

PSYC 374: Clinical and Counseling Psychology
Spring 2026, Tuesday/Thursday 1:20-2:50pm, Theater Building 001

Professor: Brian Rood, PhD, MPH
Office: Olin-Rice 326

E-mail: brood@macalester.edu
Office/Drop-In Hours: Monday 11am-12pm; Tuesday 3-4pm; Thursday 11am-12pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is an advanced psychology course about the major theories, interventions, and research in clinical and counseling psychology. The course is also designed to inform students on how to work with diverse clients and about evidence-based interventions. The list of topics in this course is not exhaustive, as there are MANY more approaches to therapy and counseling. Please let me know if there are other topics that you would like to discuss, and I'll do what I can to accommodate your interests. Class time will consist of didactic instruction, large and small group discussions, application activities, presentations, and role playing.

COURSE GOALS: By the end of the semester, students will be able to critically evaluate and effectively communicate their ideas about: the role of the counselor/therapist in psychotherapy; ethical issues related to psychotherapy; basic tenets and specific techniques associated with various approaches to psychotherapy; and the importance of psychotherapy research.

GRADED COURSE ACTIVITIES:

Note: Specific instructions, guidelines, and grading rubrics for all assignments will be posted on Moodle well in advance of due dates.

- **Class Participation and In-Class Writing (30%)**
 - At the start of each class, students will take approximately 10 minutes to reflect, in writing, on the key topics, arguments, or questions raised by the readings. Thoughtful summaries will receive a check, whereas summaries that are superficial, inaccurate, or vague will receive a zero. When in class, students are expected to engage in the discussions and activities. Please see the Class Participation section for specifics on how points/grades will be assigned.
- **Midterm Paper (15%)**
 - Roughly midway through the term, you will write a midterm paper. You will have at least a week to prepare your answers and submit a final version. The topic will be based on conversations, discussions, and questions that emerge from the first half of the course, i.e., your experience will help to determine the topic. The purpose of the midterm is to challenge you to think critically about the ideas that are emerging from the content of the course.
- **Cultural Exploration Project (25%)**
 - One of the most important and exciting issues in contemporary clinical psychology concerns the role of culture in the assessment and treatment of psychological distress. Understanding how a person's identities (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, dis/ability, religion, sexual orientation, gender, social class) relate to their wellbeing and to their experience in psychotherapy is vital for effective therapy. Myriad readings explore 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, each of you will choose a particular population (defined by, e.g., ethnicity, class, disability, sexuality, religion, occupational "culture") and attempt to learn all you can about the counseling issues associated with that group. As part of your project, you will need to interview either someone who works with this population (e.g., teacher, therapist, doctor, researcher) or someone who is part of this population. You will share what you've learned by way of a presentation at the end of the semester. Because an interview is required, and could take time to schedule/coordinate, students will need to pick their population of interest in the first half of the semester.
- **Evidence-Based Practice Paper (20%)**
 - Students will conduct a literature review of peer-reviewed scholarly articles, and write a paper in which they describe and critique published research specific to a therapeutic approach of choice and if/how it is effective in treating specific mental health concerns (alternatively, students can select two approaches and compare the two treatment approaches on specific mental health concerns). For example, students could choose to critically examine how Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is used to treat anxiety-related disorders; or how Psychodynamic Therapy is used to treat individuals who have experienced a traumatic life event. The paper is designed to answer the question: *How can we use research to know that a therapeutic approach is effective in treating certain mental health issues?* In other words: *How do we know it works?*
- **Representations of Psychological Interventions in Mainstream Media (10%)**
 - The practice of psychology is seen and heard in mainstream media (e.g., news articles, television, movies, books, podcasts); however, it is often the case that these representations are biased, distorted, or misrepresented—even if in arguably minimal ways. It is important, especially as students who study psychology, that you are critical consumers of psychological "science." For this assignment, you will write a brief paper in which you critically examine a media representation of a psychological intervention. An intervention could include, for example, a type of therapy or healing practice that is shown to help with distress, an "approach" to doing or responding to something stressful, a representation of what happens in psychotherapy, or the "role" of a therapist and their approach.

POINT BREAK-DOWN:

Participation and In-Class Writing	30
Midterm Paper	15
Cultural Exploration Project	25
Evidence-Based Practice Paper	20
Media Paper	10
TOTAL	100

Week #	Date of Class	Topic	Graded Activities
1	1/22	Introduction	None
2	1/27	Psychotherapy and the Clinician	Reflection 1
3	1/29	Psychotherapy and the Clinician	Reflection 2
4	2/3	Ethics	Reflection 3
5	2/5	Ethics	Reflection 4
6	2/10	Psychodynamic and Psychoanalytic Therapy	Reflection 5
7	2/12	Psychodynamic and Psychoanalytic Therapy	Reflection 6
8	2/17	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	Reflection 7
9	2/19	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	Reflection 8
10	2/24	Dialectical Behavior Therapy	Reflection 9
11	2/26	Dialectical Behavior Therapy	Reflection 10
12	3/3	Group and Family Systems Therapy	Reflection 11
13	3/5	Group and Family Systems Therapy	Reflection 12 / Midterm Paper Due
14	3/10	Motivational Interviewing	Reflection 13
15	3/12	Motivational Interviewing	Reflection 14 / Pick Cultural Pop.
16	3/17-3/19	Spring Break	None
17	3/24	Mindfulness and Acceptance-Based Therapy	Reflection 15
18	3/26	Mindfulness and Acceptance-Based Therapy	Reflection 16
19	3/31	Integrated Approaches to Therapy	Reflection 17
20	4/2	Integrated Approaches to Therapy	Reflection 18 / Media Paper Due
21	4/7	Medical-Behavioral Integration	Reflection 19
22	4/9	Medical-Behavioral Integration	Reflection 20
23	4/14	Recent Advances in Therapy	Reflection 21
24	4/16	Recent Advances in Therapy	Reflection 22
25	4/21	Student Requests	None
26	4/23	Grad School (Optional)	None
27	4/28	Cultural Exploration	Presentations
28	4/30	Cultural Exploration	Presentations
29/30	5/5-5/11	Finals	EBP Paper Due

CLASS PARTICIPATION: I have high expectations regarding student engagement. There are many ways in which I will assess and ultimately assign participation points for students. To clarify expectations, please review the following:

To receive full participation points, a student will...

- Attend every class meeting
- Regularly ask questions

- Regularly offer opinions, perspectives, or criticisms
- Fully engage with peers during class and small group discussions
- Fully participate in class activities

A student will lose points for...

- Not attending class
- Arriving late to class (especially if this is a consistent problem)
- Frequently checking or using their phone
- Sleeping or not being engaged during the class time
- Frequently having side conversations with peers
- Being disrespectful to peers and/or the instructor
- Not doing the readings (which will be reflected in the in-class writing responses)

I recognize that participation differs between people and can be influenced by several factors—especially ones that might not be known or apparent to me as your instructor. If you have concerns about your ability to participate in class (e.g., asking questions, offering your opinion, engaging with peers) and the impact that it might have on your participation grade, please talk to me, either before or after class, or during office hours. I am more than happy to discuss ways to manage some of your concerns and to best ensure that your style of engagement is reflected optimally in your grade.

INCOMPLETES: Incompletes will be given only under extraordinary circumstances such as death of an immediate family member, an illness or injury accompanied by a physician's note, or a natural disaster. Being busy at the end of the term is not an extraordinary circumstance.

SUBMITTING WORK: All papers need to be submitted via email. I will not accept printed copies.

OFFICE/DROP-IN HOURS: Days/time are noted at the top of the syllabus. If those do not work for you, I am happy to meet with students on a different day or time. Please let me know and we can schedule a meeting.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: It is expected that students will produce original work. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on assignments, and submitting the same or substantially similar work to meet more than one course's requirements without permission from all the instructors involved. These actions will result in the failure of the course and college leadership will be notified. If you have any questions of how this policy applies to this course, please ask me. Please note: I am a proponent of emerging technology that can help with writing, for example, ChatGPT and other AI programs. If you intend to use such software to support your writing, please let me know and we can talk through ways that you may choose to use it.

STUDENT ACCOMODATIONS: I am eager for all students to thrive, and thus I am committed to providing reasonable accommodations to all students with documented disabilities. If you have not done so already, please contact the Center for Disability Resources as soon as possible to discuss your need for accommodations. They will send me a confidential letter detailing the appropriate accommodations for this course. Please plan to follow-up on this letter with me to confirm how we'll apply those accommodations within the course.