FACULTY OF HEALTH
York University
Psychology

COURSE SYLLABUS

Counseling Psychology 4060 6.0, Section A

Term:  Fall/Winter 2012-2013, Fri, 11:30-2:30, R N201

Course Instructor
Dr. Henny Westra, Associate Professor, C.Psych.
127 Behavioral Science Building (BSB)
Phone: 416-736-2100 ext. 33706
Email: hwestra@yorku.ca*
Office Hours: By appointment

* please note that I will respond to emails within 72 hours or three days max

Prerequisites:
PSYC 1010 or 2410, PSYC 2030 or 2530, PSYC 2021, 2020 or 2510
PSYC 2020 and 2030, PSYC 2130 and PSYC 3140

Class Dates
Sep 7  Review of the Syllabus, Introduction
Sep 14 - Is Psychotherapy Effective? Common Factors & Empirically Supported Treatment
Sep 21 - The Person of the Therapist & Therapist Effects; sign up for panel & paper topic
Sept 28 - Alliance & Empathy
Oct 5  - Alliance & Empathy (cont.)
Oct 12 - Client Factors - Client as common factor
Oct 19 - Client Factors - Motivation and Resistance
Oct 26 - Client Factors - Motivation (cont.) (Interview Analysis due)
Nov 2  - No class - Co-Curricular Days
Nov 9  - Client Factors - Expectancy & Hope
Nov 16 - Dissemination & Help-Seeking
Nov 23 - Skills Lab
Nov 30 - Reports on project & paper; (Papers due)

Jan 11 - Ethical & Professional Issues
Jan 18 - Panel #1 - Psychodynamic Psychotherapy
Jan 25 - Panel #2 - The Client-Centered Approach
Feb 1  - Panel #3 - Cognitive and Behavioural Approaches
Feb 8  - Panel #4 - Experiential Approaches (esp Emotion Focused Therapy)
Feb 15 - Panel #5 - Acceptance-Based Approaches (Acceptance & Commitment Therapy, Mindfulness)
Feb 22 - No Class - Reading Week
Mar 1 - Panel #6 - Motivational Interviewing (& the Transtheoretical Model)
Mar 8 - Panel #7 - Compassion Focused Therapy
Mar 15 - Panel #8 - Interface of psychopharmacology with psychotherapy
Mar 22 - Panel #9 - Minimal Therapist Contact Approaches (Bibliotherapy, Internet-based therapy, group therapy); (Final Exam Questions Handed Out)
Mar 29 - Good Friday - University Closed
Apr 5 - Psychotherapy Integration (final exam due April 15)

Other important dates:
Sep 19 - Last date to enroll in course without instructor permission
Oct 23 - Last date to enroll with permission of instructor
Feb 15 - Last date to drop course without receiving a grade
Dec 3 - Last date to submit fall term work
Apr 8 - Last date to submit winter term work

Course Overview. Psychotherapy has been demonstrated as highly effective for facilitating change with many different problems. Recent reviews of psychotherapy have concluded that while many types of therapy exist, they are approximately equally effective. This has given rise to a 'common factors' view of treatment meaning that there are critical elements which all treatments have in common that may form the core of effective intervention.

To remain reflective of the latest literature on psychotherapy practice, this course will be framed using a 'common factors' vantage point. As such, you will be introduced to various specific schools of psychotherapy but this will be balanced with an overriding consideration of the common influences in treatment. Moreover, we will be debating and discussing many intriguing issues related to the question of how therapy works, and will focus on current debates/issues of particular importance to the practice of psychotherapy. This will allow you to get a good taste of current psychotherapy practice and research.

Objectives of the Course. This course was designed to provide an overview of the theoretical and empirical foundations of counseling and psychotherapy. It was devised to be applicable to individuals ranging from the curious to those considering (or already decided upon) counseling as a profession. It is intended to cultivate a scientific or empirically-based approach to practice, to develop critical thinking and reading skills in the area, to help the student begin to examine their own values and how this shapes practice, and to provide some hands-on exposure to important counseling micro-skills.

Format of the Course. This course will be interactive. It is constructed to facilitate your learning and to allow you to get the most out of the course. There will be various exercises built in to the framework of the course to allow you to work with the material and with your peers in an active way. Some of the modes used for learning in this course will include in-class exercises, didactic instruction, small group work, video and audiotape, and role-plays. While challenging and demanding, the aim of this type of course structure is to allow you as many opportunities to integrate the material as creativity allows. It also hopefully makes learning more enjoyable.
Introduction to the Instructor. I have been very fortunate to practice psychotherapy and conduct research on the process and outcomes of psychotherapy for over 20 years. I am a registered member of the College of Psychologists of Ontario, a member of the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers, and certified with the Academy of Cognitive Therapy. Before coming to York to focus on research and training, I have served as the clinical director of a mood and anxiety disorders specialty clinic and as a staff psychologist. My research interests (which will undoubtedly be reflected in this course) include anxiety disorders, integrating Motivational Interviewing into Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for anxiety, psychotherapy processes underlying change (especially resistance, interpersonal process, and the alliance), client factors influencing therapy including client expectations and motivation, and engagement in and dissemination of psychotherapy.

Classroom Etiquette. To make the classroom a respectful, positive learning environment for all, we will all follow a few basic ground rules.

✓ Turn off cell phones before you enter the classroom. If you forget and a cell phone goes off in class, turn it off immediately or leave the room. Do not answer it in the classroom.

✓ Limit discussion during class that is not intended for the class as a whole (i.e., whispering, text messaging), as it can be disruptive to neighbors and give the unintended message to speakers or presenters that you are not paying attention.

✓ Use respectful language. This includes refraining from making racial, ethnic, gender, and minority-related comments in a disrespectful manner. This also includes honoring others in your feedback and interactions. Feedback should be honest, respectfully delivered, and free from harsh or unnecessary criticism. Healthy, open debate is central and welcome, but keep the message about the arguments and not the speaker.

✓ Please be on time and stay until class is finished. If you do arrive late or have to leave early, please enter and leave quietly.

✓ If you miss a class, you are responsible for making arrangements to get any notes/materials from a classmate.

Evaluation.

Readings (5% fall term + 5% winter term). Each week you will provide a summary of the readings. Prepare a maximum 2 page summary (double-spaced, 10-12 pitch font), capturing the essence of the reading & the central points the author(s) wish to convey. This is due in class each week. No email copies will be accepted and no summaries will be accepted outside of class time (since part of the goal is to ensure attendance at class). Responses will be evaluated only for whether they reflect, in my opinion, that you have done the reading. Two scores will be dropped to arrive at a final grade (i.e., you will have two passes on this assignment).

Project & Paper (20%) - Fall Term. You will be asked to pick one of the following two project options:
(1) Interview two counselors in the community and write up your reflections and answers to a series of questions on your experience (see guidelines later in syllabus).

Interviews with counselors are arranged on your own. Let your instructor know after you have selected the counselors you are meeting with (email their name, phone number, and address to me).

(2) Pick a typical problem one might deal with in counseling (see guidelines later in syllabus) and identify two major (i.e., prominent or popular) self-help books or online resources that propose to help people deal with it (i.e., you can pick two major books or one book & one online website). Your paper will summarize your answers to several questions (outlined later in the syllabus). Each person will select a different topic and this will be done on a first-come, first-serve basis, in class.

The paper should be between 8 and 10 (maximum) single sided, double-spaced pages, 12 pitch font and is due Nov 30 (in class). No papers submitted by email will be accepted - hard copy only. There will be a full grade point deduction for every day late.

In the Nov 30 class, time will be devoted to having you briefly report to the class on your findings on the assignment you chose (5 minutes). Since the presentation of your findings is meant not as a 'seminar' but merely to share your findings with others for their education and information, this oral presentation portion will be graded only for whether or not it is completed. If the presentation is not completed, your grade for the project/paper will be reduced by one full grade point. If appropriate documentation of your absence is supplied, you will be offered an opportunity to do the presentation in the Jan 11 class.

Interview Analysis (10%) - Fall Term. Conduct an interview with someone for at least 10 minutes (but no more than 15 minutes) in which you do your best to listen. Have the interviewee discuss some personal problem or issue that is of concern to them, but is NOT A MAJOR CONCERN or a MAJOR ISSUE. Describe to the person that the goal of the exercise is for you to practice listening skills. Record and then transcribe the interview (delete the interview after you have transcribed it). Pick 10 of your responses and then (1) analyze the response using the criteria for reflective listening described in class and (2) come up with 2 alternative responses that would be considered good reflective listening (see template later in syllabus for an illustration).

This is due in class Oct 26. No papers submitted by email will be accepted - hard copy only. You can also submit this to my secretary in BSB 282 on or before the due date. There will be a full grade point deduction for every day late.

Small Group Presentation (30%) - Winter Term. You will select a panel presentation topic along with two other classmates, based on your interests. Guidelines for the presentation appear later in the syllabus. Evaluation will be based on the instructors ratings - which evaluates each individuals contribution and presentation (70%) and peer ratings/feedback (30%) which will be made for the group as a whole and on each presenter individually. In peer ratings, the highest and the lowest scores will be dropped. Ratings are based on organization, clarity, quality of supplements used (e.g., AV, handouts, tapes) and discussion/interest generated.
If you have to miss the groups presentation, the remaining members of your group will each be asked to assign you a grade for this portion based on your contributions and effort on the project. The average of these will constitute your grade for the small group presentation. In addition, if appropriate documentation of your absence is supplied, your final exam will be weighted 10% heavier and the presentation portion will constitute 20% of your grade.

**Final exam (30%).** You will be choosing two questions from out of three questions that will be provided at least three weeks in advance of the final exam due date. Note that a hard copy of the final exam is due to my secretary in BSB 282 before 4 pm on **Monday, April 15** (if she is not in her office, you can approach any of the secretaries in that corridor). Make sure the secretary records the date you handed it in. HARD COPIES ONLY (no electronic copies will be accepted). One full grade point will be deducted for every day late.

**Evaluation Notes.**

Evaluation is based on the York Faculty of Arts 9-point grading system.

If you have special needs please bring these to my attention as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made in advance. Note that documentation (e.g., doctors note, learning disability assessment) will be required in order to accommodate missed classes or assignments.

Students with a documented reason for missing a scheduled course requirement, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor’s letter) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor.

**Required Text & Readings**


A course kit of additional readings for the course will be available in the York book store.

**List of Topics and Readings**

**Sep 14 - Is Psychotherapy Effective, Empirically Supported Treatments & Common Factors**

Chapter 1, Todd & Bohart, Professional Psychology in Context

Chapter 5, Todd & Bohart, Research in Psychotherapy


**Sep 21 - The person of the therapist & Therapist Effects**


**Sep 28 - Alliance & Empathy**


**Oct 5 - Alliance & Empathy (cont.)**

Martin, D.G. *Counseling and Therapy Skills (2nd Ed.).* Illinois: Waveland Press Inc. (chapters 2 & 3), Listening to hear & Finding the words (pp 17-51).

**Oct 12 - Client Factors - Client as common factor**

**Oct 19 - Client Factors - Motivation, and Resistance**

**Oct 26 - Client Factors - Motivation (cont.)**

**Nov 2 - Client Factors - Expectancy & Hope**

**Nov 16 - Dissemination & Help-Seeking**

**Nov 23 - Skills Lab - No Readings**
Nov 30 - Presentations - No Readings

Winter, 2013

Jan 11 - Ethical and Professional Issues
Chapter 16, Todd & Bohart, Professional, Ethical, Legal, & Social Issues

Jan 18 - Panel #1 - Psychodynamic Psychotherapy
Chapter 6, Todd & Bohart, Sigmund Freud & Psychoanalysis
Chapter 7, Todd & Bohart, Relational Approaches to Psychoanalysis

Jan 25 - Panel #2 - The Client-Centered Approach
Chapter 8, Todd & Bohart, Client- and Person-Centered Therapies


Feb 1 - Panel #3 - Cognitive and Behavioural Approaches
Chapter 10, Todd & Bohart, Behavioral Approaches to Therapy
Chapter 11, Todd & Bohart, Cognitive & Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches to Therapy

Feb 8 - Panel #4 - Experiential Approaches (esp Emotion Focused Therapy)
Chapter 9, Todd & Bohart, Experiential & Existential Psychotherapies

Feb 15 - Panel #5 - Acceptance Based Approaches (ACT, Mindfulness)

Mar 1 - Panel #6 - Motivational Interviewing

Mar 8 - Panel #7 - Compassion Focused Therapy
Reading TBA

Mar 15 - Panel #8 - Interface of psychopharmacology with psychotherapy

Mar 22 - Panel #9 - Minimal Therapist Contact Approaches - Bibliotherapy, brief therapy, internet-based therapy (group therapy)


Apr 5 - Psychotherapy Integration
Chapter 14, Todd & Bohart, Psychotherapy Integration: Convergence in Psychotherapy

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents) - http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cbe_main_pages/ccas.htm

- York’s Academic Honesty Policy and Procedures/Academic Integrity Website
- Course requirement accommodation for students with disabilities, including physical, medical, systemic, learning and psychiatric disabilities
- Student Conduct Standards
- Religious Observance Accommodation

Senate Policy on Academic Honesty:

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY (This is an abbreviated version of the actual policy – for the full policy go to http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm)

Serious Offences Against the Standards of Academic Honesty include:

Cheating: Cheating is the attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation. This can mean anything from looking at your neighbour's answers, to crib notes, to getting copies of exams ahead of time. It also includes submitting the work you have done for one class or project to a second class, or as a second project, without getting the informed consent of the relevant instructors. Acceptance of one piece of work that is submitted for two classes must be arranged beforehand.

Impersonation: Impersonation is when someone misrepresents themselves in a test or examination, or in connection with any other type of assignment in a course. Both the impersonator and the individual impersonated may be charged.

Plagiarism and other misappropriation of the work of another: Plagiarism is the representation of another person's ideas or writing as one's own. The most obvious form of this kind of dishonesty is the presentation of all or part of another person's published work as something one has written. However, paraphrasing another's writing without proper acknowledgment may also be considered plagiarism. It is also a violation of academic honesty to represent another's artistic or technical work or creation as one's own, and there are standards to which one must adhere in the creation and presentation of music, drawings, designs, dance, photography and other artistic and technical works.
Improper research practices: Forms of improper research practices include the dishonest reporting of investigative results either through fabrication or falsification, taking or using the research results of others without permission or due acknowledgment, misrepresentation of research results or the methods used, the selective reporting or omission of conflicting information or data to support a particular notion or hypothesis.

Falsification or unauthorized modification of an academic record: It is a breach of academic honesty to falsify, fabricate or in any other way modify a student examination, transcript, grade, letter of recommendation or related document. Failure to divulge previous attendance at another post-secondary institution on an admissions application.

Obstruction of the academic activities of another: It is a violation of academic honesty to interfere with the scholarly activities of another in order to harass or gain unfair academic advantage. This includes interference or tampering with experimental data, with a human or animal subject, with a written or other creation (e.g., a painting, sculpture or film), with a chemical used for scientific study, or with any other object of study.

Aiding or abetting academic misconduct: Knowingly aiding or abetting anyone in a breach of academic honesty shall itself be considered misconduct. This may include assisting others in the preparation of work submitted for appraisal or offering for sale essays or other assignments with the intention that these works would be submitted for appraisal.

Other breaches of academic honesty include:

- making false claims or statements
- submitting false information
- altering official documents or records
- attempting or causing others to do or attempt any of the above with intent to mislead an:
  1. instructor
  2. an academic unit
  3. programme
  4. office or
  5. committee
as to a student's academic status, qualifications, actions or preparation.
Small Group Presentation Guidelines

You will form groups of two or three based on your interests in one of the seminar topics.

Signup will happen in class beginning in October and some time will be allocated in class for organization of the presentation within your small group.

Your group will research and present one specific school of therapy or other special topic outlined on the syllabus. You will need to include the required readings in your research but are clearly not limited to that.

Dimensions of the topic you are required to address (but are not limited to) are: History of the approach, overview of theory (e.g., view of human nature, its conceptualization of disorders, the role of the counselor as a therapeutic agent, etc.), evidence base or efficacy, strengths and weaknesses, major treatment techniques.

Your group will present for 2 hours on the topic (all members of your group need to present but how much each presents can be variable). You can use the entire 3 hour class time if you chose but you should give at least a 2 hour presentation. You must include some type of exercise or guided discovery using the topic material (e.g., present a video segment of the treatment or the treatment developer and have the class analyze it around key questions that you generate, focused discussion around key issues relating to the therapy, have the class conduct an exercise using some key concept in the treatment, etc.).
Counselor Interviews

Purpose. To gain a glimpse into the experience of being a counselor. And to assist those who may be interested in pursuing a counseling career, to acquire direct knowledge of the pros and cons of a career in areas of potential interest.

Identify two counselors that work in areas that might be of interest to you as a future counselor. Choose two different areas of specialty (private practice, addictions, eating disorders, children and adolescents, geriatrics, administration, academia, etc. etc.).

These individuals should not be people you already know.

You are responsible for finding and contacting available and willing counselors.

Be sure to provide the counselor with my name and number (Dr. Henny Westra, Dept of Psychology, York University, 416 736-2100 ext. 33706) in case they have questions or concerns.

As soon as you have arranged a meeting, email me and leave your name, the counselor's name, phone number, and mailing address (I will mail them a thank you card for this professional courtesy).

Devise a list of questions that can serve as some structure for the meeting. Make sure to include questions that are of particular interest and relevance for you in understanding the setting and the demands/responsibilities of the position. You might also wish to compare questions with your classmates who are doing this project.

After a very brief description of the counselor’s position & orientation (no more than 1/2 page), focus 80% of the paper in relating the content of the interview to the common factors that you are learning about in class. Here you should touch on each of the major common factors (alliance, person of the therapist, client factors, motivation, & expectations). Then 20% of the paper should be your experiences/what you learned/personal reflections & reactions. Among other things, be sure to comment on:
Some Suggestions for Counsellor Interview Questions (but you are not limited to these - suggestions only - develop your own set of questions):

Describe a typical day at work?

How did you get into this type of work/reach the decision to be a counselor?

What personal qualities do you feel are necessary to do this work?

Has the work changed you in any way? If so, how?

How did you training best or least prepare you for the realities of what you do? What other preparation do you recommend for being counselors?

If I were your client and asked you how you could help, what would you say to me?

What do you feel are important characteristics of a successful therapeutic relationship?

What do you look for in your clients early on that informs how you conduct therapy? (e.g., severity, motivation, personality style, what type of treatment they need/want, etc.)

How do you assess your clients progress?

Why do you feel counseling works?

What role does research play, if any, in your work?

What advice would you offer to a beginner in this field?

How do you maintain your skills as a counselor?

What unique challenges or demands are faced in working with this population/in this setting?

What are the most demanding and the most rewarding aspects of the work?
Self-Help Resources Project

Locate two major (i.e., based on prominence or popularity) self-help resources for the problem you have selected (either 2 books or one book & one on-line resource/therapy program).

In your paper, the first part (no more than 20%) should consist of a descriptive overview of each resource. The remainder of the paper (80%) will involve a critical evaluation of each resource according to the common factors of effective therapy discussed in class. For example, how does each resource address expectations or hope? motivation for change? other client resources? the relationship? empathy? the person of the counselor? etc. Note, that you could chose to focus in more detail on one of the common factors, but you should at least touch on all of the common factors.

GRADING OF THE PAPER:

In general, for both types of papers, your grade will be determined on a number of factors including quality and clarity of the writing and presentation, adequacy and quality of the material presented in the paper, coherence and creativity of the ideas presented, and critical thinking.

In general, an "A" paper does not have any spelling or grammatical issues & is one that is well, organized, coherent, presents adequate material, and presents critical thinking (goes beyond the material uncovered - e.g., critical reflection on how the material fits with material discussed in class and/or critical reflection on the material uncovered with respect to the objectives of the project). An A paper 'takes a risk' (shows what you think) but does not rely on 'personal unsupported opinion'. Rather it grounds arguments in an evidence base (e.g., material that was presented in class, class readings, or data accumulated through doing the project). It states a conclusion(s) or thesis & then seeks to argue for it based on data/research. (note, you don't have to do extra research - rely on the material presented in class).

A "B" paper does what is required but is more descriptive (spends a lot of time reviewing what was found without commenting on it critically - giving it serious thought), reflects less critical thinking, and/or may be less proficient in written expression. A "C" paper does not adequately meet the objectives of the task/project and/or has significant problems in written expression.
### Project/Paper Topics

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<th>TOPIC</th>
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<td>Social Phobia</td>
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<td>Panic Disorder</td>
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<td>Generalized Anxiety Disorder (worry)</td>
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<td>Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder</td>
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<td>Fear of Flying</td>
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<td>Depression</td>
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<td>Suicidal ideation</td>
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<td>Anxiety Disorders in kids</td>
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<td>Schizophrenia</td>
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<td>Couples or intimate relationship problems</td>
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<td>Procrastination</td>
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<td>Bulimia Nervosa</td>
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<td>Other? (see the instructor for permission)</td>
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<td>Interviewee Statement</td>
<td>Your Response</td>
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<td>I get irritated with my husband around the cleaning. He’ll sit and relax but I’ll go and pick up things around the house. I just need to let go of it though. It’s okay that things are on the floor</td>
<td>T: How would you do that you think</td>
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<td>I have no idea. I just can’t seem to let go of it. It happened just the other night and I started picking up and he said I’ll do it later...but it bugged me</td>
<td>You feel like you could do that... because if you did what would happen</td>
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<td>Absolutely nothing. But I can’t sit still when that is happening</td>
<td>So you know you should fix this</td>
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<td>My dad has always been a neat freak...</td>
<td>Why would it be important for your dad to have things a certain way</td>
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Guidelines For Making Empathic Reflections

What are you Listening for?

- catch implicit meanings & feelings/experiences (of which the person is dimly aware) – yet not too far ahead - **LEADING EDGE**

- Any element of experience (values, meaning, feelings, beliefs, assumptions, etc.) – What is **most alive**? What seems the most important?

- Tentativeness & frequent checking (okay to veto, responsive, trial & error)

- Keep it brief & concise if you can

- Match the intensity (tone of voice, pace, emphasis, etc.)

- Use the first person (if it feels right to do so) – joined frame of reference

- **Key is empathic intent – The trying...**

- Goal is to keep the experiencing & the exploration moving