

## CLINICAL AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Instructor: Jaine Strauss PSYC 374  
Olin 326 Fall 2013  
651.696.6114

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-4:00 pm (HUM 100c)  
Wednesdays, 9:30-11:00 am (OR 326)  
Wednesdays, 1:30-3:00 pm (HUM 100c)  
By appointment

Course website: [moodle.macalester.edu](http://moodle.macalester.edu)

### **Course overview:**

This course will examine the theory and practice of clinical and counseling psychology. We will explore specific applications of psychological principles to the mental health field with a particular focus on psychotherapy. We will also examine the issues raised by traditional clinical practice, such as ethics, the politics and economics of mental health, values and cultural biases, and "iatrogenic" (harm-inducing) effects. Finally, we will also consider alternatives to mainstream clinical services. Although covering all of these topics is a tall order for a single semester course, I recognize that this list is far from exhaustive. Please let me know about other topics you would like to discuss, and I'll do what I can to accommodate your interests.

### **Course objectives:**

- 1) To introduce you to major approaches to understanding and alleviating psychological distress; and
- 2) To sharpen your critical thinking skills by exploring the assumptions, implications, and limitations associated with therapeutic techniques.

### **Requirements and options:**

Attendance, **ACTIVE** participation, discussion questions, pop quizzes (10-15%)

Midterm essays (including peer review)(15-30%)

Diversity project (15-30%)

#### **Choose two:**

- Group presentation (10-15%)
- Genogram (5-10%)
- Civic engagement experience (10-15%)
- EST project (10-15%)

### **I. Requirements**

#### **Participation, discussion questions, and pop quizzes**

The material in this course is most effectively mastered through careful reading, critical thinking, and lively debate/discussion. All of the class assignments reflect

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the one and only "fact" of clinical psychology: no issue is cut-and-dried. Therefore, the success of this course depends on our ability to have high-level conversations about the readings. Your informed participation is the most important requirement for this class. Although I know that you all have many commitments (and I really do hope you have time to have a life outside of your schoolwork), I will expect you to read the assigned articles in depth before each class meeting.

In addition, three times during the semester, you will be responsible for generating three to four incisive and provocative **discussion questions** that arise from the assigned readings. Your questions should address themes from all readings assigned for that day. They should reflect careful consideration of the readings—and the connections among the readings—and they should be questions you believe can generate interesting and sustained dialogue among your classmates. You are responsible for posting the questions on Moodle by **no later than 5 pm** on the day **before** the relevant class discussion. I will select a few questions from the ones I receive (plus add a few of my own) and make them available at the beginning of the relevant class. **Because this assignment is meant to help facilitate discussion, there will be absolutely NO extensions; if you forget to submit your questions or do not submit them by 5 pm on the day before the class discussion, you will receive a zero for the assignment.**

Because careful reading of the articles is so crucial to the success of the seminar, I will use pop quizzes to confirm you're prepared for class. At random intervals, I will ask you to summarize the key arguments or issues raised by the readings. Thoughtful and accurate summaries will receive a check, whereas summaries that are superficial, inaccurate, or vague will receive a zero. *Zeros will detract from your participation grade, and a pattern of zeros will also reduce your overall course grade.*

Participation grades are based on how engaged you are in class discussion, but "engagement" can be shown in different ways. Making well-informed comments in class is important, but so are other contributions, like asking questions that draw out the views of others and listening attentively and respectfully. *Multiple unexcused absences from class will result in a failing grade in participation and may reduce your grade in other assignments (e.g., Mystery Therapy; Diversity Project). Consistent lateness and/or a pattern of unexcused absences will reduce your overall grade for the course.*

### Midterm Essays

Roughly midway through the term, you will complete a take-home, open-book, and open-notes midterm essay. You will have at least a week to prepare your answers, undergo a peer review, and submit a final version.

### Diversity project

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One of the most important and exciting issues in contemporary clinical psychology concerns the role of diversity in the assessment and treatment of psychological distress. It is vital that our discussions reflect an informed understanding of how, for example, a person's race/ethnicity, class, (dis)ability, religion, and/or sexuality might influence their experience in psychotherapy. There are myriad readings on this topic, some dealing with general issues in cross-cultural/multicultural/culturally competent counseling and others dealing with specific populations. Because we cannot read all of these works during the semester, I would like each of you to choose a particular population (defined by ethnicity, class, disability, sexuality, religion, occupational "culture," etc.) and to learn all you can about the counseling issues associated with that group. The project will include both library research and, if possible, an interview with a treatment provider in the Twin Cities. We will then educate each other.

*II. Optional assignments:* You have some choice from among the following four activities; you must do **two** of them, but you may do more if you wish. *You will tell your classmates about one of these assignments in an informal presentation on the last day of class.*

### Group presentations

You have the chance to form a small group (~3-4 people) for the purpose of preparing a 20-30 minute in-class presentation. Your group will choose its own topic, and I will bug you to choose your topic as soon as possible so that I can draw up a schedule. Ideally, each group will educate and stimulate the class by offering new material and insights into some aspect of clinical psychology. Please select a topic about which there is some controversy or confusion. **Your presentation must be carefully organized so that it does not exceed its allotted time.** If your group feels strongly that it needs additional time to present, please discuss that need with me at least 48 hours before your scheduled presentation. I expect each group member to become well-versed about the topic; each group member should identify 5-7 unique scholarly articles or chapters and prepare an **annotated bibliography** about those sources. The annotated bibliographies from all group members are due on the day of the class presentation. All group members will also complete a **self-evaluation form**.

### Genogram

Family systems theory offers a fascinating approach to understanding distress. We will spend a few sessions exploring the concepts and techniques of family therapy. In order to get a more hands-on view of this important field, you may also construct a genogram—a visual representation of a family system. As I'll describe in detail later in the course, you may choose to represent a fictitious family, a friend's family, or your own family.

### Civic engagement experience

You may choose to volunteer your time at a facility that provides services to people in distress. You may select your own placement, although I'm happy

to help you, as is the Civic Engagement Center. I expect you to spend at least 20 hours at your placement during the term; these 20 hours may not overlap with internships, jobs, or civic engagement responsibilities for other courses. Please keep a journal documenting the specific activities you engaged in, the hours you worked, and, most importantly, your thoughts, reactions, and questions. Grades will be based not on the content of what you say (e.g., it's okay to say that you don't like your supervisor) but on the quality of your reflection. Skimpy entries are harder for me to decode than lengthier ones, but please don't overdo; the journals need not be book-length. The second component of your civic engagement grade will be a self-evaluation form assessing your perceptions of your experience and the quality of learning you extracted from your experience; I may also contact your site supervisor for input as well. The final component of your grade will involve a research-and-reflection paper (~5-8 pages). For this paper, you will find scholarly articles relevant to your placement (a minimum of 5 *good* articles) and you will integrate discussion of those articles with reflections on a central feature of your experience at your site. You may find it helpful to touch base with me midway through the term to begin thinking about the focus for this paper and to identify relevant articles.

*EST Project: Linking diagnosis to treatment*

Many clients seek psychotherapy to relieve the symptoms of a psychological disorder. In this assignment, you will examine in detail one empirically supported treatment (EST) for a specific disorder. You will start by reviewing the published literature about the use of this EST. For most people, you will then write a traditional paper summarizing the field and offering a critical analysis of our knowledge about that EST (8-10 pages, not including references and title page). I encourage you, however, to consider other innovative and original options. Some innovative ideas from the past include writing (and sometimes illustrating) a book describing this form of therapy to new clients; developing a curriculum for using the principles of the EST in a preventive setting; designing a board game to engage children or adolescents in a set of activities related to the EST; recording a TED talk; and creating a web site designed to aid consumers of this EST. There are many other possibilities; because creative projects often take longer to conceptualize than traditional papers, please come see me early if you'd like to pursue this option.

**IMPORTANT POLICIES:**

🌀 I am eager for all students to thrive, and thus I am committed to providing reasonable accommodations to all students with documented disabilities. Please contact Associate Dean Lisa Landreman (651.696.6220) as soon as possible to discuss your need for accommodations. She will send me a confidential letter detailing the appropriate accommodations for this course.

🌀 LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED BUT THERE WILL BE A GRADE PENALTY. Your grade will drop by a grade interval for each day

between the official due date and the date I receive your paper. I define “day” as a 24-hour interval. For instance, if a paper is due on Monday at 4:30 pm and you turn it in on Wednesday at 10:30 am, your grade would drop from, for example, a B+ to a B-. *I recognize that sometimes life interferes with academic work. If there are mitigating circumstances that preclude your completing your work by the due date, please come talk to me and we will discuss whether a grade penalty is warranted.* Please note that I cannot accept discussion questions late; discussion questions received after the deadline will receive a zero.

© **INCOMPLETES WILL ONLY BE GRANTED UNDER EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.** Being busy at the end of the term is not an extraordinary circumstance.

© Any evidence of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism on papers) will, in accordance with college guidelines, be reported to the Dean of Academic Programs and will result in a grade of “0” on the assignment. Under certain circumstances, it may result in your failing the course. If you have a question about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult with me.

#### Important Dates

9/19	Choose diversity project topic
10/10	Mystery therapy assignment due at start of class
10/23	Midterm essays due
11/5	Genograms due
11/14	Diversity projects due at start of class
12/5	Presentations in class
12/6	EST and civic engagement projects due at 4:30 pm

## Topics

(articles will be posted on Moodle)

**September 3:** Introduction

**September 5 & 10:** The ABCs of Therapy: Creating and maintaining a therapeutic relationship

**September 12:** Therapeutic approaches I: Psychodynamic and psychoanalytic therapy

**September 17:** Therapeutic approaches II: Humanistic and Gestalt approaches

**September 19:** Therapeutic approaches III: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

**September 24 & 26:** Therapeutic approaches IV: Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, and Narrative Therapy

**October 1:** Therapeutic approaches V: Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)  
**Guest: Tracey Wilkins, LICSW, Program Director, South Metro Human Service's DBT clinic**

**October 3 & 8:** Therapeutic approaches VI: Interpersonal, feminist, and men's therapies

**October 10:** Psychotherapy Mix-N-Match/Mystery Therapy  
You will each be trained to serve as a particular kind of therapist or client in a (hopefully!) edifying and engaging counseling round-robin. In order to prepare for this event, please watch one of the four assigned mystery therapy videotapes. **Mystery Therapy assignment is due at the start of class.**

**October 15:** Excellent therapists, self-healing clients, motivational interviewing, and nonspecific factors in successful therapy

**October 17 & 22:** Family therapy

**October 29:** Clinical hypnosis  
**Guest: Delle Jacobs, LICSW, LMFT**

**October 31:** Couples counseling and sex therapy

**November 5:** Creative and expressive therapies

**November 7:** Working with kids: when play is hard work

**November 12:** Spirituality and psychotherapy: synergism or oxymoron?

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**November 14 & 19:** Counseling in a multicultural world

**November 21:** Ethics and iatrogenics: Doing good vs. doing no harm

**November 26:** Does psychotherapy work? Research in clinical psychology and the future of psychotherapy

**December 3:** Being a psychotherapist: Panel discussion

**December 5:** FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS!

### **Grading Guidelines**

Below are the principles I follow when assigning grades to papers. I have sketched out the qualities associated with each grade interval; I use pluses and minuses when papers fall in between categories or when they have qualities associated with several grade categories. You will notice that the grades reflect my evaluation of both the content and style of your paper. If you anticipate problems with either of these domains, please seek assistance from me, the MAX Center, or any other reliable resource. Please acknowledge resources you use in a footnote.

The grade of “A” is reserved for papers that demonstrate unusual mastery of the course material in tandem with original, insightful, and persuasive analysis. These papers present sophisticated arguments in a style that is compelling and readable. Ideas are expressed with attention to detail; the logic of the paper is carefully supported by adequate documentation and examples. The writer anticipates a skeptical reader’s critique and manages to short-circuit rebuttals. The paper fully addresses the requirements spelled out in the assignment. Finally, “A” papers are a delight to read because of their careful attention to clear communication and the rules of grammar.

The grade of “B” is awarded to papers that demonstrate clear mastery of the course material along with some originality and insight. These papers present their arguments effectively with few logical flaws, failures of documentation, or grammatical errors. In my experience, this grade is given most frequently in two cases: for papers that begin with the germ of a great idea but do not sustain the argument with maximal effectiveness and for papers that respond to the assignment accurately but without significant innovations.

The grade of “C” is given to papers that indicate a less-than-adequate grasp of the course material or a flawed writing style. These papers may be erratic (excellent material mixed with misinformed analysis) or may be consistently lackluster. This grade, in my experience, co-occurs with greatest frequency in papers that were done in a hurry without careful attention to argument or writing style.

The grade of “D” is assigned to papers in which there is a serious problem with the course material or with the writer’s analysis. These papers seem to be those in which the writer has either not read the relevant material carefully or has seriously misunderstood it. Furthermore, these papers are often marred by significant stylistic problems. I consider this grade very worrisome and urge anyone who receives this grade to see me as soon as possible.

The grade of “NC” is reserved for papers that are totally off-base. Rarely does a student receive this grade after devoting even modest energy to the course material. A failing grade indicates an inability to express or apply the



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course concepts in accord with the assignment. It is imperative that a student who receives this grade speak with me as soon as possible.

## GRADING CONTRACT

Please indicate which activities you intend to complete and the specific percentage you would like each to contribute toward your final grade. *This grading contract will be due after you receive your grade for your midterm essays.* Because some activities (e.g., civic engagement) require considerable planning, please consider choosing your two optional activities early in the semester. I would be happy to meet with you to explain the assignments more fully and to help you decide what activities would suit your learning goals best.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Activity (possible % of final grade)</b>	<b><u>Your %</u></b>
<i>Required:</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Participation, Discussion Qs and pop quizzes (10-15%)	_____
<input type="radio"/> Midterm essays (15-30%)	_____
<input type="radio"/> Diversity project (15-30%)	_____
 <i>Pick at least <u>two</u>:</i>	
<input type="radio"/> Group presentation (10-15%)	_____
<input type="radio"/> Genogram (5-10%)	_____
<input type="radio"/> Civic engagement experience (10-15%)	_____
<input type="radio"/> EST project (10-15%)	_____
 <b>TOTAL PERCENTAGE</b>	 <b>100%</b>