PSY632 Psychology in Relation to Theology II

Reformed Theological Seminary - Orlando
Thursday, 8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m., 2 credit hours total
Spring Semester, 2015
Instructors: Jim Coffield, Ph.D. Scott Coupland, Ph.D.
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PURPOSE
This course is designed to help students integrate and consolidate their thinking and positions on a variety of issues related to counseling. It will also familiarize students with popular issues and professionals in the Christian and secular counseling worlds. The intent is to prepare students to be able to respond to commonly asked questions they may have to field in job interviewers, and from referral sources or clients.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Upon completion of this course, the student will:
1. Organize their thinking and responses to popular issues and questions often raised by job interviewers, and from referral sources or clients.
2. Familiarize themselves with well-known professionals in the Christian counseling world.
3. Be able to state their positions on counseling related issues in a concise, verbal manner.
4. Challenge students to engage each other professionally and respectfully in a roundtable dialogue format.
5. Gain confidence in their ability to articulate their philosophy of counseling.

COURSE FORMAT
Roundtable dialogue and student presentations.

SCHEDULE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 5</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<td>Mar. 12</td>
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<td>Spring break, no class</td>
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<td>Apr. 2</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<td>Apr. 9</td>
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<td>Apr. 16</td>
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<td>Apr. 30</td>
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<td>May 7</td>
<td>Presentations and class discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 14</td>
<td>Oral exams, Christian counseling</td>
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<td>May 19</td>
<td>Oral exams, mental health counseling</td>
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class attendance and participation in roundtable discussions
The course format is dialogue-based, and students are expected to be on time to class (class begins promptly at 8:30am) and participate in the class discussions. Lack of participation, being late to class, and/or missing class will result in a deduction in your grade.

2. Position papers and informational summaries
Each student will be assigned four issues from the Christian counseling and mental health counseling perspective, one counseling topic, and one counseling professional from the list below. For each of these you will write a brief response (1-2 double-spaced pages). For the four issues you will write position papers. For the topics you will write informational summaries. For the counseling professionals you will include a biography, bibliography, and a summary of that person’s unique contribution(s) to the field of counseling. For all of your papers a reference list of your sources is required. You will be assigned specific dates when you will use your write-up to briefly share your responses and then lead a discussion on your issue or topic during the class. Upload your papers to Canvas by Monday at midnight before the date you are assigned to use your paper to lead a class discussion. Use the question number as the title of your paper when submitting it to Canvas and on the cover page of the paper (Ex., “Question 8”). Include the questions or issue at the top of the first page of your paper. Use APA 6th edition formatting for your papers. It is critical that these are submitted on time because your classmates are required to read these prior to attending class. Late papers will receive a grade deduction.

3. Reading
Students will read the weekly papers written by classmates prior to attending class. The intention of this is to promote thoughtful discussion during class. Students are required to go onto their Canvas account and record the amount of reading they completed the week. This must be completed prior to the start of class on Thursdays.

4. Oral exams
Students will be put into groups of 6 students for the two oral exams the will be given on May 14th and May 19th. On May 14th each group will appear for one hour before a local pastor and your professors and be asked to orally respond to random questions from the Christian counseling section of the issues and topics listed on this syllabus (questions 1-39; 91-100). Each student will have approximately 10 minutes where he or she will answer questions. During the remainder of the hour, the student will listen to the responses of the other members. On May 19th the same procedure will occur, expect that the questions will come from the mental health counseling section of the issues and topics listed on the syllabus (question 40-90), and the panel will consist of a local counseling professional and your professors. You will be graded on the quality and thoughtfulness of your responses.
GRADING SCALE
Listed below are the assignments that will determine your final course grade.

Class attendance 65 points (13 x 5 points)
Class participation 65 points (13 x 5 points)
Reading 120 points
Position, topic, and biography papers 150 points (6 x 25 points each)
Oral exams 100 points (2 x 50 points each)
Total possible points 500 points

Course grades will be determined by adding points from the all the assignments. Grades will be based on the following scale:

A 485-500 points  B- 86-87 points  D+ 75-77 points
A- 94-96 points  C+ 83-85 points  D 72-74 points
B+ 91-93 points  C 80-82 points  D- 70-71 points
B 88-90 points  C- 78-79 points  F below 70 points

Christian Counseling Issues
1. What is Christian counseling?
2. How does your Christian faith inform what you do in the counseling room, both theoretically and practically?
3. After two sessions with a client she asks you why you, as a Christian counselor, haven’t quoted any scripture during your counseling. How do you respond?
4. What is your understanding of the sufficiency of scripture, particularly as it relates to counseling? (Some other ways to ask the same question: 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so the servant of God may thoroughly equipped for every good work.” Given this passage, why would you need anything but scripture in your counseling of others? Why would you use words, concepts, phrases that are not found in scripture in the counseling process?)
5. Is using the bible in a proof texting manner appropriate in counseling? A pastor said that a counselor said that he doesn’t do proof texting of scripture. What does this mean?
6. Explain the concept of common grace? How is this applied to the counseling process?
7. Why does a person need to deal with the past especially considering a passage like Philippians 3:13-14 that says “But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”?
8. So many theories of counseling were developed by unbelievers and many were anti-faith. How can such humanistic theories ever be incorporated into a biblical understanding of counseling? (Some other ways to ask the same question: Psychology is only 150 years old. How can it possibly be an important part of understanding soul care? The saints of old never had psychology. Why is this so important now?)
9. Doesn’t much of psychology simply justify people’s sin instead of calling sin “sin”?
10. Why do Christian counselors focus so much on feelings or emotions, when scripture seems to focus more on truth? Doesn’t Paul say that you are to be “transformed by the renewal of your mind.”?
11. Jesus died on the cross for the forgiveness of sin, not to make us feel better, but it seems like Christian counselors focus on the latter (feeling better). Shouldn’t we just trust and obey?
The fourth Gospel reports Jesus’ saying, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments,”
12. When is mental illness sin and when is it not?
13. How do you reconcile Christian approaches to counseling with evidence-based approaches to counseling?
14. Do people need to forgive themselves? Do people need to love themselves?
15. How and why would you counsel a non-Christian?
16. What does evangelism look like in the context of counseling a non-Christian?
17. How do you justify counseling outside of the church; that is, outside the authority of a pastor or elder board? Aren’t counselors just circumventing the role of authority of the pastor or church leadership?
18. How can a Christian counselor justify charging so much money for discipling someone?
19. The counseling concept of confidentiality seems to go against the authority of the church and church discipline. How do you justify keeping information away from the very body of leaders God ordained to deal with it?
20. How do you counsel persons seeking marital separation and/or divorce?
21. How would you respond to a client that says “I’m depressed and praying against a demon of depression,” and then quotes Ephesians 6:12 “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”
22. A person asserts: “It seems like Christian counselors are more concerned with state requirements for licensure and secularly defined ethical roles than truly biblical ethics of care.” How would you respond?
23. The means of grace are the Word of God, fellowship (including the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper), and prayer. Some pastors would say all a person needs to be equipped to carry out the tasks of the church and the Great Commission are the means of grace; therefore, professional counseling is unnecessary. How do you respond to this?
24. How do you incorporate the means of grace into your counseling?
25. Contrast the difference between emotional and spiritual health. Justify biblically how these are the same or different?
26. How do the concepts of the imperative and indicative inform your counseling?
27. What is your theology of change in the context of counseling?
28. What are your larger counseling goals in working with a person struggling with same sex attraction?
29. In the context of a counseling session an adult female client reports being lured into a sexual relationship with your pastor or elder in your church. What would you do?
30. A client is struggling with abuse from her past. She feels guilty because she feels angry with God but thinks this is sinful. How do you respond to her concern?
31. What is the role of forgiveness in counseling? What does forgiveness look like? What is the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation?
32. What is your understanding of shame and guilt?
33. How do we grow in wisdom in the context of counseling?
34. Do people ever really change? What hinders or stops people from changing?
35. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the counseling process?
36. What is your opinion of closed door counseling, particularly when working with the opposite sex?
37. How does reflecting “the character of Christ” guide the practice of the counselor and the overall helping relationship?
38. Some would say that true help and change can only occur as the client comes to know, trust, and embrace who God really is as depicted in Scripture. Respond to this assertion and discuss its implications for the counseling process.

39. Some would say true help and change can only occur as the client comes to know and embrace who he or she really is in Christ. Respond to this assertion and discuss its implications for the counseling process.

Mental Health Counseling Issues

40. How does your religion inform what you do in the counseling room?

41. Describe your theory of counseling.

42. What does it mean to have an eclectic approach to counseling?

43. You did your counseling training at a seminary. What was your rational for doing so?

44. What is a sexual minority? How will you deal with gays, lesbians, or other sexual minorities seeking support in their relationships?

45. You have a client that needs help coming out to his family as a gay man. How do you help him come out to his family?

46. How would you counsel a woman with an unwanted pregnancy?

47. How would you deal with a woman that reports having had abortions?

48. Discuss a current research issue or a counseling-related book that you have read and how it/they has/have impacted your counseling.

49. What are the reasons for being a member of a professional counseling organization? Select two of them that you would consider joining and explain why you would pick them specifically.

50. How would the theory and/or techniques of CBT fit within your model of counseling?

51. Does a person need to deal with the past? Why or why not?

52. What is the role of assessment and screening tools?

53. What is the role of medications in treating psychological disorders?

54. How does your understanding of neurobiology affect the way you address trauma and addictions?

55. What makes a counselor culturally competent? How do you as a counselor address your own cultural incompetence (i.e., lack of knowledge, skills, and attitudes)?

56. How does your understanding of multiculturalism affect your diagnosis?

57. Suppose you are counseling a family that consists of two parents and two children, 9 and 11 years olds. Based on your counseling over a few sessions you suspect there is a history of physical abuse by the parents. However, all the family members report the counseling has been helpful in significantly improving the communication between the parents and the children, and the parents are now working together as a team in parenting, and the children are not acting. You fear that reporting abuse at this point would interfere with their progress. What would you do?

58. Would you use social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkIn, Google+) to (1) communicate with clients, or (2) advertise your counseling practice? Why or why not?

59. What, if any, ethical or legal concerns do you have about using Skype or FaceTime to conduct counseling sessions?

60. How might a counselor assess problematic and/or compulsive/addictive on-line activities?

61. A couple counseling client pair tells you they were told by another counselor to use pornography to enhance their sexual intimacy. How would respond to this recommendation?
63. A woman reports to you that her husband has been physically beating her, and, in fact, has a bruise on her face from a fight she had with him that morning. Should you report this to the abuse hotline? What immediate steps would you take to help her?
64. How does crisis counseling differ from typical counseling?
65. Where does social justice and client advocacy come into your work?
66. Can counselors from one cultural group really hope to be effective with clients from another cultural group?
67. If you want to assess a client’s suicide potential, what questions would you ask him?
68. What kind of client problems/populations do you feel drawn to? Why? Are there are client problems/populations that would be more difficult for you to work with? Why?
69. Exposing without imposing values is an ethical cornerstone of counseling. Choose an example and share how you would address a value conflict with a client (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.).
70. Some scholars (e.g., Allen Ivey, Professor Emeritus at the University of Massachusetts) argue that providing clients with a diagnosis (using DSM terminology) is antithetical to counseling’s philosophy of empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard as well as collaborative nature of the therapeutic encounter. How do you as a counselor address this concern in your practice?
71. What concerns do you have about the DSM-5?
72. What are the important elements of a treatment plan?
73. A client presents saying they are depressed. What information do you need in order confirm the diagnosis, and what would be your short-term and long-term treatment goals?
74. According to the American Journal of Psychiatry, studies show that the majority of clients in psychotherapy have a relatively small number of therapy sessions. The average is between five and eight sessions. How does a dynamically oriented counselor address this reality?
75. You are assigned a client that works with your spouse/partner. You have heard stories concerning their relationship. How should you proceed given that there will be informal and formal contact with this person? What are your concerns? How should you proceed?
76. Is your theory of counseling empirically- or evidence based? How does a relationally-based approach to therapy find support from empirical data?
77. What are the theoretical roots of a relationally-based approach to counseling?
78. What are the most common assessment instruments used with depression, anxiety, substance abuse, psychopathology, and career counseling?
79. When is it appropriate to use a personality assessment like the MMPI II, and what are some alternative personality assessments to the MMPI II?
80. Explain the key features of a scientifically informed, biopsychosocial approach to assessment and case conceptualization.

Mental Health Counseling Topics
81. EMDR
82. Motivational interviewing
83. Positive psychology
84. Mindfulness (mentioned in question above. Know specific techniques)
85. Solution focused therapy (and other brief therapies)
86. Dialectic behavioral therapy
87. Life coaching
88. Internal family systems
89. Attachment theory as it relates to counseling adolescents and adults
90. Describe the influence of CACREP and professional organizations on counseling programs.

**Christian Counseling Topics**
91. Healing prayer
92. Deliverance-oriented counseling
93. Sonship theology and ministry
94. Theophistic therapy
95. Biblical counseling (CCEF)
96. Reparative therapy
97. Institute for the Study of Sexual Identity perspective on same-sex attraction
98. Levels of explanation approach
99. Christian psychology approach
100. Describe the continuum of approaches to Christian counseling based on how the proponents of them value general versus special revelation.

**Counseling Professionals**
101. David Powlison,
102. Paul and Tedd Tripp
103. Ed Welch
104. David C. Meyers
105. Larry Crabb
106. Dan Allender
107. Tim Clinton
108. Henry Cloud and John Townsend
109. David Benner
110. Diane Langberg
111. Steve Arterburn
112. Mark Laaser
113. Eric Johnson
114. Everett Worthington
115. Doug Rosenau
116. Mark McMinn
117. Archibald Hart
118. Siang-yang Tan
119. Les and Leslie Parrot
120. Mark Yarhouse
# Course Objectives Related to MAC Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** PSY632  
Psychology in Relation to Theology II  
**Professor:** Drs. Coupland and Coffield  
**Campus:** Orlando  
**Date:** 10/1/13

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAC Student Learning Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strong</strong></td>
<td>Students write position papers and take oral exams demonstrating their understanding of a variety of counseling models and techniques.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>Students write position papers and take oral exams demonstrating their knowledge of intervention models and skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Minimal</strong></td>
<td>Students write position papers and take oral exams demonstrating their understanding of racial, ethnic, and cultural issues.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>None</strong></td>
<td>Students write position papers and take oral exams demonstrating their awareness of commonly used assessment tools.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strong</strong></td>
<td>Students write position papers and take oral exams demonstrating their understanding of DSM.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Moderate</strong></td>
<td>Students apply their biblical and theological knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<th>FOUNDATIONS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling/soul care, a variety of counseling models and theories, ethics and professional standards of practice, and a psychological, biblical and theological framework for counseling/soul care.</td>
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<td>Moderate</td>
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<th>COUNSELING, PREVENTION, AND INTERVENTION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Able to describe and apply the principles of mental and spiritual health, including prevention, intervention, consultation, education, and advocacy, as well as the operation of programs and networks that promote mental health in a cultural/global society.</td>
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<th>DIVERSITY AND ADVOCACY</th>
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<td>Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking clinical mental health counseling services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one’s own life and career and those of the client.</td>
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<th>ASSESSMENT</th>
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<td>Understands and applies various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses, including diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.</td>
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<tr>
<th>RESEARCH AND EVALUATION</th>
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<td>Understands and demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling through a biblical worldview.</td>
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<th>DIAGNOSIS</th>
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<td>Knows and applies the principles of the diagnostic process, including differential diagnosis, and the use of current diagnostic tools, such as the current edition of the <em>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)</em>, and evaluates them through a biblical and theological framework.</td>
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<th>INTEGRATION</th>
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<td>Integration of biblical &amp; theological concepts with counseling practices.</td>
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<th>SANCTIFICATION</th>
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<td>Demonstrates a love for Triune God</td>
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