

Gero 522 Course Syllabus

Spring 2007

Overview of course: This course provides a didactic background in counseling older adults and their families. The first part of the course provides basic information on common mental health problems of later life and how to assess them. The second part introduces the student to basic knowledge about counseling theories and their application to problems in later life including grief and adjustment to chronic illness. This section concludes with a discussion of evaluating the effectiveness of psychological interventions with older adults. The remainder of the course covers counseling in the family system, applying counseling theory and interventions in organizational settings like nursing homes, and ethical issues with older adults.

As one of the skills courses in gerontology, the course is intended to introduce students to counseling skills that can be used in a wide variety of human services jobs in the aging services network. The class can also provide gerontological counseling knowledge for persons in other programs which prepare the student for a counseling career such as social work, counseling psychology, clinical psychology, and so on.

Required Texts:

Knight, B.G. (2004). *Psychotherapy with older adults*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage Publications.

Smyer, M.A. & Qualls, S.H. (1998). *Aging and mental health*. Blackwell.

Note: Additional supplementary readings will be provided to students throughout the course.

Counseling as Applied Gerontology (1/11/07)

The Contextual, Cohort-based, Maturity, Specific Challenge Model

Readings: Knight (2004) Chapters 1 and 2
Smyer & Qualls, Chapters 1 and 2

Depression & Suicide in Older Adults (1/18/07)

Readings: Knight (2004) Chapter 5;
Smyer & Qualls (1998) Chapter 8

Gatz, M. (2000) Variations on depression in later life. In S.H. Qualls & N. Abeles (Eds), *Psychology and the aging revolution*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association

Wetherell, J. (1998). Treatment of anxiety in older adults. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, and Training*, 35, 444-458.

Dementia and Delirium in the Elderly (1/25/07)

Exercise: Introduction to Assessment of Dementia

Reading: Smyer & Qualls (1998) Chapter 7

Serious Mental Illness: Paranoia, Schizophrenia, and Paraphrenia (2/1/07)

Internet: see diagnostic criteria for DSM-IV and ICD-10. Check sites for info and support related to these disorders

Readings: Smyer & Qualls (1998) Chapter 9

Knight, Case Studies: Lila and Sophia

Substance Abuse: Alcohol, Prescription Medications, other (2/8/07)

Readings: Knight (1992, on reserve) Lana

Internet: see diagnostic criteria. Check sites for info and support.

Life Review and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (2/15/07)

Reading: Knight (2004) Chapters 3, 8

Smyer & Qualls (1998) Chapter 3

Knight, B. (1996). Psychodynamic therapy with older adults: Lessons from scientific gerontology. In R. Woods (Ed.), Handbook of clinical psychology and ageing. London: Wiley. on reserve)

Knight (case studies) Cases on Helen and Rose

Personal Life Story Essay Due on 2/15/07

Topics in Counseling the Elderly: Death and Dying (2/22/07)

Discussion: Personal Experiences with Death and Funerals;
Attitudes toward Death & Dying

Readings: Knight (2004) Chapter 6
Knight (case studies) JoAnn, Rena, Agnes, Jerry and Bea

Transference and Countertransference with older adults (3/1/07)

Readings: Knight (2004) Chapter 4

Interview Paper Due on 3/1/07.

Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Illness & Disability in Later Life (3/8/07)

Reading: Smyer & Qualls, Chapter 4
Knight (2004): Chapter 7
Knight (1992, on reserve) John and Nora

March 12 – 17 (Spring Break)

Sexuality in Later Life (3/22/07)

Reading: Knight (1992, on reserve) Fred

Crowther, M.R. & Zeiss, A.M. (1999). Cognitive behavioral therapy in older adults: A case involving sexual functioning. *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, 55, 961-976.

Altschuler, J. & Katz, A. (1996) Sexual secrets of older women: Countertransference in clinical practice. *Clinical Gerontologist*, 17, 51-67.

Dorfman et al., (1995). Old, sad, and alone: The myth of the aging homosexual. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 24, 29- 44.

Evaluating Therapy with Older Adults (3/29/07)

Reading:

Pinquart, M. & Sörenson, S. (2001) How effective are psychotherapeutic and other psychosocial interventions with older adults? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Mental Health and Aging*, 7, 207-240.

Counseling Theory Paper Due on 3/29/07.

Family Systems Viewpoints and Counseling the Elderly (4/5/07)

Readings: Smyer & Qualls, Chapter 6

Services for Families of the Demented Elderly (4/12/07)

Readings: Smyer & Qualls, Chapter 5

Assignment: Stress monitoring
Relaxation
Relaxing events
Cognitive restructuring

Psychological Interventions in the Nursing Home Setting (4/19/07)

Readings: Smyer & Qualls (1998) Chapter 11

Sloane, P.D. et al. (1997). Management of the patient with disruptive vocalization. *Gerontologist*, 37, 756-682.

Stevens, A.B. et al. (1998). Teaching and maintaining behavior management skills with nursing assistants in a nursing home. *Gerontologist*, 38, 379-384.

Lichtenberg, P.A. (1999). Psychotherapy in geriatric long term care. *Journal of Clinical Psychology: In Session*, 44, 1005-1014.

Ethical Issues in Counseling Older Adults (4/26/07)

Reading. Knight (2004) Chapter 9

Discussion group assignments: Questions after cases. Discussion about when to stop counseling person with AD

FINAL PAPERS DUE ON 4/26/07

Major assignments and grading policy:

Personal Life Story Essay. Write approximately 6 pages reviewing your own life from the standpoint of developmental stages, cohort effects, age-graded social roles, and family roles,

context effects. When you get to the age you are now, try to project into the future, using these concepts and what you know about gerontology. 15% of the course grade. Due on 2/15/07

Participation. Participation in newsgroup discussions counts for 15% of the course grade.

Interview paper. Interview an older adult not related to you; Give Folstein MMSE and the CES-D and score. Discuss a current or past problem and how he or she has tried to handle it. Get some history of the problem and their lives. [About 10 pages, double-spaced] 20% of course grade. Due on 3/1/07.

Counseling theory paper. Discuss and interpret the person that you interviewed earlier and their problems within the context of a counseling theory. End with discussion of what you would try to do with this person in a counseling context. Your understanding of the person and the problem should be different than the individual's own perception and clearly derived from the therapy system selected. [8-12 double-spaced pages]. 20% of course grade. Due on 3/29/07.

Final paper

- (1) select one system of therapy (psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, or other with prior approval);
- (2) discuss what changes are required for work with elderly (10%)
- (3) discuss strengths of this system in working with elderly (10%)
- (4) apply approach to a problem that older people face (20%)
- (5) Discuss same problem from family systems viewpoint (20%).
- (6) Discuss differences in what you would do from individual and family viewpoints (20%)
- (7) Clarity of discussion, logic of discussion, and use of references additional to assigned readings (20%)

[approx. 15 pages, double-spaced.] 30% of course grade. Due on 4/26/07.

Timeliness: Papers are expected to be on time. Arrangements to turn in a paper after the due date must be made in advance. Medical emergencies should be reported by voice mail or e-mail, both of which are time and date labeled. Late papers may not be accepted or graded.

Academic integrity. With regard to the course papers, academic integrity violations include plagiarism, turning in purchased papers, turning in papers written by someone else, turning in papers written for another class. See SCampus for more information on academic integrity. The Office of Student Conduct also has a Guide to Avoiding Plagiarism (X 06666 or on-line at [www.usc.edu/dept/student-affairs/student conduct](http://www.usc.edu/dept/student-affairs/student%20conduct))