Paper 3:** If you were a program director charged with designing a curriculum in diversity education, what didactic, clinical, and research experiences would you employ to insure that your graduates both appreciated and understood diversity issues as they related to clinical practice and/or public policy? *This paper is due December 6 at 5pm.*