

**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**HELPING SKILLS FOR CSA PROFESSIONALS (CN ED 516)**  
**FALL 2011**

**Instructors**

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**Course Description**

This course is designed to develop basic helping skills for student affairs practitioners. It will help students identify the differences between helping skills and counseling and provide an opportunity for students to learn and practice basic helping skills. In addition, this course will serve as a first class for students who may be interested in pursuing advanced coursework in counseling. *Helping Skills for CSA Professionals* is an experiential course. Therefore, students are expected to actively participate in activities and exercises inside and outside of the classroom. Students are also expected to reflect on their personal and professional growth, focusing on the attitudes, beliefs, biases, and values they bring to their helping relationships.

**Learning Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate active listening skills (3.2.1)
- Demonstrate empathy, integrity, and compassion in interactions with others (3.2.2)
- Demonstrate cross-cultural communication skills (3.2.3)
- Demonstrate group facilitation skills (3.2.4)
- Demonstrate crisis intervention skills (3.2.5)
- Demonstrate mediation skills (3.2.6)
- Demonstrate knowledge and adherence to applicable professional ethical standards (3.3)
- Demonstrate self-understanding and commitment to ongoing development (4.1.1)
- Demonstrate interest in and ability to learn about individuals different than oneself (4.1.2)
- Demonstrate interest in and ability to learn about ideas and beliefs different than one's own (4.1.3)
- Demonstrate self-management (4.1.4)

**Required Texts**

Lippincott, J. A. & Lippincott, R. B. (2007). *Special populations in college counseling: A handbook for mental health professionals*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Reynolds, A. L. (2009). *Helping college students: Developing essential support skills for student affairs practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

## **Methods and Activities**

This course is focused on proficiency development and skill building, and much of the work will be experiential. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the information and ideas presented in the assigned readings and to integrate material offered by the instructors. In class, we will spend a great deal of our time learning and practicing helping skills. In addition, students will be expected to practice these skills outside of class. As students learn to be skilled helpers, it is expected that they will reflect on their strengths and struggles, engage in introspection, and work on self-understanding. This process is expected to be both intrapersonal and interpersonal, both internal and collaborative. In other words, students are expected to think about their development and to share their insights with classmates and instructors, and they are expected to provide honest and constructive feedback to each other. This means that we are all expected to work to create a classroom that is safe to learn and grow, one where we treat each other with respect, honesty, and dignity while challenging and supporting each other.

## **Evaluation**

**Class participation (75 points possible):** Class participation is an important component of this course, and it is essential that students be present and punctual for each session. The experiential and collaborative nature of the class is diminished if students are not active and engaged. Providing feedback and receiving it from each other are the most helpful processes for learning helping skills. In order for feedback to be effective, it is important that students read all assigned readings before coming to the class for which they are assigned and also that students are prepared to discuss and practice what they have read. It is also important that students practice the helping skills we are working on between class sessions and share insights relative to out-of-class practice as appropriate. Class participation grades will be comprised of attendance and active participation in class discussions and activities. Points will be accrued at the rate of five per class session, and the total for each session will be based on the criteria indicated in this section.

**Taped practice sessions (125 total points possible):** Students will conduct two 30-minute taped sessions as helping professionals and two 30-minute taped helping sessions as clients, for a total of four sessions. The sessions are to be real sessions, not role plays, so that each participant can experience what it is like to be in either position. Both sessions will be taped.

**Helper (100 points possible):** For each of the two sessions in which students are helping professionals, they must submit a tape as well as a transcript and a session analysis. For the **transcript**, students should transcribe the middle 15 minutes of the tape. The transcription should be verbatim, which means word for word, including repeats, “um”, “er”, laughing, sighs, and extended pauses. The transcript should note when the helper is speaking and when the client is speaking and should be done as a chart with three columns. In the left column, there should be a direct transcription of the dialogue. In the middle column, the helping skills being used should be indicated for each helper comment. In the right column, next to the skill, there should be a brief assessment of the effectiveness of using that skill at that place and how the helper knows how effective it was. For the **session analysis**, students should submit a paper that provides a thoughtful reflection of the session including a brief summary, the helper’s goals for the session, the flow of the session, the quality of the relationship, helper and client factors, external factors, cultural factors, value or ethical conflicts experienced by the helper, what the helper was experiencing, what the helper thinks the client was experiencing, and the

effectiveness of the session. In discussing the effectiveness of the session, describe at least three helpful strategies/techniques used and explain how they were helpful. Also, describe three less helpful strategies/techniques used, how you know they were less helpful, and what you might have done differently.

**Client (25 points possible):** For each of the two sessions in which students are clients, they are expected to submit a two-to-three page reflection paper discussing what it was like to be a client. The paper should address such issues as:

- What was the experience like for you?
- What did the student helper do that was helpful? (Be specific and describe at least two examples and discuss how each was helpful.)
- What did the student helper do that was not helpful? Give two specific examples.
- Even if you felt that the session went well and the helper was generally helpful, provide at least two examples of areas that could be improved.

Blanket statements such as “It was a good session, and everything was fine” or “We just weren’t working together” are not acceptable and will result in point deduction.

**Weekly practice sessions (ungraded):** Students are expected to meet weekly with their partners outside of class to practice listening and helping skills. These practice sessions should be taped and brought to class, with the tape cued to a portion of the tape that is interesting or for which feedback is desired. Each week, students should be prepared to play a segment from their tapes. These sessions are ungraded but are part of class participation and thus are expected to be completed on a weekly basis.

**Class facilitation of special population (50 points possible):** Students will prepare an in-class facilitation on a special populations addressed in the Lippincott and Lippincott text. As a group, we will determine both the facilitators and the dates during our first class meeting. The facilitation should be 30 minutes long and should engage the class in an in-depth discussion about the identified special population.

**Final reflection paper (50 points possible):** Students will write a final reflection paper that describes their development as helping professionals throughout the course. The paper should include a discussion of what students think has gone well in the process of working on helping skills, how they feel about their skill levels as they complete this course, what areas need continued work, and what attitudes and biases caused the greatest struggles throughout the semester. Students should also reflect on the process of learning helping skills, including discussion of what it was like to get feedback from and to give feedback to those with whom they worked. Students should focus on changes they see in themselves, both in terms of helping skills and personal awareness and growth during the semester. Additionally, students should focus on the areas they will continue to work on as they move through their programs. The final reflection paper should be 6-8 pages in length.

## **Grading**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Point Equivalent</u>
A	285-300
A-	276-284
B+	264-275
B	249-263
B-	240-248
C+	231-239
C	222-230
C-	216-221
D	195-215
F	Below 194

## **About Written Work**

All written assignments must be typed or done on a word processor and formatted in accordance with the American Psychological Association in the sixth edition of its publication manual. Diversity must be taken into account in both content and style. Written assignments are to be free of typing, spelling, and grammatical errors. Please proof read! If you have difficulty with formal writing, please seek assistance from one of the resources on campus or elsewhere. Writing and overall presentation *will count heavily* toward the grade on all written assignments.

## **About Work Turned in Late**

All work is due at the *beginning* of class on the due date. Any work turned in after 1:30 pm on the date due will be considered late and will result in a lower grade. Grades will be lowered by 10% if turned in within 72 hours (3 days) of the due date and by 20% if turned in between 72 and 168 hours (7 days) of the due date. No work will be accepted after 168 hours of the due date.

## **About Special Needs**

Any student who has special needs for assistance or accommodation in order to get the most from this course should schedule an appointment with the instructors early in the semester so that we can find ways to work together to maximize the learning environment. This syllabus is available in alternative media on request.

## **About Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. To prevent plagiarizing someone else's work, credit for the words and ideas must always be given. Quotation marks are used to indicate another person's exact words. Paraphrasing is summarizing a passage or taking the ideas of the sentence and constructing a new sentence in your own words. You must substantially alter the original sentence in order for it to be your work. Citing the source is still necessary because you took the idea from the source.

*Plagiarism is academic misconduct and may result in a failing grade on the assignment or in the course.*

## **Topical Outline**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
8/23/11	Introduction to Course Introduction to Subject	
8/30/11	Introduction to helping skills and process	Reynolds Chapters 1, 2, 4
9/6/11	Ethical and cultural issues for helping in higher education	Reynolds Chapters 3, 5 ACA, ACPA, NASPA Ethics Codes
9/13/11	Exploration stage: Attending, listening, Open questions, probes	Reynolds Chapter 6 L & L to be assigned
9/20/11	Exploration stage Restatement, reflection of feelings Integrating skills	L & L to be assigned
9/27/11	Insight stage Theoretical underpinnings, challenge, interpretation	L & L to be assigned
10/4/11	Insight stage Self-disclosure, immediacy Integrating skills	L & L to be assigned
10/11/11	Action stage Integrating skills	<b>Tape and analysis due</b> <b>Client experience paper due</b> L & L to be assigned
10/18/11	Integrating the stages	L & L to be assigned
10/25/11	Conflict and Crisis Management	Reynolds, Chapter 7 L & L to be assigned
11/1/11	Mandated Students Alcohol Issues	L & L, Chapters 11, 12

11/8/11	Group facilitation	Reynolds, Chapter 8 L & L to be assigned
11/15/11	Supervision	Reynolds, Chapters 9, 10 L & L to be assigned
11/22/11	<b>Thanksgiving Break</b>	<b>No Class</b>
11/29/11	Tape presentations	<b>Tape and analysis due</b> <b>Client experience paper due</b>
12/6/11	Tape presentations	<b>Final reflection paper due</b>