

**Assemblies of God Theological Seminary
SOUTHEASTERN COLLEGE BRANCH CAMPUS
1000 Longfellow Blvd.
Lakeland, FL
May 6-10, 2002**

**PCPB 649 ETHICAL, LEGAL, AND PROFESSIONAL ISSUES IN
MARITAL AND FAMILY THERAPY**

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Summer 2002

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the ethical, legal, and professional issues involved in the practice of counseling and marital and family therapy.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Ethical Objectives: By the end of the course the student will be familiar with the major ethical issues confronting counselors and therapists. The student will become familiar with the AAMFT, ACA, and the APA codes of ethical principles and standards. Other major topics of instruction will include the therapist's competence, privacy, confidentiality, privileged communication, and informed consent.
2. Legal Understanding: As part of the course, the graduate student will be expected to become more familiar with the relevant legal issues in the practice of therapy. These issues will include: The therapist's responsibilities to clients and other interested parties (e.g. duty to warn), the nature of the legal system and procedures relative to MFT, family law, child custody issues, the therapist as "expert witness," malpractice and legal liability, and therapy records. Students will learn that laws affecting the practice of professional counseling and marital and family therapy vary from state to state. Students will learn the necessity of consulting text, laws, and professional organizations within the state one chooses to practice.
3. Professional Issues: As part of the course, the graduate student will become more familiar with some of the professional issues in mental health. The student will become familiar with the current graduate education requirements for professional mental health practice, the therapist's continued education and development, supervision; the professionalization process; relationships with colleagues; professional publications; how the therapist's orientation, values, and philosophy of life impact clients; licensure; the legislative process; and therapy research.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be expected to:

1. Understand the major ethical issues confronting all therapists (e.g. privacy, confidentiality, privileged communication), the special concerns endemic to systematically oriented MFT, and develop a rationale for competent, ethical, therapeutic behavior.
2. Examine the nature of the legal system and legal requirements for the professional practice of counseling and therapy.
3. Understand the professionalization process for professional counselors and family therapists, including graduate and counseling education, participation in professional organizations, and identity as a therapist.

TEXTBOOK

Corey, G., Corey, M. S., & Callanan, P. (1998). **Issues and ethics in the helping professions (5th Ed.)**. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.

BASIC OUTLINE

Ethical Decision Making

Counseling: The Counselor as a Person and a Professional

Values and Helping Relationships

Client Rights and Counselor Responsibilities

Ethics and Confidentiality: Legal Issues

Ethics in Theory, Practice, and Research

Managing Multiple Relationships

Professional Competence and Training

Ethics, Supervision, and Consultation

Multicultural Perspectives and Diversity Issues

Ethical Issues in Therapy (Marital, family, and Group Work)

A Familiarity With the Various Professional Codes of Conduct

METHODOLOGY

This course is based on the assumption that graduate students should be actively involved in the learning process. Therefore, you will be expected to assume a high level of responsibility for your own learning by: Reading all assigned reading, conduct an in-depth study of selected topics, and a high level of active class participation.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Pre Session

Read the entire text.

B. Session

Attendance and meaningful class participation. This includes completion of pre-session study guides, coming to class prepared to discuss and share study guide answers.

C. Post Session

A final exam covering all assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions.

Due Date: June 10, 2002.

Write a research paper on one major topic. Papers are to be 18-20 pages long and include at least ten (10) references. **Due Date: August 12, 2002.**

GRADING PROCEDURE

It is expected that all classwork will be completed as scheduled. Late work will be penalized up to one letter grade.

Completed study guides (Pre-session - Due May 6, 2002).....	25%
Meaningful class participation and attendance.....	25%
Research Paper.....	25%
Final Exam.....	25%

NOTE: Work received after the post-session due date specified in the syllabus will result in a change of grade fee (\$15.00) being charged, even when an extension has been granted by the instructor.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Possibly not in our library)

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Adair, J. G., Dushenko, T. W., & Lindsay, R. C. L. (1985). Ethical regulations and their impact on research practice. *American Psychologist, 40*, 59-72.

Adler, T. (1990). Researchers agree data sharing is good, but specifics elude them. *APA Monitor, 9*.

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Koocher, G. P., & Keith-Spiegel, P. (1998). *Ethics in psychology: Professional standards and cases, 2nd edition*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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Sieber, J. E. (1989). Ethical and professional dimensions of socially sensitive research. *American Psychologist*, *43*, 49-55.

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SPECIFIC DATA

Syllabus prepared by Larry Hazelbaker, March 2002.