

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

ECHD 9610
Theories of Counseling Psychology
Fall Semester, 2009
Wednesday 9:05 – 12:05.

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REQUIRED TEXT

Prochaska, J.O., & Norcross, J.C. (2006). *Systems of psychotherapy: A transtheoretical analysis* (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Selected readings as assigned by the professor

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To refresh your knowledge and understanding of the philosophical tenets/assumptions, concepts and principles, and intervention goals and strategies that characterize the major contemporary approaches to counseling and psychotherapy
2. To provide methods for critical analysis and comparison of major historical and contemporary counseling and psychotherapy theories and therapies
3. To examine racial/ethnic, cultural, gender, and sexual orientation issues in relation to major historical and contemporary counseling and psychotherapy theories and therapies
4. To provide opportunities for students to translate theories into practice and become familiar with their applications in various therapeutic settings
5. To examine future trends and directions of psychotherapy and understand how these trends relate to theories of counseling and psychotherapy

Revised 8-26-09

COURSE FORMAT

The format of the course will consist of two primary components: **presentation/discussion** and **application/activity**. The presentation/discussion component will focus on key conceptual and theoretical dimensions of the major historical and contemporary theories of counseling and psychotherapy. Discussions will be based on material from the text, outside reading assignments, and relevant issues raised during class. *The discussion portions of the course place primary responsibility on each student to critically read and reflect upon the assigned reading material, to raise questions and constructively discuss issues relevant to the readings, and to discern differences between one's knowledge and one's beliefs and opinions.*

The application/activity component of the course will be experiential and interactive in nature. The purpose of this component is to help students bridge the gap between theory and practice through experiential exercises and the use of clinical cases. In addition, this component will help students apply conceptual, philosophical, and theoretical aspects of the major historical and contemporary theories of counseling and psychotherapy to real-life situations and clinical cases.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Class Participation

40%

The class participation grade will be based on two separate components. The class participation grade distribution will be as follows:

A. Class Discussions and In-Class Activities (15%)

By sharing your understanding of and perspectives on course material, the learning experience can be enhanced for everyone. Thus, this component of the class participation grade will be based on the following factors: *your preparation for class discussions, the clarity of your contributions, your demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the readings, your ability to comprehend the issues being discussed, and your ability to listen and engage in facilitative discussion.*

B. Class Presentation/Facilitation (25%)

This requirement has two basic components. **First**, address the following as it relates to the theory you are presenting:

- a. The theory of personality(including but not limited to the following)
 - i. What causes healthy/unhealthy development
 1. What is the role of heredity
 2. What is the role of learning
 - ii. How are the nature of people and their motivation considered
 - iii. How does your theory understand the change process for the individual/system
- b. The theory of psychopathology
 - i. Consider the relationship between normal and abnormal behavior
 - ii. How does this relate to the theory of personality
- c. The therapeutic content and process
 - i. Purpose of therapy
 - ii. Goals
 - iii. The mechanisms of change (both general and specific)
- d. The therapeutic relationship
 - i. The role of the therapist
 - ii. The role of the client
 - iii. Function of the relationship
- e. The cultural factors that were/are influencing the theory (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, social issues, developmental or personal histories, etc.)
- f. Effectiveness
- g. Criticism
- h. **One example taken from art, poetry, literature, film, etc. that illustrates one or more aspects of the theory**
- i. Application to case

Second, *facilitate a discussion on the theory you are presenting.* You are not doing a presentation here, you are facilitating discussion.

Participation

A portion of the grade is determined through class participation and contribution. Active participation is essential and will be evaluated in the following way:

- **Excellent** – Proactive participation through leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration. This does not mean dominating discussion or using a lot of words to say little.
- **Satisfactory** – Reactive participation with supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion rather than study, thought, and contemplation.

- **Minimally acceptable** – Passive participation including being present, alert, attentive, but not actively involved.
- **Unsatisfactory** – Late, absent from class, present but not attentive or involved, making irrelevant contributions to the discussion, etc.

Note. Attendance is expected. *Student participation is the core element in the design of this course.* Discussions/activities done during class are designed for the entire group – therefore, they cannot be completed outside. Also, because of the nature of this class, it is important to *be on time for every meeting.* *Students are allowed one unexcused absence.* Students with three absences (excused or not) are subject to being withdrawn from the course.

Theoretical Orientation Paper

25%

It is important as a professional in an applied psychology specialty to not only have a working knowledge and understanding of historical and contemporary counseling and psychotherapy theories, but also comprehensive and in-depth knowledge of the theoretical orientation(s) and/or framework(s) that guide(s) one's own clinical work. In addition, the ability to articulate one's theoretical orientation(s) and guiding principles is also a critical element. Thus, each student will write a paper on his/her theoretical orientation(s) and/or framework(s) to include the following: 1) What counseling/psychotherapy is, 2) Whether or not behavior has a purpose, intention, or design, 3) The relative importance of conscious and unconscious determinants of behavior, 4) The role of reward (and punishment), 5) The nature and function of the learning process, 6) The existence and nature of stable structures of personality, 7) The relative importance of hereditary factors, 8) The role and importance of early developmental experiences versus contemporaneous factors, 9) The degree of continuity or discontinuity of behavior at different stages of development, 10) The relative importance of individual (internal) factors versus environmental (external) factors, 11) The relative uniqueness of the individual, 12) The existence and function of homeostatic mechanisms (psychological equilibrium), 13) The relative importance of the subjective frame of reference, 14) The existence and role of a self-concept, 15) The existence and variety of motives, 16) The association between abnormal to normal behavior.

Once you have thoroughly delineated your theory of psychotherapy, discuss how it 'fits' your personality and your interpersonal style. Include information on your basic assumptions about therapy, how you conceptualize healthy/unhealthy

persons, why individuals need and/or seek help, critical elements needed for change to occur in therapy, what your goals are as a therapist in a therapeutic environment, and the nature and importance of the therapeutic relationship. Feel free to include any other information that you deem relevant to this topic. Due November 11th. **Papers longer than 21 typed double spaced pages will not be accepted!**

Systems of Psychotherapy Examination (October 28th) **20%**

The systems of psychotherapy examination will serve to help students synthesize information from our coverage of the theories presented in class.

Final Examination **15%**

The final exam will consist of an application of your theory of psychotherapy applied to a specific case.

Special learning needs

If you have a documented disability or any other special needs and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible. Necessary academic accommodations will be made for you based on the recommendations received from Disability Services. You must be registered with Disability Services to receive academic accommodations.

Academic honesty and integrity

All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers.

1. No student shall receive or attempt to receive assistance not authorized in the preparation of any laboratory reports, examinations, essays, themes, term papers, or similar requirements to be submitted for credit as a part of a course or to be submitted in fulfillment of a University requirement. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when ideas of another are incorporated into a paper, they must be appropriately acknowledged.
2. No student shall knowingly give, or attempt to give, unauthorized assistance to another in such preparation.
3. No student shall sell, give, lend, or otherwise furnish to any unauthorized person any material which can be shown to contain the questions or answers to any examination scheduled to be given at some subsequent date or time in any course of study offered by the University, excluding questions and answers from test previously administered.

4. No student shall take or attempt to take, steal, or otherwise procure in an unauthorized manner any material pertaining to the conduct of a class, including tests, examinations, grade rolls, roll books, etc.

Note. Students in the Department of Counseling and Human Development Services found in violation of the University's academic honesty policies or codes of professional ethics are subject to review and possible permanent expulsion from the programs offered in the Department.

Tentative Schedule

(Changes are likely and will be announced in class.)

This syllabus is provided as a general plan for this course. Deviations and changes announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary during the semester.

August 19 Distribution of Syllabus, Discussion of Course Requirements, and Assessment

August 26 General Issues, Definitions, General Framework, Film, and Class Presenters Assigned

Reading Assignment
Prochaska & Norcross: Chapters 1 & 2

Ideas for discussion:

The field of psychotherapy has been fragmented by future shock and staggered by over-choice, and that healthy diversity has deteriorated into unhealthy chaos. By implication this would suggest that students and professionals are constantly faced with this confusion and fragmentation. Do you agree or disagree? How much of the level of distress might be related to individual cognitive styles or other potential moderating variables (e.g., tolerance for ambiguity, personality traits)?

In what context did you first encounter the work of Freud? What was your initial reaction?

September 2

Guest Discussant and Short Film

Reading Assignment

Prochaska & Norcross: Chapter 3

Ideas for Discussion:

How do transference and countertransference affect relationships outside of therapy (e.g., teacher-student, lawyer-client)?

What is the definition of resistance? What are the likely manifestations of resistance? What are the potential uses and misuses of resistance?

How has your view of psychoanalysis changed over the course of your education?

Adler posits that the ideal person's life is dominated by social interest. What should be the relative contribution of social interest and self-interest in the mature personality?

Consider the basic mistakes clients make in their world views. What are the likely effects of these basic mistakes in a person's impact on others? What early experience may have supported this view? How might you, as a psychotherapist, see this view manifest itself in the therapeutic relationship?

September 9

Existential and Person Centered Therapies [Class presenter(s)]

Reading Assignment

Prochaska & Norcross: Chapter 4 & 5

Ideas for Discussion:

Existentialists view lying as the foundation of psychopathology. How does lying or inauthenticity relate to your thoughts about causes of human behavior and psychological disorders? How would you incorporate the existential view of inauthenticity into your therapeutic approach?

What are the dividing points between the humanistic and existential psychotherapies?

Empathic understanding is the cornerstone of person-centered therapy. Rogers realized in later years that person-centered therapists had erroneously equated the technique of reflection of feelings with the complex concept of empathy. What is the intended purpose and function of both reflection and empathic understanding in Rogers' model?

Think of a person you consider self-actualized. How does this person differ from other people? In what ways are they alike?

September 16 Gestalt, Experiential Therapies, and Interpersonal Therapies [Class presenter(s)]

Reading Assignment
Prochaska & Norcross: Chapters 6 and 7

Ideas for Discussion:

The phrase "as if" plays a significant role in both Gestalt and Adlerian systems of psychotherapy. Discuss the differences between the two systems.

The textbook suggests that the future of Gestalt therapy may be in psychotherapy integration and working with specific disorders. What are your thoughts on this? How do you support your position?

Games are a complex series of ulterior transactions that progress to a psychological payoff. Various degrees of game playing can be viewed in everyday interactions. Identify some common social or interpersonal interactions in which a game seems to be played. Brainstorm about the purpose and anticipated payoff.

One criticism of TA language is that it lacks depth and fails to accurately describe and explain. What are the merits of a simple, common language for psychotherapy versus a more specialized, in-depth language.

September 23 Exposure, Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies [Class presenter(s)]

Reading Assignment
Prochaska & Norcross: Chapters 8-10

Ideas for Discussion:

Should clients be made aware of the techniques being used to manipulate and change their behavior? Is it possible for conditioning to occur without awareness?

The behavioral approach involves specificity and concreteness in operationalizing client complaints. What does a functional analysis of behavior involve? How does it contribute in the development of a behavioral treatment plan?

What are some of the myths, erroneous opinions, and misconceptions associated with B. F. Skinner?

Beck identified eight cognitive distortions. Think about a case scenario for each distortion. What function does each distortion serve? What underlying schema supports the distortion? As a therapist, how would you work with the distortion?

Address two misconceptions or criticisms (depending upon your viewpoint) that (a) cognitive therapy is a form of persuasion and conversion and (b) cognitive therapy ignores the primacy of emotions.

Cognitive therapies attribute psychopathology to irrational or erroneous thinking. Does this view blame clients for problems they did not create?

September 30

Systemic Therapies (Strategic, Structural and Bowenian)
[Class presenter(s)]

Reading Assignment
Prochaska & Norcross: Chapter 11

Ideas for Discussion:

How do issues like secrets and dishonesty among family members affect the therapeutic process? Under what circumstances should secrets be tolerated (e.g., infidelity, drug use, plans to leave a marriage, sexual orientation)?

Discuss triangulation in families. Which family member is most often triangulated? How can therapists avoid becoming triangulated into families with whom they work? When might it be clinically advantageous for the therapist to be triangulated?

Strategic therapists created a popular technique known as the therapeutic double-bind. Discuss this technique and the pros and cons of using it with clients.

October 7

Gender-Sensitive and Multicultural Therapies [Class presenter(s)]

Reading Assignment

Prochaska & Norcross: Chapter 12 & 13

Ideas for Discussion:

Given what you know about your gender experiences and messages, what positive and negative expectations might you have of male and/or female clients? How might your empathic ability and strength of therapeutic alliance be differentially available to female and male clients?

Given your experiences with and messages about members from racial and ethnic groups other than your own, what positive and negative assumptions might you make about clients from those racial and ethnic groups? What frustrations might you have differentially with clients from racial and ethnic backgrounds different from your own?

The change process of social liberation is one that is traditionally beyond the scope of most psychotherapies. However, some psychotherapy systems (e.g., feminist therapy) believe that psychotherapy itself should be involved in the process of social liberation. Discuss the appropriateness of social liberation as a part of the psychotherapy enterprise.

Earlier conceptions of mental health were monocultural and monosexual in nature. Two of these assumptions are that talk-oriented psychotherapy is indicated for practically all clients, and that talking to an outsider will help. Discuss exceptions to these two assumptions and identify other assumptions.

October 14

Constructivist, Integrative and Eclectic Therapies, and Comparative Conclusions [Class presenter(s)]

Reading Assignment

Prochaska & Norcross: Chapters 14, 15, & 16

Ideas for Discussion:

Contemporary philosophy often pits constructivism against empiricism. Constructivists support the proposition that reality is constructed individually and uniquely within each person. The empiricists suggest that knowledge in science is a result of validation and replication, not interpretation. Discuss these two points.

Consider the function of the therapeutic relationship and role of the therapist in narrative therapy. What would narrative therapists say about unconditional positive regard, self-disclosure, confrontation, and authenticity?

Review the nine defined goals for solution-focused therapy. Compare them to the principles of behavioral therapy and specifically contingency management. What are the compatibilities and incompatibilities?

Technical eclecticism uses procedures drawn from different theories without subscription to the theory and theoretical integration integrates underlying theories along with techniques. Discuss the following issues: (a) eclecticism is a practice and integration is an aspiration, (b) eclecticism is what therapists claim to be doing when they don't know what they're doing, (c) eclecticism is finally the recognition that a mixed breed is heartier and healthier than a pure breed, and (d) integration is either the most difficult challenge we have set for ourselves in psychotherapy or is the ultimate compromiser's delight.

Prochaska and Norcross use Perry's developmental stages as ways in which theorists and psychotherapists can process and evaluate models of psychotherapy. Think about how this might work in relation to the dualist, multiplist, relativist, and committed stages and/or therapists. How do the emergence of integrative, elective, and transtheoretical models fit?

October 21

The Future of Psychotherapy

Reading Assignment

Prochaska & Norcross: Chapter 17

Ideas for Discussion:

Based on the Delphi Poll presented in the chapter, “what’s hot and what’s not in psychotherapy? How does this fit with your own clinical and academic experiences?”

Table 17.1 lists composite predictions of theoretical orientations of the future. Do you agree or disagree with these predictions? What is your rationale for your position?

Discuss case studies and discuss exam on 28th

October 28

Exam on Systems of Psychotherapy

November 4

The future of psychotherapy (continued)
Discussion - Theoretical Orientation Papers

Reading Assignment

- Rosenzweig, Saul (2002), Some Implicit Common Factors in Diverse Methods of Psychotherapy, *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, vol. 12, no. 1, 5-9.
- Frank, J.: *Persuasion and Healing*, Chapters 1 & 2

Ideas for Discussion:

Saul Rosenzweig wrote this seminal article over 70 years ago. Are his conclusions regarding the failure of specific theories of psychotherapy to capture the deeper common factors inherent in the change process still salient today?

Jerome Frank posited that all psychotherapeutic methods are elaborations and variations of age-old procedures of psychological healing – emphasizing a common factors perspective in psychotherapy. Consider this position in light of the more oft used approach to psychotherapy in which differences are highlighted over similarities.

November 11

**Due - Theoretical Orientation Papers
(Discussion of Papers)**

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| <p>Theoretical Orientation Papers-“Defending” one’s position and applying one’s theoretical orientation to clients/case studies</p> |
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November 18 The future of psychotherapy (continued)
Guest Discussant

Reading Assignment

- Castonguay, Louis (2000) A common factors approach to psychotherapy training. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 263-282.
- Castonguay, L. & Beutler, L.E. (2006). Principles of therapeutic change: A task force on participants, relationships, and technique factors. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, Vol 62(6), 631-638.

“Wrapping Up” (**Schedule individual meetings**)

November 25 No class (Thanksgiving Break)

December 2 Individual Meetings (Location: Dr. Ginter’s office)

Exam Week Final Exam