

 <p>University of Lethbridge</p>	<p><i>Master of Counselling Program</i></p> <p><b>CAAP 6619 OL</b></p> <p><b>Specialized Counselling Practicum</b></p>
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The University of Lethbridge, Faculty of Education

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Office Hours:	Students needing assistance can contact the instructor by phone, email or in person. Meetings can be arranged online, by phone or onsite at TH318.		

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Provides an opportunity for professional development and supervised practice in a specialized counselling context. Students will be involved in direct work with clients under the supervision of a qualified professional. The practicum allows students to actively explore issues encountered in working with a specialized client population or area of practice.

### **ADDITIONAL DETAILS:**

The class seminars provide the opportunity for further exploration of important counselling topics, group feedback of student work with clients, and for in-depth exploration of issues encountered in specialized practicum settings. The practicum settings provide opportunity for supervised practice in counselling techniques with clients. As well as the face-to-face seminars the course also includes weekly online lessons, activities and discussion.

### **PREREQUISITES:**

CAAP 6611, 6613, 6615 (or M. Ed. Program equivalents).

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Many of the course objectives in CAAP 6619 (Specialized Practicum) are similar to those outlined in CAAP 6611 (General Practicum), however, the expectation in the specialized practicum is that students will demonstrate the skills and knowledge in a more effective, refined and independent manner. Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate the transfer of skills and knowledge acquired through prior courses to applied counselling settings; and
- Effectively incorporate theory, skilled practice and applied experience into a personal counselling framework.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES<sup>1</sup>**

The specific objectives and goals of this course are to help increase the ability to:

1. Establish a strong working alliance and good working relationships with client(s) during the first session and all subsequent counselling sessions.
2. Conduct an efficient and comprehensive psychosocial history of the client and the presenting problem, while always maintaining strong working alliance skills (the specifics will depend upon theoretical orientation and the requirements of the practicum site).
3. Conceptualize presenting problems into a greater context by documenting how individual and micro-macro system dynamics likely instigated and contribute to the maintenance of the problem and/or that limit effective resolution of the presenting problem (the specifics of the systems analysis will depend upon theoretical orientation of the agency/the student).
4. Develop and carry out treatment plans, using approaches research has shown to be effective strategies for clients' identified problem(s).
5. Maintain an effective counselling process and relationship until the client(s)' problem(s) have been resolved.
6. Document clinical work in a way that meets the standards of the counselling site, insurance companies and the province in which the student is working.
7. Work cooperatively and effectively within an agency setting and initiate appropriate professional relationships with mental health professionals outside that agency as needed.
8. Integrate theory and research into counselling practice for specific counselling issues.
9. Effectively utilize self-directed and group learning through the use of academic readings, videotaping and reflection, transcript analysis, case consultation, and reflective consultations.
10. Demonstrate sound clinical judgment that integrates knowledge of diversity, professional ethics, relevant laws, and organizational policies when collaborating with clients and with

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<sup>1</sup> These are excerpts and/or adaptations from a previous course outline of Dr. Dawn McBride. Objectives 1-7 were adapted from Liberty University COUN 698: Counselling Practicum course syllabus. Objectives 8-12 were drawn from CAAP 619: Advanced Counselling Practicum course.

other helping professionals.

11. Demonstrate relevant assessment, interventions, termination, and evaluation procedures consistent with standards for professional independent practice.
12. Incorporate theory, skilled practice and applied experience into a personal counselling framework.

## **PRACTICUM PLACEMENT GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

See the Faculty of Education Practicum Handbook.

## **REQUIRED READING:**

Yalom, Irvin, D. (2002). *The Gift of Therapy*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Counselling Practicum Handbook: Graduate Programs in Education. (2011). Faculty of Education: University of Lethbridge.

Sinclair, C., & Pettifor, J. (Eds.). (2001). *Companion manual to the Canadian code of ethics for psychologists* (3rd ed.). Ottawa: Canadian Psychological Association.

Additional required readings will be provided online.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY & RECOMMENDED READINGS AND RESOURCES:**

Boylan, J., & Scott, J. (2009). *Practicum & Internship: Textbook and resource guide for counseling and psychotherapy* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis.

American Psychological Association. (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57, 1060-1073.

Kottler, J. A., & Carlson, J. (2004). *Their finest hour: Master therapists share their greatest success stories*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Morgan, R. D., Kuther, R. L., & Habben, C. J. (Ed.). (2004). *Life after graduate school in psychology. Insider's advice from new psychologists*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Norcross, J. C. (Ed.). (2002). *Psychotherapy relationships that work: Therapist contributions and responsiveness to patients*. New York, NY: Oxford.

Pearson, Q. M. (2004). Getting the most out of clinical supervision: Strategies for mental health. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling*, 26, 361-373.

## REQUIRED RESOURCE MATERIAL:

- APA Manual (most recent edition);
- Video recording equipment (i.e. video camera, laptop + appropriate hardware/software);
- Audio recording equipment.

## COURSE EVALUATION:

CAAP 6619 is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. To earn a grade of a *Pass* students must meet the following expectations:

1. Adhere to the guidelines and expectations outlined in the Faculty of Education Practicum Handbook;
2. Earn a *Pass* in the final review of the Practicum Evaluation Form;
3. Attend the entire 4-day in class seminar and participate in an active, professional and respectful manner.
4. Read all assigned articles and chapters; meet requirements in online activities and discussion forums; actively participate in peer activities; successfully complete all assignments (see below) to the graduate level standards as outlined by the Faculty of Education;
5. Meet requirements as outlined in the Practicum Handbook (i.e. required hours for client contact and supervision; submitting signed practicum log sheets);
6. Adhere to the CPA code of ethics and the Standards of Professional Conduct.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

### Assignment 1: Therapist Self Care (5 points)

The importance of self-care for counselors is an essential but often neglected area of focus. As such, we will begin the new term by giving attention to this topic. During week one you are to post a brief but realistic self-care plan. (This can be posted in week *two* for anyone relocating to a new practicum placement). Include a description of one or two of your major challenges from last term. Be specific. Why were these issues so challenging? How did they affect you? Also, what do you see as your most challenging issues for this coming term?

Next, outline two *realistic* self-care interventions that can help you directly address these issues in a concrete way – and that you plan to commit to using during this semester. Briefly outline the manner in which they facilitate self-care. How do they help? What do they provide?

Third, identify one helpful self-care resource to share with the others. This can be a brief article (and in this case, preference is given to practical/applied rather than theoretical), book, website, blog, video – or a particular *practice* that has proven value for promoting self-care in mental health professionals. Do your best to share *gems* – those resources and exercises that have distinct and confirmed value.

## **Assignment 2: Case Presentation (40 points)**

Each student will conduct a case presentation during our face-to-face seminars. Presentations will last approximately 30 minutes and will be accompanied by a brief (1-2 page) description of relevant information (i.e. anonymously presented client background, presenting issues, counselling objectives, etc.). Each presentation will be followed by a group discussion led by the student and the instructor. Specific presentation guidelines will be provided early in the course and a schedule will be prepared.

Grading will be based on the professionalism of the presentation, with particular attention paid to:

- Clarity and conciseness of the background/introduction;
- Relevance and effectiveness of interventions that have been chosen and used;
- Depth and accuracy of the self-analysis;
- Clarity of the request for feedback;
- Manner of responding to the feedback provided.

Details of the assignment structure and procedure for delivery will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

## **Assignment 3: Content and Process (25 points)**

In this two-part assignment we will explore the important notions of content and process. The first aspect of the assignment involves guided self-reflection and the writing of a short paper. The theme of the paper is self-awareness.

As you know, the objectives for this course include a focus on professional activities such as developing and carrying out treatment plans, establishing a strong working alliance and applying interventions in a skillful way. While exploring these skills and interventions, and receiving guidance and supervision along the way, we also get to observe ourselves. We learn about who we are as individuals. We experience situations where we flourish and also those where we may struggle. We see our natural abilities and strengths emerge and we also commonly see areas where we might need further attention and growth. In short, while learning these skills we also learn about ourselves. This assignment will give you the opportunity to explore and reflect on some of those personal insights.

The *content* of this material will then be integrated into our onsite seminars as a means of helping us explore and understand *process*.

Details and guidelines will be provided at the beginning of the term.

#### **Assignment 4: Active and Engaged Participation (Including Activities, Discussion Forums) (30 points)**

Online participation refers to both the completion of weekly activities and an active involvement in discussion forums. Weekly exercises and small group activities will be conducted throughout the course and it is expected that all students will be reasonably available to members of their group.

As well as participation in exercises and activities, the quality, quantity and timeliness of your discussion forum posts will be taken into account. Though there will be times when we all post simple comments, there will also be times when you are responding to particular questions. Such posts are to be thoughtful, well written and concise. Because interaction is an important part of the discussion forums, it is important that each person's comments are spread throughout the week.

(NOTE: As well, since the nature of this class commonly involves discussion and personal disclosure maintaining confidentiality is essential.)

#### **SEMINAR TOPICS AND COURSE SCHEDULE:**

Seminar topics, online weekly lessons and activities, and course schedule will be posted in the U of L's Moodle site.

#### **INTELLECTUAL HONESTY**

As outlined in the University calendar: "No student shall represent the words, ideas, images or data of another person as his or her own. This regulation will affect any academic assignment or other component of any course or program of study, whether the plagiarized material constitutes a part or the entirety of the work submitted."

Plagiarism is a form of intellectual dishonesty in which another person's work is presented as one's own. Be certain that whenever you use a secondary source in your course work and assignments you reference your source in a consistent and logical manner. All direct quotes (quotations of any number of words from the original) and indirect quotes (paraphrased ideas) must be acknowledged. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and as with any form of academic misconduct, it will be penalized. Penalties may take the form of rejection of the submitted work; expulsion from the course or the program; or legal action, depending on the specific nature of the infraction. However, dutiful citation of quotes and paraphrased materials does not mean that you can write an essay assignment by stringing together a series of quotes. You should always try to summarize or describe someone else's ideas in your own words. When you present your own ideas or opinions in a paper, provide evidence or arguments to substantiate your position. The [APA website](#) offers information about the citation styles of the American Psychological Association. (Excerpt from CAAP 6615: Dr. B. Shepard).