Syllabus

PP 555 - A: Professional Ethics and Conduct
Fall Trimester, 2001
Tuesdays, 6:00 – 8:45 PM
David L. Downing, PsyD

Course Description

This is a crucial course in the ISPP/Chicago Northwest Campus Curriculum and its mastery is seen as an essential component of the training program. Indeed, this course constitutes one of the Clinical Competency Examination practice proficiencies that are key toward manifesting satisfactory mastery of clinical and theoretical material from the program.

This course will cover the legal and ethical issues inherent in the conduct and process of professional psychology. Topics which will be included for consideration are: confidentiality, ethical competence, prescription privileges, managed/rationed care models, "duty to warn", euthanasia, expert testimony, malpractice, and forensic matters, such as the insanity defense. Professional practice issues revolving around business and ethical concerns such as private practice, licensing/certification, and insurance reimbursement will also be discussed.

Course Objectives

1. To familiarize students with contemporary ethical and professional conduct issues facing professional psychologists.
2. To provide students with guidelines for evaluating and resolving ethical dilemmas and decision making.
3. To assist in the preparation of students for the multiplicity of roles, responsibilities, and involvements of the professional psychologist.
4. To provide students with models for how psychology can contribute to matters of social policy.
5. To encourage students to observe and reflect upon their own intrapsychic states for the purpose of further developing an appreciation for their own sets of biases, attitudes, values, and beliefs, as part of a greater strategy for maintaining high levels of professional and ethical conduct.

Office Hours

Office hours are by arrangement. The professor is in the office Monday through Friday.

Course Expectations

1. It is anticipated that all readings be completed prior to class to permit a seminar-style dialogue.
2. There will be two in-class examinations: a mid-term and a final. These examinations will cover information assigned in the syllabus, as well as lecture material from class.
3. OR, students may elect to do a research paper (minimally twelve pages, APA-format) on a topic of relevance to the arena of professional ethics in professional psychological practice. Topics must be authorised by the professor. Papers are due by the eleventh week of class. [nb: depending on the performance of the mid-term, the student may be required to take a final examination.]
4. On a weekly basis, each student will also be required to submit one critical question of salience for them that arose in the context of perusing the material from one of the assigned readings. It is expected that the student take a concept, topical issue, etc, and develop a question that is non-rhetorical or self-evident. In short, it should represent a clear area of interest, genuine puzzlement, concern, etc, on the student’s part, regarding a matter that they wish to understand. Questions should be typed, noting the author(s); title of the reading referenced; and the page numbers wherein the material may be found.

5. Also on a weekly basis, students will be required to apply a key concept, ethical/professional conduct dynamic, “critical moment”, or issue from the week’s readings and elaborate on this in a “vignette” or clinical “moment”. The student may draw from their own current or past experiences as a clinician or professional-in-training. This should be concise and pithy, no longer than one type-written page. Again, reference the author(s); the chapter/article referenced; and the page number(s) wherein the related material may be found. Again, sufficient copies should be made so that each student, as well as the professor, may receive a copy of the “vignettes”.

6. The above requirements will be weighted as follows: A. Mid-term examination: 40%; B. Research paper: 40 %; OR, C. Final examination: 40%; D. Weekly assignments & class participation: 20%.

7. It is the responsibility of students with special needs to bring these to the attention of the Instructor.

Course Readings

Required readings are purchased through MBS Textbooks. Additional journal articles are available through the library. Other materials will be made available by the professor.

Class One

Introduction: Ethics and Standards of Conduct; Training and Licensing of psychologists.


Class Two

Training and Licensing of psychologists, continued. Confidentiality, Privacy, and Privilege

2. Continue with readings 1-5 from Week One.

Class Three

Duty to Warn. Risk Assessment.


**Class Four**  
*Continuation of Classes Two & Three. A Critical Analysis.*


**Class Five**  
*Multiple Relationships.*


**Class Six**  
*MID-TERM EXAMINATION*

**Class Seven**  
*Considerations and Parameters in the Provision of Psychotherapeutic and Other Professional Psychological Services, Guidelines for Service Provision to Special Populations Including Women and Ethnically Diverse Populations; Couples & Families; Rural Mental Health Practice.*


**Class Eight**  
*Forensic Psychology. Ethical Issues Pertaining to Psychological Assessment*


**Class Nine**  
*Contemporary Issues in Professional Psychology; The Changing Health Care Landscape; Psychology as a Business.*


**Class Ten**  
Contemporary Issues in Professional Psychology: Psychology as a Business; the Rationing of Care.


**Class Eleven**  
And Now For Something Completely Different: A Look at Prescription Privileges for Psychologists.  
[TERM PAPERS DUE – where applicable]


**Class Twelve**  
FINAL EXAMINATION [where applicable]

**Required Texts**