COLLEGE OF
ARTS AND SCIENCES

Seattle University
Master of Arts in Psychology
Practicum Supervision Seminar
PSYC 543, 544, & 545
Fall, Winter, & Spring 2011-2012

This course addresses the following MAP Program Goals: Understanding human experience, exploring therapeutic & research implications of EP, developing in-depth reflexivity and self-understanding, & preparation for WA licensure.
This course addresses WAC 246-809-221 content areas: Assessment/diagnosis, Ethics/Law; Abnormal psychology/psychopathology; counseling individuals, & mental health consultation.

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Class Hours: Monday or Wednesday 1:30-3:30pm, Casey Group Room

Course Overview:
The goal of this seminar is to support your growth and development as a therapist as you undertake your first year of practicum training. Our emphasis will be upon exploring your unfolding relationship with your clients and upon negotiating the challenges that emerge as you attempt to put in practice the values, understands, skills, and perspectives that you have been acquiring in your coursework. The greatest share of our time each week will be dedicated to case consultations and discussion. You will take turns presenting on issues that are arising in your clinical work with particular clients. We will make use of audio and/or video recordings of your work to facilitate our reflective process.

Much of our work in the seminar will be focused upon helping you to develop a capacity to be fully present and attuned to both your own experiences and the experience of your clients in the therapy relationship. Further, we will explore how these co-constituted experiences unfold in the dialogue between you and the client and how it shapes the therapeutic relationship. As therapists, developing a useful self-awareness entails confronting and coming to terms with our hopes, fears, anxieties, frustrations, and challenges to our values and certitudes that every authentic encounter with another human being entails. This seminar is a place where we can reflect upon these challenges that lie at the heart of therapeutic work.

Within the seminar we will strive to offer honest, thoughtful, and supportive feedback and to create an environment in which it feels safe to explore the challenges of this work. We will do so understanding that we grow most as professionals when we can acknowledge the limits of what we can do on behalf of our clients, and when we can explore our concerns about missteps, frustrations and difficulties in our work with individuals. In keeping with the traditions of relational and interpersonal psychodynamics, we will often find it helpful to reflect on the ways that our responses to case materials can illuminate dimensions of our clients' lived experiences that play out in other interpersonal contexts.

Disabilities Notice: if you have, or think you may have, a disability (including an 'invisible disability' such as a learning disability, a chronic health problem, or a mental health condition) that interferes with you performance as a student in this class, you are encouraged to arrange support services and/or accommodations through Disabilities Services staff in the Learning Center, Loyola 100, (206.296.5740). Disability-based adjustments to course expectations can be arranged only through this process.

Readings:
As the seminar proceeds, we may identify particular challenges and clinical issues in your work as therapists in training that you might like additional background reading upon. When we identify such topics of collective interest, I will suggest readings that might be of interest to the group. As time permits, and in consultation with you, we may choose to set aside time within the seminar to talk about these readings and about the clinical issues that they raise. Every effort will be made to ensure that the readings are of direct values and relevance to the challenges you are confronting in your work.

Required Reading:
2005 ACA Code of Ethics: I will distribute a copy and you can also find at the link here: http://www.counseling.org/Resources/CodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx

Course Requirements:
1. Be honest, respectful, and engaged with your peers. Arriving on time to the seminar, attending consistently and being prepared on the days on which you are presenting are the most basic ways you can demonstrate respect for your peers.

2. Be Humble. Conceived in terms as wide-ranging as *healing, counseling, fostering insight, teaching, mentoring, modifying behavior, and challenging dysfunctional beliefs*, there are numerous perspectives on the practice of good therapy. Each has its value and role. Welcome the differing perspectives that your peers and supervisors may bring as you reflect on your work with clients. Remember that you too are developing and refining your theoretical orientation over the course of your training, and openness to dialoguing across different perspectives is a valuable part of the process.

3. Be Humble: Part II. In every encounter there will be dimensions of our clients' lives and experiences to which we are blind. There will be dimensions of our own experience to which we may be blind. Be open to feedback from the group and flexible about integrating new information. Recognize that even our best understandings will be imperfect and partial.

4. Case Presentations. You will be asked to present on your work with clients several times over the year. On these occasions, please bring a clear recording (audio or video) of your work with a client to share with the group. Where this is not possible, a brief transcription of key moments in your work will suffice. It may be tempting to discuss clients with whom you feel most confident in your work, but more valuable, typically, will be to focus on work with those clients with whom you feel stuck, confused, bored, or otherwise at a loss as how to proceed. Be ready when introducing your work with the client to present to your peers relevant history and background information on the client. I will provide an outline for the kind of information to provide as the seminar gets underway.

5. Fall Quarter Process Analysis: At the end of the quarter, you will be asked to reflect closely upon your work with one client during a single therapy session, and write up a process analysis of that session. Details of this assignment will be provided as the quarter unfolds.

6. Winter Quarter Clinical Analysis: Review on particularly interesting, problematic, or significant case. No need to be lengthy, just thoughtful (i.e., aim for depth rather than breadth).

7. Spring Quarter Statement of Therapeutic Orientation: During the year, you will be working on developing a clearer understanding of what therapy is and how it best develops. You will be using the knowledge gained in your first year to bear upon the practice of therapy. Out of our discussions and listening to each others' case presentations, a statement of your orientation to therapy will flow. To start, ask yourself, "What are the essential qualities (or features, or characteristics, etc.) that you feel distinguish you as psychotherapist from among the other kinds of helping professionals?" Then write a brief statement (3-5 paragraphs) describing these qualities that you see as "essential" for potential clients to know about you.