

SENIOR SEMINAR (PSYCHOLOGY 412.003): FIELD WORK

Syllabus for Fall Semester, 2011

Course Meetings: Mondays, 1:45-4:00 p.m. (class) & Wednesdays, 2:45-4:00 p.m. (lab)

Professor: Dr. Melissa Himelein
Office: Lipinsky Hall 201C
Office Telephone: 250-3896

Email: himelein@unca.edu
Home page: <http://facstaff.unca.edu/himelein>
Course page (Moodle): <http://learnonline.unca.edu>



"When I look at the world I'm pessimistic, but when I look at people I am optimistic." (Carl Rogers)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Field Work is a capstone course in psychology, designed for advanced students considering helping profession careers. As a senior seminar, we will explore the topic of helping people deeply and thoughtfully, from the perspective of both science (the research) and art (the skills).

This course has two primary components. First, in order to gain experience and proficiency as a helper, you will complete a 90-hour internship at a community agency involved in helping work. Class time will be used to discuss your field work, learn about and practice basic helping techniques, and explore clinical issues. Second, in the effort to apply psychological literature to a fuller understanding of your internship, the lab portion of this course will be devoted to planning, carrying out, and writing a literature review related to your clinical experience.

Prerequisites for Psychology 412 include senior standing and at least 24 hours in psychology. While the course is not currently designated as writing-intensive, I expect it will be so soon and I will teach it accordingly. In addition to university, psychology department, and writing-intensive course student learning outcomes (see "Field Work SLOs" handout in Moodle for a list of each type), specific objectives of this course include:

- obtaining stimulating, thought-provoking, and career-relevant clinical experience
- gaining comfort and expertise in using basic helping skills
- increasing self-awareness about helping motivations, strengths and challenges, and career direction
- understanding important professional and ethical issues and how psychological research can be applied to helping work
- developing skill and confidence as a writer

OFFICE HOURS

- Drop-in hours (no appointment necessary - I will be in my office during this time unless I announce otherwise): Monday, 4:10-5 pm; Tuesday, 10:20-11 am; Wednesday, 1-2 pm; Thursday, 9:20-10 am.
- Appointments (schedule in advance so I'll be sure to be in my office): Best times this semester will likely be Monday and Friday mornings, but other times can be arranged as well.

OTHER MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Both email and voice mail work well for getting in touch with me quickly during weekday work hours. (Note that I don't answer my office phone if I have someone in my office, so if you get my voice mail, please leave a message.) I typically check email once per night as well. However, I really enjoy talking to students in person, so for extended questions or concerns, please consider coming to see me in person!

I use Moodle when relaying messages to the entire class, which directs email to your official email address. If you don't use your UNC Asheville email, please be sure that you forward email from that account to your preferred email address. It is especially important in this class that I have up-to-date contact information for you. Please be sure to let me know of any changes in telephone numbers or email that may occur over the course of the semester.

READINGS

Weekly readings for this course are noted on the course calendar and available electronically on Moodle. For complete bibliographic information, see the "Readings List" handout posted in Moodle.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. 90 hours of supervised, hands-on clinical work.

- *90-hour minimum:* There are roughly 15 weeks in the semester, not including breaks or the final exam period. You'll be able to complete your hours by the end of the semester if you work 6 hours per week, though any schedule that your supervisor finds satisfactory is fine with me. Please view 90 hours as a minimum; I suggest aiming to complete 100 hours in order to give yourself some leeway should obstacles arise (e.g., emergencies, illness, weather). Training workshops offered by your agency or at-home prep time required for your internship can be counted toward hours.
- *Record-keeping:* Please keep a formal log of your hours at the agency, recording specific dates, times, and activities. You can download log forms from Moodle or make your own. For example:

Date	Times	Cum. Hrs.	Activities	Supervisor Verification
8/20/11	9am-5pm	8	Attended all-day training for new employees	(signature)
8/27/11	9am-5pm	16	Observed group counseling sessions; read case files; met with supervisor; tutored 2 different adolescents; watched presentation	(signature)

- *Psychology and Life (PALs) and placement hours:* The Psychology Department encourages majors to participate in the world of psychology beyond the classroom by sponsoring a series of department colloquia and events relevant to our discipline. You may count participation in PALs toward your 90 hours – just be sure to log them and write about them in your journal.
- *Contracts:* Field Work placement contracts should be completed and signed by your agency supervisor as soon as possible. Supervision of your clinical work *must* be provided by the agency at which you work, preferably by a licensed helping professional (psychologist, social worker, counselor, or teacher). I will contact all supervisors at least once during the semester.
- *A word on commitment:* Though technically a volunteer at your practicum site, please treat the position with the same level of commitment you would have for well-paid employment. Remember that your internship may well be the experience that propels you into your first post-B.A. job or helps you gain acceptance to graduate school. Put your best foot forward.
- *Problems:* If you are experiencing any problems with your field work, please discuss these with me as soon as possible. I *really* want this internship to be a positive experience for you! Although your agency supervisor is responsible for your well-being at your placement site, I can serve as a mediator, support person, or consultant should difficulties arise.

2. Weekly journal entries about internship and reading. To maximally benefit from a clinical experience, I think it's essential to take time to reflect upon it. To encourage this reflection, I ask that you write two one-page journal entries each week in which class (not lab) meets: one will focus on your internship experiences (or later in the semester, in-class helping exercises), and the other will address the assigned reading.

- For internship-related journal entries, it is not necessary to describe all your daily activities; these will be noted on your log. Instead, describe events that are especially meaningful to you, e.g., something your supervisor did that impressed you, a particular client of interest, an intimidating crisis situation, an experience that affected your career goals. Unless otherwise specified, you are free to pick your own topic.
- I will provide prompts for the weekly journal entry related to the reading, listed on the Moodle course calendar each week. Course readings focus in large part on clinical issues, which – time permitting – we will also discuss in class.

Both types of journal entries are a type of informal, or “exploratory,” writing, designed to give you an opportunity to gain greater comfort with writing and assist you in clarifying your thinking about the many clinical topics we'll explore this semester. My primary criterion in reviewing your reflections will be evidence of conscientious, engaged thinking about the topic. Maximum credit will be earned if your journal entry thoughtfully addresses the experience you describe, meets length requirements, is submitted on time, and is written carefully enough that your ideas are clear (i.e., I will not be concerned with sentence-level structure or grammar as long as such issues do not obscure my ability to understand your essay).

Essays may be typed and submitted electronically, via Moodle, or if you have legible handwriting, you may opt to keep your entries in a traditional journal or notebook. I will collect journals to review approximately 4 times; tentative collection dates are noted on the course calendar. If these change, I will tell you in class and also change the Moodle calendar.

3. Class attendance and participation. Regular attendance is *essential* in this class. This is your opportunity to learn about your classmates' experiences (and, therefore, other agencies); to air your concerns, fears, or frustrations; to discuss important professional and ethical issues; and to practice basic helping skills. This is not material that can be duplicated by borrowing someone's notes. Consequently, I am strict about attendance in Field Work. If you miss more than one full-length (Monday) class, I will automatically deduct points from your attendance and participation grade (see “Evaluation”). Likewise, missing more than three lab classes will result in deductions. Absences due to official university-sanctioned events or religious holidays will be excused, but you must inform me of such conflicts as soon as possible so that I can plan accordingly.

Class participation will involve a willingness on your part to participate in role play exercises designed for practice of helping skills. Although such practice can be intimidating initially, most students find this type of learning enjoyable and useful. (Please let me know if this is not the case for you!) In addition, a portion of time in class each week will be devoted to discussion of field work placements, a conversation to which everyone will contribute. Your enthusiastic participation in this class will be much appreciated and will lead to a positive experience for all of us.

4. Literature review. The lab portion of this class will be devoted to your writing of a literature review: a 10-12 page summary and synthesis of psychological research studies related to some aspect of your internship. To help prepare you for this assignment, we will use lab classes to discuss topic selection, literature search strategies, reading and analyzing psychological studies, and writing nuts and bolts. A detailed handout describing the project will be presented in lab. Preliminary opportunities for feedback on this assignment will be due in stages throughout the semester: an initial study critique, a project proposal, the final written report, and a presentation of your conclusions to your classmates during the final class or final exam period.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

Should class not meet for any reason, I will send you an email via Moodle regarding schedule changes. However, weekly journal entries should be completed each week, regardless of class cancellations; lab assignment due dates are also likely to stay the same (assuming Moodle submission).

EVALUATION

Assignment	Points*																																				
Internship: Successful completion of 90 hours Full credit is earned for turning in signed logs verifying the minimum of 90 hours. Deductions will be taken if fewer than 90 hours are completed, regardless of the reason (5 points per hour not completed). In addition, the internship supervisor's feedback will be considered, with deductions taken for poor work habits (e.g., punctuality, reliability, work ethic, professionalism).	150																																				
Journal Reflections: 24 reflections x 3 points each Full credit is earned for conscientious and thoughtful attempt to describe experience or answer reading prompt, appropriate length, submission on time, and writing that is careful enough that ideas are clear. Entries include 12 focused on internship and 12 focused on reading.	72																																				
Class Attendance and Participation Full credit is earned for missing no more than one Monday class and no more than three lab classes, and appropriately participating in class (i.e., taking part in helping skills exercises, sharing about your internship experience and responding to the experiences shared by your classmates). Deductions for absences beyond the limit: 10 points per Monday class, 5 points per lab class.	50																																				
Research Study: Summary and Critique	8																																				
Literature Review Proposal	10																																				
Literature Review	100																																				
Literature Review Conclusions Presentation (can serve as oral competency)	10																																				
Total points possible	400																																				
Final grades are determined by your cumulative point total, with the percentage earned equivalent to a specific grade category: <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Grade</th> <th>% of Points</th> <th>Points</th> <th>Grade</th> <th>% of Points</th> <th>Points</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>93+</td> <td>372-400</td> <td>C+</td> <td>77-79</td> <td>308-319</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A-</td> <td>90-92</td> <td>360-371</td> <td>C</td> <td>73-76</td> <td>292-307</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B+</td> <td>87-89</td> <td>348-359</td> <td>C-</td> <td>70-72</td> <td>280-291</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>83-86</td> <td>332-347</td> <td>D</td> <td>60-69</td> <td>240-279</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B-</td> <td>80-82</td> <td>320-331</td> <td>F</td> <td><60</td> <td><240</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Grade	% of Points	Points	Grade	% of Points	Points	A	93+	372-400	C+	77-79	308-319	A-	90-92	360-371	C	73-76	292-307	B+	87-89	348-359	C-	70-72	280-291	B	83-86	332-347	D	60-69	240-279	B-	80-82	320-331	F	<60	<240
Grade	% of Points	Points	Grade	% of Points	Points																																
A	93+	372-400	C+	77-79	308-319																																
A-	90-92	360-371	C	73-76	292-307																																
B+	87-89	348-359	C-	70-72	280-291																																
B	83-86	332-347	D	60-69	240-279																																
B-	80-82	320-331	F	<60	<240																																

**Any late assignment will be penalized 1 point per day late.*

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Any instance of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade on the relevant assignment. A second instance of academic dishonesty will result in failure of the course. Academic dishonesty in this class would most likely consist of some type of plagiarism, which we will discuss in lab as we consider appropriate summarizing of journal articles. If you have any uncertainty about the nature of plagiarism, please consult with me.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

Topics and assignments are subject to revision. (It is more important to me that students have the best learning opportunity possible than that I stay on schedule!) I will, of course, let you know in class and on the Moodle course calendar about changes in topics, readings, assignments, or due dates.

FIELD WORK COURSE CALENDAR (FALL, 2011): MONDAYS, 1:45-4:00 p.m. & WEDNESDAYS, 2:45-4:00 p.m.

Date	Class Reading & Assignments	Class Helping Skill & Discussion Topic	Lab Topic & Assignments
8/22 & 24		Skill #1: Client observation and nonverbal behavior Introductions Starting internships	Overview of project (See: U Conn Writing Center, Writing a lit review)
8/29 & 31	Corey & Corey, Are the helping professions for you?	Skill #2: Listening, attending behavior, and encouraging Helping profession careers	Selecting a topic
9/7 only		(No class 9/5: Labor Day)	Three topics preliminary search
9/12 & 14	JOURNALS DUE 9/12 Corey & Corey, Getting the most from your education and training	Skill #3: Asking questions, paraphrasing, and summarizing Internship supervision	Critiquing a study
9/19 & 21	Yalom, Empathy: Looking out the patient's window Hill, An overview of helping	Skill #4: Noting and reflecting feelings Empathy; helping model	STUDY CRITIQUE DUE 9/21
9/26 & 28	Kottler, Things we learn	Skill #5: Dealing with transference Self-disclosure	Literature search
10/3 & 5	JOURNALS DUE 10/3 Kottler, Patients who test our patience	Skill #6: Dealing with countertransference Values and helping	Literature search
10/12 only		(No class 10/10: Fall Break)	PAPER PROPOSAL DUE 10/12
10/17 & 19	Welch, On being tough & tender	Skill #7: Feedback and confrontation Helping pairs Week 1	Paper conferences
10/24 & 26	Sue & Sue, Contextual & collaborative assessment Yalom, Avoid diagnosis	Skill #8: Interviewing and assessment Helping pairs Week 2	Paper conferences
10/31 & 11/2	NOVA, An introduction to crisis intervention protocols	Skill #9: Crisis intervention Helping pairs Week 3	Writing strategies
11/7 & 9	JOURNALS DUE 11/7 Joiner et al., Establishing standards for the assessment of suicide risk	Skill #10: Suicide risk assessment Helping pairs Week 4	Writing strategies
11/14 & 16	Genograms, About, Components, & Create your own	The helping model applied to children and adolescents Exploring family of origin issues	PAPERS (rough draft) DUE 11/16 (peer review session)
11/21	Sue & Sue, Multicultural counseling theory and issues	Becoming culturally competent Multicultural counseling	(No lab class 11/23: Thanksgiving Break)
11/28 & 30	Hill, Ethical issues in helping	Managing ethical and boundary issues Ethical dilemmas	PAPERS (final draft) DUE 11/30
12/5 & 12/7: 3 pm (Final exam)	JOURNALS & LOGS DUE 12/5 Yalom, Cherish the privileges Barnett et al., In pursuit of wellness	Reducing stress and burnout Review, site evaluations, and self-evaluations Careers & the future!	Paper conclusions (presentation)