

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling Program

EDCD 628.002 – Counseling and Social Justice
3 Credits, Spring 2023
Tuesdays, 7:20 – 10:00 PM
Fairfax campus – Thompson Hall, Room L013

Faculty

Name: Dr. Mireille Aprahamian
Office Hours: Before and after class by appointment
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Prerequisites/Corequisites

B or better in EDCE 611 or B or better in EDCE 654 or B or better in EDCE 660

University Catalog Course Description

Discusses the Counseling and Development program's mission statement of Social Justice, Multiculturalism, Internationalism, Advocacy and Leadership. Provides an overview of theories and models of social justice, advocacy, and leadership. Examines theories and models from a multicultural perspective and discusses within the context of counseling in school and community settings. Examines the role of counselors as change agents, leaders, and advocates.

Course Overview

This course is designed to specifically address the Counseling and Development program mission statement of Social Justice, Multiculturalism, Advocacy and Leadership. The course will provide an overview of theories and models of social justice, social change, advocacy and leadership. These theories and models will be examined from a multicultural perspective and discussed within the context of counseling in school and community settings. The new role of counselors as agents of change, leaders, and advocates will be examined. The course will focus on the applied aspects of new role of the counselors, and explore the individual, group, institutional, and systemic barriers confronting counselors in performing their role, such as, issues of power and authority, sexism, racism, discrimination, etc. The course will also provide strategies for counselors to be an effective change agents, leaders, and advocates for their clients in community and school settings.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture/seminar format.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Understand the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of the profession (CACREP 2.F.1.d)
2. Identify advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients (CACREP 2.F.1.e)
3. Understand the effects of power and privilege of counselors and clients (CACREP 2.F.2.e)
4. Identify strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination (CACREP 2.F.2.h)

5. Identify strategies to advocate for persons with mental health issues (CACREP 5.C.3.e)

Professional Standards

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) 2016

| CACREP Standard | Course Objective Coverage | Course Activities |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients (CACREP 2.F.1.e) | This Standard is part of Course Objective #2, which is addressed in Classes 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, including on “Historical Perspective of Social Justice” and “Theories of Social Justice and Change” | Course activities that discuss this Standard include: lecture and class discussion on theories of social justice and counseling and social justice. |
| the effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients (CACREP 2.F.2.e) | This Standard is part of Course Objective #3, which is addressed in Classes 2, 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, including on “Social Justice Identity Development” and “Social Justice Issues: National & Global” | Course activities that discuss this Standard include: lecture and class discussion on social justice identity development. Additionally, this Standard is measured as part of the Social Justice Advocacy Project Key Assignment, which assesses KPI A.2.b.2 |
| strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination (CACREP 2.F.2.h) | This Standard is part of Course Objective #4, which is addressed in Classes 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, including on “Counseling and Social Justice” and “Self-Care & Burn-Out” | Course activities that discuss this Standard include: lecture and class discussion on counseling and social justice. Additionally, this Standard is measured as part of the Social Justice Advocacy Project Key Assignment, which assesses KPI A.2.b.2 |
| strategies to advocate for persons with mental health issues (CACREP 5.C.3.e) | This Standard is part of Course Objective #5, which is addressed in Classes 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, including on “Counseling and Social Justice” and “Social Justice in Music, the Arts and Pop Culture” | Course activities that discuss this Standard include: lecture and class discussion on counseling and social justice. |

Required Texts

All readings are uploaded on Blackboard

Additional Readings

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy).

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

- a. **Social Justice Advocacy Project** (*No more than two students can select the same SJ issue*)
(Key Assignment: KPI A.2.b.2; CACREP 2.F.2.h, 2.F.2.e)

1. Social Justice Identity Development

10 pts.

In 2-3 pages you will reflect on events and life experiences that have shaped your cultural being. You want to explore experiences that are significant in shaping your worldview, cultural heritage and identity; and how these experiences have shaped your thinking, values, and behaviors. You should also interpret the cultural meaning of these experiences (cultural socialization) and the impact on your current functioning. Discuss how your experiences have led you to choose your social justice issue.

2. Historical review of Social Justice issue

20 pts.

Complete a 5-7-page research paper exploring the historical context of your chosen social justice issue. You should use 7-10 sources and the paper should be APA 7th edition formatted. All sources do not have to be peer reviewed but they should be scholarly.

3. Advocacy Brief

15 pts.

Write a one page advocacy brief for lawmakers summarizing the importance of your advocacy issue, why an act/bill or law should be voted on or repeal, relevant research related to mental health and a personal story to highlight the issue (optional). advocacy statement on your social justice issue. To prepare this brief explore the connection between your issue and mental health, to include any mental health implications. Review relevant policies (e.g. bills, laws, executive orders) at the international, national or state level.

4. Self-care plan

10 pts.

As social justice advocates compassion fatigue is common, so it is imperative for you to take care of yourself. Briefly outline how you intend to take care of yourself personally, professionally and as an advocate. Maximum 1 page.

5. Action Step

25 pts.

For this portion of the project you need to take “action”. Complete a 2-3-page reflection discussing your experiences.

Presentation

10 pts.

During the presentation you will present your issue to your peers via poster. During your poster presentation you will provide historical context, advocacy issues related to your topic and ways individuals can support/advocate for this population. The average research poster size is 36” x 48”. The University library can assist with printing.

At the end of the semester submit your entire project to VIA

• **Other Requirements**

Expectations for Online Counseling Courses: *Cameras on!* The practice of counseling is relational in nature. As practitioners, we use our eyes, ears, voice, face, and body to communicate presence and understanding to our clients. In order to effectively train you in the practice of counseling concepts and skills, we need to see you to gauge your understanding and reaction to the material being presented. To this end, we ask that you turn on your camera during class meetings.

APA Format: Students in Counseling & Development courses are expected to use APA style (7th Ed.) for written papers.

Electronic Devices: **Turn off and put away all electronic communication devices not needed for participation during class.** Cell phones and other communicative devices are not allowed

in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, text, etc.) will result in a significant reduction in your participation grade. Notify the instructor prior to class if you have an emergency situation that requires accommodation.

Attendance: In accordance with the policies of the Counseling and Development Program, on-time attendance at every class meeting is expected. Late arrival to class will be considered an absence. Two or more unexcused absences will result in loss of course credit. Attendance on the first day of class is required. Excused absences are permitted for illness, religious holidays, or emergency situations only; documentation is required for the absence to be considered excused. Work-related absences are not considered excused.

Course Requirements: Each student is expected to: (1) attend each class, (2) complete all reading assignments before class, (3) arrive on time and stay for the entire class period, (4) participate in discussions and in-class work groups, (5) regularly check GMU email, and (6) submit or access documents via Blackboard and/or to the instructor as a hard copy as assigned.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a violation of both the George Mason University code of honor and the expected professional dispositions of the Counseling & Development Program. The GMU English Department has developed the following statement regarding plagiarism: “Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinion, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writer's own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious, and what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being reader friendly. In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers and establishes credibility, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism.”

- **Grading**

Grading will be based primarily upon the significance, thoroughness, accuracy, relatedness, logic and degree to which points made are effectively supported. Papers receiving an “A” grade will be outstanding in each area. Grammar and style will be considered when they detract from the presentation or understanding of the professional arguments made. As noted above points/grade will be deducted from assignments that do not follow APA guidelines and/or exceed the page limit.

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|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| GRADED ASSIGNMENTS: Grades will be posted to Blackboard | |
| Attendance and Participation | 10 points |
| | |
| Social justice Advocacy Project | |
| a. Social Justice Identity Development | 10 points |
| b. Historical review of SJ issue | 20 points |
| c. Advocacy brief | 15 points |
| d. Self-care plan | 10 points |
| e. Action step | 25 points |
| f. Presentation | 10 points |
| Total Points - 100 | |

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved:

A [100-94]; A- [93-90]; B+ [89-87]; B [86-84]; B- [83-80]; C [79 - 70]; F [69 and below]

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Students must adhere to program professional dispositions:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/assets/docs/forms/Professional%20Dispositions.pdf>

Professional Dispositions Assessment

Professional Dispositions Assessment are completed by instructors in all courses except electives and field experience courses (Practicum: 750/751; Internship 1: 792/793; and Internship 2: 794/795). In electives and field experience courses, instructors or supervisors may choose to complete a Professional Disposition Assessment should the need arise. In field experience classes, University and Site Supervisors will assess students on a Student Evaluation that is specific to P&I.

A developmental approach to PD Assessment is used, understanding that students are developing in their awareness, skills, and abilities throughout the course of the Counseling Program. In general, students in “basic or pre-practicum level” courses may demonstrate the disposition sometimes or inconsistently. Students in “intermediate or practicum level” courses should demonstrate the disposition more often or frequently. The courses are assigned to levels as follows:

| <i>Course Level</i> | <i>Courses</i> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Basic (Pre-Practicum) | <i>Core:</i> 602, 601, 525, 603, 609, 606, 604, 656 <i>CMHC:</i> 654, 652, 658 <i>SC:</i> 613, 611, 626 |
| Intermediate (Practicum) | <i>Core:</i> 608, 660, 628, 619, 610, 797 |

Professional Dispositions assessments are scored as follows:

- **4: Consistently Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition all or almost all of the time. This rank is considered exceptional, particularly for students who are at the beginning

of their program. Students who are advanced in the program (i.e., in their last year of the program and enrolled in Internship I or II) should expect to achieve this rank.

- **3: Frequently Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition often or most of the time. It is expected that students in the middle of the program (i.e., usually the second year for full time or third year for part time students) will achieve this rank. This reflects that they have moved beyond the initial phase of counselor training and are developing well towards being a professional counselor.
- **2: Sometimes Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition sometimes or inconsistently. It is expected that students at the beginning of the program (i.e., first year for most students) will achieve this rank. Students at the beginning of the program are expected to be developing towards these professional dispositions as a part of their counselor training and preparation for their future as a professional counselor.
- **1: Seldom Evident** – The student demonstrates the disposition rarely or not at all. In some instances, this may also indicate a harmful demonstration of professional disposition(s). Students at the beginning of their program may achieve this rank, which can be developmentally appropriate as they learn the expectations for students and future professional counselors. Should this occur, students should expect to meet with their advisor, who will assist them in addressing the area of concern.
- **N/A: Not Applicable** – An instructor or supervisor may use this to note that they did not have the opportunity to observe the disposition or that it was not relevant in the given context. This is most likely to occur at the beginning of the program when some dispositions may not be germane to the particular class.

Class Schedule

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

| Week | Topics | Assignment(s) Due | CACREP Standards |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1: 1/24 | Introduction and Overview | | 1 |
| 2: 1/31 | What is Social Justice? | | 1 |
| 3: 2/7 | Social Justice Identify Development | | 1,3 |
| 4: 2/14 | Historical Perspective of Social Justice | Social Justice Identify Development | 2 |
| 5: 2/21 | Social Justice Issues: National & Global | | 3 |
| 6: 2/28 | Social Movements/Abolitionism | | 2 |
| 7: 3/7 | Allyship/Co-Conspirator | Historical Review | 2 |
| 8: 3/21 | Liberation Psychology | | 1,4,5 |
| 9: 3/28 | Self-Advocacy | Self-care Plan | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 10: 4/4 | Social Justice in Practice | Advocacy Plan | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 11: 4/11 | Social Justice in Practice | Action Step | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 12: 4/18 | Presentations | Presentations | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 13: 4/25 | Presentations | Presentations | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| 14: 5/2 | Office Hours | | |

Counseling Program Mission Statement

The Counseling Program is committed to preparing counselors who promote the social, psychological, physical, and spiritual health of individuals, families, communities, and organizations in order to contribute to the advancement of global well-being. The program strives for national and international excellence in implementing a counseling perspective which provides a foundation in basic counseling skills and focuses on social justice, multiculturalism, international, advocacy and leadership. It is our belief that a global perspective on development across the life span, and an understanding and appreciation of multiculturalism, diversity, and social justice are integral to the preparation of professional counselors, requiring that professional counselors are prepared to assume leadership roles, be proactive change agents and become advocates for social, economic and political justice. The program is committed to accomplish this mission by working through interdisciplinary teams as well as promote the interconnectedness of teaching, research, service and professional practice. Through this mission faculty will facilitate a continued tradition of international, national and regional leadership through the development of collaborative partnerships and projects, research, publications, presentations, consultation, and training.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380, or the 24-Hour Sexual and Interpersonal Violence Crisis Line at (703) 380-1434. You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

Assessment Rubric

Social Justice Advocacy Project (Key Assignment: KPI A.2.b.2; CACREP 2.F.2.h, 2.F.2.e)

| Criteria | % | Exceeds Standards 4 | Meets Standards 3 | Approaching Standards 2 | Below Standards 1 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Social Justice Identity Development KPI A.2.b.2; CACREP 2.F.2.e | 15 | Excellent and clear reflection of experiences that shape their worldview, heritage and identity. Included the effects of power and privilege on their social justice identity development. | Good and clear reflection of experiences that shape their worldview, heritage and identity. Adequately included the effects of power and privilege on their social justice identity development. | Inadequate reflection of experiences that shape their worldview, heritage and identity. Minimally included the effects of power and privilege on their social justice identity development. | Poor reflection of experiences that shape their worldview, heritage and identity. Did not include the effects of power and privilege on their social justice identity development. |
| 2. Historical Review KPI A.2.b.2; CACREP 2.F.2.e | 20 | Excellent and clear comprehensive understanding of the historical concepts/ideas and provides an overview of systematic and sociopolitical considerations related to the topic. | Good and clear comprehensive understanding of the historical concepts/ideas and provides an overview of systematic and sociopolitical considerations related to the topic. | Inadequate and minimal thoughts of the historical concepts/ideas and provides an overview of systematic and sociopolitical considerations related to the topic. | Poor thoughts of the historical concepts/ideas and provides an overview of systematic and sociopolitical considerations related to the topic. |
| 3. Advocacy Brief KPI A.2.b.2; CACREP 2.F.2.h | 10 | The advocacy brief is excellent and clear. The brief is well researched incorporating all required components. | The advocacy brief is good and clear. The brief includes some research and the majority of required components. | The advocacy brief is inadequate. The brief is missing significant research and required components are missing. | Inadequate, poor or no examples provided that apply concepts to social justice counseling. |

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| 4. Self-care plan | 10 | Provided a self-care plan that was excellent and comprehensive | Provided a self-care plan that was good and clear | Self-care plan was inadequate | Did not submit a self-care plan |
| 5. Action Step KPI A.2.b.2; CACREP 2.F.2.h | 25 | Participated in both a level one and level two step and the reflection was excellent and comprehensive reflection | Participated in both a level one and level two and the reflection was good and clear | Participated in only one level of the action step and reflected minimally | Did not participate in an action step and did complete a reflection |
| 6. Presentation | 10 | Presentation is a 15 – 20 minute presentation that is informative, clear and comprehensive. | Presentation is a 15 – 20 minute presentation That is moderately informative, clear and comprehensive | Presentation of less than 15 minutes or more than 25 minutes. Too many or too few details to establish clarity and interest. | Presentation is less than 10 minutes, no handouts for audience, limited or no enthusiasm. |
| 7. Writing style, grammar, page limit including APA Style Overall points deducted for APA errors. | 10 | Adheres to APA style and is clear, understandable, exceptionally well organized, and grammatically correct. No APA errors. Language is appropriate for the type of paper. Adheres to paper requirements for page limit and headers/sub-headers. | Adheres to APA style with only a few errors; is clear, well organized, understandable, and grammatically correct with only a few errors. Language is mostly appropriate for the type of paper. Adheres to paper requirements for page limit and headers/sub-headers with only a few errors. | Has errors in APA style lacks clarity, not well organized, and has grammatical errors. Language is somewhat appropriate for the type of paper. Adheres to some of paper requirements for page limit and headers/sub-headers. | Does not follow APA style, is unclear, is poorly organized, and has many grammatical errors. Language is generally not appropriate for the type of paper. Adheres to few or none of the paper requirements for page limit and headers/sub-headers. |