

BRIERCREST

CO 790 Counselling Practicum I

Practices I: The Personal Transformation of the Person of the Counsellor

Fall 2020

Professors: Samuel Berg, DMin, RMFT-S (sberg@briercrest.ca)

Margaret Clarke, PhD (cand.), RMFT-S (mclarke@briercrest.ca)

Carlie Pagens, MA, RMFT-S (cpagens@briercrest.ca)

Course Dates: November 23-27, 2020

3 Credit Hours

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This practicum will focus on the person of the counsellor through the experiential integration of counselling skills and concepts into each student's natural way of being. Qualities of highly effective counsellors will be highlighted and gifts within the student explored.

Prerequisite: 12 credits in CO (Counselling) including CO 603 Foundations of Marriage and Family Therapy and CO 705 Counselling Ethics.

COURSE INTEGRATION

Practicum I provides an introduction to actual counselling in a peer group setting. These groups will function as the accountability units in which problems will be conceptualized according to the model taught in CO 603. Role-playing and evaluation of taped interactions will be a part of this course.

This course will provide:

- An introduction to the practices of counselling.
- An opportunity to re-story the personal narrative identity of the student in order to discover the strengths and gifts the student brings to the practice of counselling.
- A peer group setting, didactic intervals, role-plays, and pairings, which will contribute to this experiential learning.

COURSE READING:

Andersen, Tom. (1987). The reflecting team: Dialogue and meta-dialogue in clinical work. *Family Process*, 26, 415-428.

Fine, Marshall. (2003). Reflections on the intersection of power and competition in reflecting teams as applied to academic settings. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 29, 3, 339-351.

Olthuis, James H. (2001). *The beautiful risk: A new psychology of loving and being loved*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

White, M., and Epston, D. (1990). *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE:

Taylor, Daniel. (1996). *The healing power of stories: creating yourself through the stories of your life*. New York: Doubleday.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: <https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/>.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: <http://briercrest.ca/bookstore>.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (<https://briercrest.instructure.com>; cf. <http://briercrest.ca/online/canvas>) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

COURSE OUTCOMES

1. The student will gain an introduction to the consideration of contextual and systemic issues in working with people.
2. The student will learn the basic presuppositions and assumptions underlying a narrative approach to working with people.
3. The student will have an opportunity to experience her or himself, together with the anxieties and strengths that he or she will bring to the counselling situation.
4. The student will gain a growing respect for the dignity of each person.
5. The student will gain an appreciation of the impact of questions and active listening.
6. The student will gain practice in taking a "not-knowing" stance with another person.
7. The student will grow in cognitive and affective self-awareness.

COURSE OUTLINE, CONTENT and ASSIGNMENTS

1. Students will engage with a counsellor for personal counselling, either individually, as a couple, or as a family. Students may commence this counselling at any time during the fall semester. If the student opts for couple or family counselling, the counsellor should have specialized training in working with couples or families. This assignment may be completed during the fall semester as students are enrolled in the Practicum. A note to the named professor indicating the dates of counselling, the type of counselling, i.e., individual, couple, or family, and that 5 sessions have been completed will suffice to indicate completion of this requirement. Completion date: December 18, 2020. Value: 5%.
2. The class will begin with an orientation retreat on the Sunday before the week of class (**November 22, 2020**). The retreat will begin at 3:00 p.m. on campus at a location to be arranged. Orientation will include an introduction to and getting acquainted with the other members of the practicum group, an review of the use of narrative practices in counselling, the beginning of an exploration of the person-of-the-counsellor resources that you bring to your work as a counsellor, an explanation of procedures that we will follow throughout the rest of this practicum and CO 791 Practicum II, an assignment of practicum partnerships, and other organizational details. It will also include an opportunity for the student to begin the self-reflective work required to be present with another person. Following this introductory time, you will meet in your partnerships to begin your first counselling sessions, after which you will also review and prepare your presentation for the group supervision session Monday morning.

3. Before practicum, you will be expected to read the two required books, by Olthuis, and by White and Epston, and write a 500-word reflective paper on each one. These two papers will be due at the beginning of the practicum on **November 23, 2020**.
4. Also, before the week of class, you will be expected to read the two required papers by Fine and Anderson, and write a 1-page summary of your understanding of reflecting team practices. This paper will also be due at the beginning of the practicum on **November 23, 2020**.
5. At the end of the orientation retreat on Sunday, you will be assigned to a partner or triad who will be your practicum partner(s) throughout the remainder of Practicum I and then have your first session. You will meet daily in the afternoons with your partner(s) for a 90-120-minute session in which you will each counsel the other. The first group supervision meeting will be on Monday morning. You will also be assigned to a supervision group which will meet with one of the faculty members daily. The configuration and sizes of partnerships and groups will depend on overall course enrollment. You will digitally record each meeting with your practicum partner. For this purpose, please bring a minimum of a 4G SDHC Memory Card, or your own camera or recording device. The seminary has access to a limited number of cameras, so if you have your own, it will be helpful to bring it, along with a tripod. Ideally you will have a laptop computer on which to view your recordings.
6. You will present recorded material from the partner meetings to the practicum group. In preparation for your presentation (see point 7), you are asked to:
 - a. Review the recording of the session (trainees who watch their recordings learn the fastest).
 - b. Prepare a transcript of the clip that you will present in class (keep notes in a file).
 - c. List the counseling goal(s) that your "client" had, as well as your learning goals, and how this session contributed towards reaching them.
 - d. List the theoretical ideas you used in conducting yourself in the session.
7. Your supervision group will meet each morning for approximately 4 hours. The groups will provide opportunities to think theoretically about cases, within the limits of confidentiality, to discuss issues arising from the pairs, as a way to:
 - a. Explore the personal emotional reactions you had while in the session, and the ways in which your own story was evoked during your conversation with your practicum partner, so that these can become an aid rather than a hindrance in counselling. This is called person-of-the-counsellor work.
 - b. Begin the development of counselling conversational practices. This is called skills-of-the-counsellor work.
 - c. Experience the benefits of group supervision.
8. Group supervision will proceed as follows: Each student will present every day. After reviewing your entire recording, you will choose a "clip" of approximately 5-8 minutes to present to the group. You will have a 15-20-minute period in which to present and engage in conversation with the other members of the group and supervisors about issues relating to the material in the "clip." The times above are approximate depending on the size of class enrollment. The group supervision conversation will be guided by the ideas about how "reflecting teams" work (see Freedman and Combs, 1996, Ch. 7, and Andersen). Please be aware that the group sessions may also be video-recorded from time to time for purposes of supervision or training. You will be informed so as to give consent.

A VISION FOR GROWTH AS A COUNSELLOR

A biblical model for the person-of-the-counsellor is given in Philippians 2:1-5, where we are instructed to “in humility think of others as better than ourselves,” to “look not only to our own interests but also to the interests of others,” to “have the same attitude of mind as Christ Jesus had.” In keeping with these ideas, the goal of this practicum is for students to learn to demonstrate the following:

1. A willingness to listen to and consider the feedback of others.
 - Absence of defensiveness when confronted.
 - Willingness to accept the re-tellings of others.
 - A willingness to acknowledge the presence of "blind spots" in one's life.
2. An ability to listen to and around the words of the other group members.
 - Hearing emotions sensitively.
 - Being able to give sensitive re-tellings to people as they share their hearts.
 - Being comfortable with silence.
3. Evidence of a growing ability to “de-center” oneself in the counselling relationship.
 - Avoiding the tendency to be the one with the answers.
 - Offering one's ideas in a tentative and positive frame.
 - Recognizing the personal perspective from which we each speak.
4. A present tense perspective on personal issues.
 - Not, "I've dealt with that," or "It's in my past - don't touch it."
 - Rather, "Here's what I'm experiencing now about it..."
5. An ability to embrace the pain of others.
 - An ability to provide "presence."
 - Weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with those who rejoice.
6. Personal and emotional integrity.
 - Willingness to face the reality of what is.
 - Evidence of feeling the impact of personal issues appropriately.
7. Chosen vulnerability.
 - Sharing oneself for the purpose of allowing others to learn from one's journey.
 - A willingness to risk as comfort in the group grows.
8. Evidence that movement or growth occurred during the practicum.
 - Evaluation is not done on the basis of arrival but on the basis of distance traveled.
 - Holy moments where renewal and growth was being tasted.

EVALUATION

We are required to give a grade for achievement in the practicum. A grade of “B” will be the expected grade for acceptable work. The grade of “A” will be given when the student has demonstrated outstanding ability to use skills and person-of-the-counsellor in working within the partnerships. A grade of “C” will be considered a “conditional pass.” You will be required to do some remedial work before proceeding on to the internship. A grade of F will mean that you will either be asked to repeat the practicum, or to withdraw from the program.

Evaluation of the student's achievement will be based on the following:

1. The reflective papers.
2. Participation in the supervision group.

3. Videotape of the last "session" in which you acted as counsellor. **Due:** Friday, Dec. 4, 2020
4. Final 500-word reflective paper evaluating: **Due:** Friday, Dec. 4, 2020
 - a) Learning and growth during the practicum, and
 - b) Growth and learning goals in your development as a counsellor.

Expected competencies:

1. Demonstrated willingness to receive the feedback of peers and supervisors.
2. Demonstrated risking of vulnerability, in significant sharing of stories of loss and offering and receiving feedback.
3. Demonstrated ability to listen actively to the stories of others.
4. Demonstrated ability to empathize without recourse to "escapes."

SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar:

<https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/>.

Attendance Policy

In order to benefit fully from a seminary education, to be good stewards of time and finances, and to be considerate of their classmates and faculty members, students must be in class at every opportunity.

Modular Courses

Students are expected to attend 100 per cent of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible due to extenuating circumstances, arrangements must be made with the course professor before the first day of class. If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending class, a maximum of one (1) full day of class can be foregone. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Online Courses

If extenuating circumstances prevent a student from attending scheduled meeting times, then up to 20% of meeting time can be foregone. Students missing scheduled meeting times should make every effort to inform the course professor prior to any time missed. If additional time is missed, the student will fail the course unless they first request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit.

Semester-Based Courses

All students missing more than two full weeks of a particular course from registration to the last day of classes will receive an automatic fail (0%). A student may appeal a course failure due to excessive absences. Successful appeals will be granted only in rare cases where all absences are clearly beyond the student's control. Appeals must be made through the Academic Appeal Process.

Course Schedules

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the [academic calendar](#).

Return of Graded Assignments

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the [Seminary](#). If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty

Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-25 in the [academic calendar](#) for more information.

Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or health condition who may need academic accommodations (permanent or temporary) should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Director of the Academic Resource Centre in person (L234 in the Library), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (academicresourcecentre@briercrest.ca). Documentation from a qualified practitioner will be required (i.e., medical doctor, psychologist, etc.).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Andersen, Tom. (1987). The reflecting team: Dialogue and meta-dialogue in clinical work. *Family Process*, 26, 415-428.
- Brown, J. E. (1997). The question cube: A model for developing question repertoire in training couple and family therapists. *Journal of marital and family therapy*, 23, 1, 27-40.
- Friedman, Steven, ed. (1995). *The reflecting team in action: Collaborative practice in family therapy*. New York: Guilford.
- Hardy, K. V., and Laszloffy, T. A. (1995). The cultural genogram: Key to training culturally competent family therapists. *Journal of marital and family therapy*, 21, 3, 227-238.
- Mearns, Dave. (2003). *Developing person-centred counselling*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Olthuis, James H. (2001). *The beautiful risk: A new psychology of loving and being loved*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
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