



Shepherd University

Psychology 306 Special Topics: Creative Arts in Therapy; a multi-modal approach to client change. (3) Credits.

Fall Semester, 2005

General Course Information

Meeting time: Wednesdays, 6-8:45 p.m.

White Hall, Room 333

First class: August 17, 2005

Instructor Information

Instructor---Dr. Bob Masson

E-Mail address rmasson@frontiernet.net (Feel free to email with questions, concerns, problems, etc. Whenever possible, I'll get back to you within the day.)

Office Hours: Before class or by appointment. Please don't hesitate to contact me by email if you have a question or concern.

Teaching Philosophy

Learning to be an effective helper (counselor, social worker, therapist, psychologist) requires a commitment of time and effort on the student's part. I expect students to treat coming to class as they would a job; please be on time, be prepared (having done readings, etc.), and have an open and positive attitude. In return, I'll be prepared and do my very best to make class interesting and a positive experience for you. If you are ever bored or unclear about what we are doing, please see me. I'm excited to be working with you.

Additional Instructor Information

I'm new to Shepherd University this semester, although I have taught counseling courses for many years at several universities, including Penn State, West Virginia University, and Florida Gulf Coast University in Ft. Myers, Florida. I have also worked as a counseling psychologist for the Veterans Administration and in private practice.



Course Description

Clients learn and change most readily when they are exposed to not only talking, but when they get to see, move, and assess problems from a fresh frame of reference. We're calling this a multi-modal approach. Therefore, we'll use writing, drawing, movement, guided fantasy, props, strategic interventions (eg: paradoxical situation, reframing), etc.

This course will offer a range of creative techniques that can be used in a variety of interpersonal helping situations. Depending on your background and experience in the helping professions, you may be able to use some of these approaches immediately. This is especially true if you are working in a counseling related job. If you have not yet had a counseling techniques or theories course and haven't had practice doing counseling, this course will give you many ideas to use later as you gain more training and experience. We may spend some time working on basic techniques of counseling as a way of helping you better incorporate these creative techniques.

I'll demonstrate a variety of creative exercises in which I'll ask you to voluntarily participate. The purpose in letting you experience them is to make the class more interesting and help you learn from a first hand perspective. Of course, no one will be made to participate or share any thoughts from these exercises if you choose not to. Please see me if you are ever uncomfortable with anything we do in class.

Class format: This class will use a variety of instructional approaches, including, mini-lectures, demonstrations, and small group discussions.



Textbooks:

I know you will like the two books we are using for the course. They both contain great ideas you will use as a professional in years to come: Creative Counseling Techniques, by Ed Jacobs; and Counseling as an art: the creative arts in counseling, by Sam Gladding. Both books have been ordered and may be a little late getting here.



Grading, Attendance, and Other Policies

Class Attendance: Much of the classroom format will be experiential. It will be difficult to make up the experiences of demonstration, discussion, and feedback done in class. In

order for maximum learning to occur, you must attend class regularly. Everyone is entitled to one absence without penalty. If you miss three or more classes, your final grade may be lowered by an entire letter grade. To be considered present and prepared, you must be in class from the beginning to the end on each day we meet. Please do not leave at break. It is expected that all readings be completed prior to class in order to maximize class discussions. During class, questions are always welcome and encouraged. Remember, you are becoming a professional; learning to formulate good questions and comments in a group is as much a part of being an effective professional as learning other skills.

Grading: Grading in this class is based on one hundred points. 90-100=A; 75-89=B; 60-74=C; 50-59=D; 49 or less=F.

Exams: 30 points each: There will be a mid-semester and a final exam on the material (60 points total). The questions will include fill-ins, short answers, choices and short essays. Make-ups won't be given except under unusual circumstances.

Papers (20 points): From time to time, you will be asked to submit reaction papers in response to a reading assignment or experience/demonstration in class. These papers are intended to help you think through various issues related to the course. They will not be academic or information orientated, but rather require that you give complex thought to the issues and begin to develop your own set of ideas. More will be said later in class about the topics.

Participation (10 points): As a helper (counselor, psychologist, social work, etc.) you will be required to interact in many settings; professional staff meetings, client consultations, etc. Learning to formulate your ideas and speak up about them is an important part of the job. Therefore, I strongly encourage that you push yourself, even if you feel shy or intimidated. I'll never put you on the spot, but will encourage to express yourself. These points will be given based on my subjective appraisal as to how *involved* you are in class, not how much you talk.

Demonstration (10 points) I'll ask you toward the end of the semester to choose one technique we've learned and do a demonstration using this technique on a problem situation. We may do this in front of the class or in small groups. This is a chance for you to be original and creative. Most students find this both challenging and fun.

Readings: Reading assignments will be made weekly. Please complete all the readings, because you won't understand the material covered in class if you don't. We won't go over the readings in class, as in actually sitting with books open. Instead, we'll use the material in our work that evening. However, do bring your books each week, as we will use them for reference. I expect you to read both books, cover to cover. So, keep reading.

Confidentiality: As we demonstrate various techniques, it's possible that some may "tap into" individual feelings. Fellow students may share information that is personal. Please be respectful of these comments. Treat such information just as you would information from a client in a counseling situation.

From time to time, I'll ask for volunteers with whom to do demonstrations. If you volunteer, we'll assume the problem or issue you are discussing is a role play. If you choose to use a real issue, that is up to you.

While confidentiality about personal issues that might be discussed is expected, it can't be guaranteed. If you have any concerns about this, please see me.



Additional Information

1. Please be on time.
2. Please eat or snack before class or on break if you're coming from a long day.
3. I'll be doing many demonstrations in class. **PLEASE don't talk** while I'm doing this. Even though we're role playing, it's very distracting. If you have a question or comment, write it down and bring it up when I'm done.
4. Email Account: At some point, if you haven't already, you will want an email account. I will use your university email address to contact you if needed. If you prefer that I use another email address, please indicate that on the card.

The following two paragraphs are for your general information about academic policy:

Academic Dishonesty/Cheating Policy:

From the 2005-2007 College Catalog, page 58:

Cheating in all its forms, including plagiarism and cheating on visual work, is considered an academic matter to be controlled and acted upon by the individual faculty member. Students guilty of academic dishonesty on examinations in any course shall receive, as minimum penalty, a grade of F in that course. Such action shall be taken by the instructor, with written notification to the appropriate College administrators. Repeated offenses shall subject the student to suspension or dismissal from the college. Students involved in facilitating the academic dishonesty among others, such as the unauthorized dissemination of examination materials, will be subject to disciplinary action beyond that called for by their own cheating in the course.

Disability Accommodations:

I will be very pleased to provide classroom and academic accommodations to students with documented disabilities. If you need to request accommodation in this class due to a disability, or you suspect that your academic performance is affected by a disability, please see me or your advisor to make appropriate arrangements. Please do this within the first two weeks of the semester. No special accommodations will be made for test-taking or meeting other assignments unless you have established a documented disability within the first two weeks of the semester.