Introduction to Clinical Psychology
Psychology 250

Dr. Lisa Cepeda
lisa.cepeda@uvm.edu

Office Hours: Thursday afternoons by appointment only.

Class meets: 250A Tuesdays/Thursdays Billings Ira Allen LH MLK: 10:00-11:15
250B Tuesdays/Thursdays Lafayette Hall L411: 1:00-2:15

Course Description. This is an experiential class that examines the history, scope and functions of clinical psychology. Clinical psychologists concern themselves with abnormal behavior and mental processes. With regards to the study of abnormality, clinical psychologists perform 3 main functions: They explain abnormality, distinguishing abnormality from normality, they create assessments to measure abnormality and they provide successful interventions to treat abnormality. The primary focus of this class will be to study the treatment and the specific forms of treatment that stem from the major theories of psychotherapy.

Classroom work: Regular and prompt attendance to class is expected. A large portion of the class time is devoted to small group discussion, role play and other forms of experiential learning.


Psyc 250 is an emotionally challenging course. Not only will you glean an understanding of how clinical psychology came to be, you will experience the assessment process and how it can be useful toward the goals of understanding the complexities of people and helping in the diagnosis process that can inform treatment. You will also work closely with case studies and hands-on, personal activities to experience three major theories of psychotherapy. We will study Psychodynamic, Person-Centered and Cognitive-Behavioral Psychotherapies. In the process, you will have opportunities to “try on” the theories and discover which system of change works best for you. You will work predominately in small groups or dyads (groups of two) throughout the semester. Many of the experiential exercises will invite you to look inward and reflect on your own life (experiences, beliefs, relationships, choices). You will be invited to share your insights within your group and to give and receive feedback as you learn the major theories of psychotherapy.

You will be asked to treat the personal disclosures of others as confidential. Although there is no way to guarantee that everyone will respect this principle of confidentiality, I ask that you each commit yourself to it. Also know that if I believe that you present a significant risk to yourself or others, or if I learn about a current risk of abuse to a child or an elderly person, I am obligated to break confidentiality and secure needed support and help.

Evaluation and Grading.

- There will be 2 non-cumulative exams in this course, which will cover the chapter readings. Each exam accounts for 20% of your final grade.

- There are 5 reaction papers required over the course of the semester. For each paper, you will receive an article to read that will facilitate a written discussion. Papers are graded on substance, insight and ability to communicate from a personal stance; making the topic relevant to the self. Reaction papers account for 20% of your grade.
o **Reaction paper #1**: What is Normal? By Peter Kramer
  - Discuss your definition of what normal behavior is and by contrast what is abnormal. With thoughtfulness given to your personal culture (family of origin and personal experiences), how do you come to possess this definition of normal?
  - Write up a futuristic biography of yourself (or someone you know well) in the same vein as the four people showcased at the end of the article in the section: Redefining Normal.

o **Reaction paper #2**: What Brand Is Your Therapist? By Lori Gottlieb
  - Discuss the differences (as you understand them) between life coaching and psychotherapy.
  - Would you be more likely to pay for a consultation with a life coach or a session with a psychologist? Explain.
  - How might you “brand” yourself if you were to begin a private practice as a clinical psychologist?
  
  o Reaction papers 3-5 TBD
  
  o **Extra Credit Opportunity**: To gain a possible 2 extra points toward a reaction paper grade, you may attend the Psychology Club’s movie night, view the showing and write a two page reaction paper about the movie or a theme that was meaningful to you that was highlighted in the movie.

- There are 7 quizzes that are required. Each quiz will be written by the student in a **multiple choice** format with the answers highlighted. In addition, there will be one essay question to be answered in depth for each quiz. Essay questions will be provided. Each quiz needs to be 15 questions with 4 answer choices plus a well written answer in paragraph form to the essay question. Each quiz is due at the beginning of class time on the date assigned on the syllabus; typed and in a hard-copy format. Quizzes will be graded on correctness of information, plausible answer choices, creativity and grammar. Quizzes account for 20% of your final grade.

Example quiz questions are given. I look to see that at least half of all quizzes contain complex and more difficult quiz questions. Note the difference between quiz questions. Note in question 4, important information is found within the question stem. For each set of quizzes, the authors of the best 3 quizzes will receive 2 bonus points toward their test grade.

1. **During the first half of the 20th century, what activity came to characterize applied psychology more than any other?**
   
   a. intelligence testing  
   b. vision, hearing and other sensory acuity testing  
   c. personality testing  
   d. psychoanalytic treatment

2. **The Behavioral approach led to**
   
   a. treatments for sexual disorders, substance abuse, and anxiety in the 1920's and 1930's.  
   b. the development of experimental neuroses.  
   c. a move away from evaluating treatment effectiveness.  
   d. a belief that psychological problems were biological rather than learned.

3. **Which of the following statements accurately reflects the role of assessment in treatment planning?**
   
   a. Since diagnoses based on thorough assessments tend to be very distinct, it has been possible to define specific treatments for those diagnoses.  
   b. Psychodiagnostic assessment fits very neatly into the medical model.  
   c. Assessment can not only assist in the development of a treatment plan, but can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the treatment as well.  
   d. In real, every day practice, assessment has little relationship to treatment planning.
4. "Evidence-Based Practices" are interventions based on the best research currently available. Some groups that have been quick to create lists of evidence-based psychological interventions are

a. insurance companies.
b. specific groups within the APA.
c. colleges, universities and other educational institutions.
d. drug companies

- Essay Questions

Chapter 2 Quiz: How did historical events, especially the two world wars, influence the development of clinical psychology?

Chapter 3 Quiz: What are the general goals of assessment and what part does clinical judgment have in the assessment process?

Chapter 4 Quiz: What are advantages and disadvantages of structured interviews?

Chapter 5 Quiz: What are the differences between objective and projective personality tests and why are projective tests controversial?

Chapter 6 Quiz: How has the therapeutic relationship been understood and what effect does the therapeutic relationship have on therapy outcomes?

Chapter 7 Quiz: What are transference and countertransference? How are they viewed by the various psychodynamic approaches?

Chapter 8 Quiz: What is Socratic questioning? For what purpose do cognitive therapists use it?

- You are required to write a paper describing the elements of therapy from the movie Ordinary People.
  o This paper needs to be 4-5 pages in length.
  o This paper will account for 20% of your grade.
  o The following elements need to be discussed:
    ▪ Background explanation on Conrad including:
      • Presenting problem
      • Symptoms
      • Family history
      • Medical factors
      • Strengths/assets
      • Conrad’s schema’s or core beliefs
      • Working hypothesis (see p. 106 CBT Case Formulation Worksheet)
      • Treatment Goals
    ▪ Therapist
      • Therapist characteristics
      • Role
      • Therapeutic alliance
      • Therapy observations: What is the therapist doing/not doing, saying/not saying to facilitate movement? What elements of theories do you see present?
      • Include brief summary of theories used.
      • What factors lead to successful therapy?
      • Include specific interventions (what is the therapist actually saying and or doing).
    ▪ Personal thoughts on the case
      • Likes/Dislikes on the therapy
      • What would have worked better for you- had you been Conrad?
      • What would you do differently if you were the therapist?

  o Due: Thursday, November 21st, 2013.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T Aug 27</td>
<td>Introduction to Clinical Psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Aug 29</td>
<td>Work Outside of Class on Reaction 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>T Sept. 3</td>
<td>Clinical Psychology’s Past and Present</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Sept. 5</td>
<td>Reaction Paper 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>T Sept 10</td>
<td>Basic Features of Clinical Assessment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Sept 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T Sept 17</td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Sept 19</td>
<td>Interviewing and Observation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>T Sept 24</td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Sept 26</td>
<td>Testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reaction Paper 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>T Oct 1</td>
<td>Clinical Psychologists Present Life Paths</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Oct 3</td>
<td>Reaction Paper 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>T Oct 8</td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Oct 10</td>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>T Oct 15</td>
<td>Basic Features of Clinical Interventions:</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Oct 17</td>
<td>Ethics and the Therapist’s Values</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reaction Paper 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>T Oct 22</td>
<td>Case studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Oct 24</td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>T Oct 29</td>
<td>Psychodynamic and Humanistic Therapies</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Oct 31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T Nov 5</td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Nov 7</td>
<td>Reaction Paper 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>T Nov 12</td>
<td>Cognitive-Behavioral Therapies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Nov 14</td>
<td>Quiz over Chapter 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>T Nov 19</td>
<td>Ordinary People Paper Due</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Nov 21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>T Nov 26</td>
<td>Final class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Th Nov 28</td>
<td>Thanksgiving- No Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>T Dec 3</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Attendance is important. You may choose to miss 3 classes without impacting your grade. Upon the 4th absence (regardless of reason), your grade will drop by a full letter grade. Upon a 7th absence, an additional letter grade will be the consequence. Upon a 9th absence, your grade will drop another letter grade, etc. Know that when you miss class, you hurt your group. You may earn a bonus of 3% on your final grade if you choose to miss 0 classes and are tardy 0 times; 1% if you choose to miss only 1 class and are tardy 0 times. **Three times being tardy = 1 absence.** Arriving late or leaving early = a tardy. To earn the extra points, you may not be tardy or absent.

- Late work is **not accepted** except in unusual circumstances (illness, death in family). See me **prior to due date** to explain extenuating circumstances if you require an extension.

- Computers and cell phones are **not** permitted. In an attempt to practice the interpersonal skill set required of a psychologist, we will work at being present and engaged in a face-to-face format with our classmates. The ability to set and follow appropriate boundaries with technology communicates mature and responsible behavior; both of which are requirements for this professional career and a respectful experience in my class.

**Students with disabilities.**

The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civic rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the ACCESS office at 656-7753. If you need specific accommodations in this class, please bring a letter from ACCESS within the first 3 weeks of class so that we can make appropriate arrangements.