



THE UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
Master of Counselling

## CAAP 6699 Project: Professional Portfolio <sup>1</sup>

Spring Semester: January – April 2013

---

### Contact Information

Instructor: Blythe Shepard, Ph.D., CCC  
Phone: 403-329-2383  
Office: TH274 (East)  
Email: [blythe.shepard@uleth.ca](mailto:blythe.shepard@uleth.ca)  
Skype: blytheshepard  
Office Hours: By appointment (please email to arrange)

**\*Response time:** Expect up to a 24-hr turnaround time during the week. Please resend your message if you have not received a reply in this timeframe; I may not have rec'd it.

### Overview:

Credit Hours: 0.0 – Graduate Studies

The intention of the professional portfolio is to provide you with a variety of independent and highly interactive opportunities to clearly articulate your strengths and “growing edges” related to self-growth and counsellor skills/abilities. Many of the reflective tasks will be integrated into a professional portfolio along with the development of a CV and a comprehensive five-year professional development plan. A professional portfolio is an expression of who you are as a counselling professional and should reflect your voice. You will have opportunity to integrate artifacts and examples that demonstrate your competencies, personal identity as a counsellor, and ongoing professional development plan. Professional portfolios can be used as an employment tool, marketing a private practice, and/or record of your ongoing professional development.

### Objectives

Throughout this course, you will:

1. engage in active self study of your strengths and growing edges as a counsellor preparing to exit from the M.C. program which will be integrated into a professional portfolio and 5-yr professional development plan
2. using critical and reflective thinking, demonstrate the skills and knowledge acquired through the MC program
3. demonstrate your ability to engage in self-directed learning for ongoing professional development
4. engage in reflective thinking that demonstrates your ability to self-monitor and learn from your experiences

---

<sup>1</sup> Drs. D. McBride, B. Shepard, and J. Thannhauser contributed to the development of this syllabus.

5. demonstrate acquisition of entry-to-practice competencies and/or identify ongoing professional development plans to acquire competency
6. provide constructive, in-depth feedback to fellow students
7. creatively integrate artifacts (e.g., symbols, examples, writing/counselling samples) into a professional, comprehensive portfolio that contains at minimum the following sections:
  - Comprehensive CV
  - Comprehensive professional development plan for the next 5 years
  - Counselling philosophy statement
  - Biographical sketch
  - Description/definition of counselling as a profession
  - Evidence of all courses taken with a syllabus for each course
  - Description of practica & work experience
  - Written reviews of your performance (e.g., course feedback, evaluations) (may be integrated into other sections as appropriate)
  - Statement of professional goals

## Course Materials

### Required:

Corey, G. (2010). *Creating your professional path*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publications manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington: Author.

\*\*Note: Additional readings will be provided to supplement your learning and reflection at the instructor's discretion.

## Evaluation

The course is graded as a Pass/Fail. A pass in this course is defined as earning a minimum of a B-grade.

Course Assignments	Weighting
<p><b>Participation in Study Tasks &amp; Online Discussions</b></p> <p>The structure and process of the weekly online lessons require that all students progress at a similar rate throughout this portion of the course. During each week, you will be expected to respond to questions that are posted in the weekly discussion forum. Discussion forum participation is graded for quality and quantity. There is one pre-scheduled "reading week" where no lessons are held. There is NO individually selected "skip" week.</p>	Pass/Fail
<p><b>5-Yr Professional Development Plan</b></p>	Pass/Fail
<p><b>Professional E-Portfolio.</b></p> <p>A detailed list of the expectations for the preparation of the portfolio will be distributed in week 1. The portfolio is a master learning activity where students</p>	Pass/Fail

continually refine their work over the course.	
<b>Course Total</b>	Pass/Fail

## Course Policies

**Academic accommodation policy:** If you have a disability that requires academic accommodation, please follow the procedures outlined in the university calendar. In addition, please notify the instructor within the first week of the start of the course or for a more recent disability due to an accident or illness, no later than three days upon your return to class.

**Academic dishonesty:** This course adheres to U of L's policy and consequences for academic dishonesty. Please consult the calendar for the definition and consequence of this behaviour.

**Assignment submission and late policy:** All assignments are due on the specified date by 11:59pm MST. A late policy of 5% per day including weekends applies to all assignments received after midnight.

**Professional conduct:** All students in the course are required to adhere to the Standards of Professional Conduct as outlined in the most recent edition of the University of Lethbridge Calendar, Faculty of Education section VI. Any violations will result in dismissal from the class and/or a failing course grade being awarded.

## Course Assignments

### 1. The 5-Year Professional Development Plan Assignment

The purpose of a professional development (PD) plan is to self-assess, maintain, and develop the knowledge and skills required for maintaining ongoing competence and ethical practice (College of Alberta Psychologists, 2010). A PD plan is a living document that should be maintained throughout your career and will reflect your ongoing and/or changing career goals. As of 2011, the College of Alberta Psychologists requires all regulated members to complete annual Continuing Competence plans, as required by the Health Professions Act. In a similar manner, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association requires members with the Certified Canadian Counsellor designation to engage in and provide evidence of continuing education. As such, developing a professional development plan is not just an academic exercise. Rather, it facilitates meeting the certification requirements of our governing bodies. Finally, developing a PD plan demonstrates a commitment to ongoing competent and ethical practice.

Throughout this course, you will be guided through a series of self-reflection exercises to facilitate the development of your professional development plan. Active and ongoing participation in these exercises will help ensure successful completion of this assignment.

The first steps in developing your 5-year plan will be spread over a few weeks, primarily in weeks two, three, five, and ten (see Five-year Plan Activities document under Course Assignments). You will fill in the Five-year plan template (Week Five) to help you focus on developing your final Five Year Plan document based on your reflections over the next 13 weeks. It is not expected that you will have your draft of your Five Year Plan ready until week 10.

### Assignment Requirements:

When creating a professional development plan, the following questions should be considered:

- o What should I learn?

- o Why should I learn?
- o How can I learn?
- o What is a reasonable time frame?
- o What are my expected outcomes?
- o How will I know that I am learning?
- o What challenges can I anticipate?
- o How can I overcome these challenges?
- o What resources do I need?
- o Who can I ask to be a coach or mentor?

Present PD plan with accuracy and professionalism (i.e., accuracy in spelling, grammar, and APA referencing; professional language). You may use APA formatting to structure your PD plan or you may devise an alternative presentation style as long as it has a clear, consistent organizational scheme.

**Submit** a draft of your professional development plan to your classmates for review on **Mar. 23rd**. The final version is **due on April 13<sup>th</sup>** for marking.

-----

College of Alberta Psychologists (2010). Continuing Competence Program. Retrieved from <http://www.cap.ab.ca/frnPage.aspx?Page=ContinuingComp>

## 2. E-Portfolio Assignment:

The e-portfolio serves as your final culminating activity and celebrates the completion of your MC degree. It can be a very validating exercise as you integrate all that you have learned and reflect upon your achievements over the course of your degree.

The e-portfolio will be **developed progressively** throughout the semester. It is critical that you attend to the **draft submission deadlines** (see course outline) in order to complete this project successfully.

### Assignment Requirements

- All portfolio documentation is to be integrated into a coherent, organized website that reflects your unique voice and demonstrates evolution, progression, and coherence.
- There should be a clear structure to your website that allows the viewer to easily navigate through the different sections. Each section should include an orienting statement as to the purpose/intent of the section.
- The organizational structure for the portfolio is up to you (e.g., themes, categories). Entries can include relevant learning from both within and outside the formal academic program (e.g., volunteer work).
- Provide artifacts that demonstrate diverse learning in addition to courses throughout tenure as a student (e.g., daily life, wisdom of clients, bumper stickers, art work, music, poetry, quotes).
- Integrate academic literature as appropriate.
- As this is a creative activity as much as it is an academic one, you do have freedom to (and are encouraged to!) present your portfolio in a creative, attractive way as long as it looks professional and does not detract from the presentation of the material. Feel free to include images, poetry, etc. that reflects who you are as a counsellor. Remember, though, that the addition of these features should not slow down access to the portfolio content.

- APA (6th ed.) referencing should be used as appropriate. Work must demonstrate professionalism and accuracy (e.g., accuracy in spelling and grammar, appropriate professional language).
- You have the freedom to choose if the website will be restricted (password protected) or public.
- There is not an expectation that you will demonstrate competency in all competency areas at the end of your degree; rather, the portfolio is to demonstrate the ongoing development of your skills, knowledge, and competence in these areas. Your PD plan is a good place to identify areas of limitation and propose the steps you will take to continue your professional growth in these areas.
- As you are the author of the portfolio, I want to hear **your** voice. You select how you are going to demonstrate each competency area in a concrete way.
- Continuous ongoing development is necessary for successful completion

### Types of artifacts (this is not exhaustive):

- reflective journal entries
- self-evaluations and evaluations from others (e.g., supervisors, group co-facilitators, etc.)
- client feedback
- critical incidents
- relevant course work
- publications
- presentations
- case studies and case conceptualizations
- sample therapy plan
- video (mock, with signed consent from participating party(ies))
- program designs
- letters and notes of appreciation from clients/students
- evaluations and feedback forms from those workshops (the positive ones!)
- articles or web pages in which your name appears
- brochures, reports, or proposals you have planned and completed
- CV additions such as lists of speaking engagements, published writing, and professional development courses
- agendas or programs featuring your name
- professional development activities
- evidence related to specific area of specialization in counselling
- documentation of certifications, diplomas and degrees

\*\*Note: Demonstrate good ethical practice by ensuring confidentiality is maintained in all documentation that comes from work with clients

### Choosing artifacts:

- TIP: "Collect, select, reflect"
- Why is each entry included and how does it illustrate you as a counsellor?
- What does this artifact mean to you? What have you learned in regards to this particular artifact? What would you do next time?

### Required sections:

At a minimum, your portfolio should include the following sections:

- Comprehensive CV
- Comprehensive professional development plan for the next 5 years
- Counselling philosophy statement
- Professional biographical sketch
- Description of counselling as a profession
- Evidence of all courses taken with a syllabus for each course
- Description of practica & work experience
- Written reviews of your performance (e.g., course feedback, evaluations) (may be integrated into other sections as appropriate)
- Statement of professional goals

Your portfolio should integrate artifacts that demonstrate:

- evidence of critical thinking (e.g., case study analysis)
- job interview preparation
- evidence of self change/growth while in the MC program
- your best practices in counselling skills & intervention
- your best practices in professional and ethical conduct
- your best practices in group counselling
- your best practices in diversity & multicultural counselling
- your best practices in lifestyle & career development
- your best practices in human development & learning
- your best practices in assessment
- your best practices in research & evaluation
- integration of self-care

## Grading Faculty of Education

### Grading Schedule for Graduate Classes

Percentage Grade	Alpha Grade	Pass/Fail
97 – 100	A+	Pass
93 – 96	A	Pass
90 – 92	A-	Pass
87 – 89	B+	Pass
83 – 86	B	Pass
80 – 82	B-	Pass
77 – 79	C+	Fail
73 – 76	C	Fail
70 – 72	C-	Fail

***Note: Any course with a grade of less than B- cannot be considered for credit in the M.C. Program.***

## Tentative Course Schedule

<b>Week</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Peers or Instructor</b>
<b>Week One</b> Jan 9 <sup>th</sup> to 13 <sup>th</sup>	Become familiar with developing a webpage Critique e-portfolios	
<b>Week Two</b> Jan 16 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup>	Update CV and decide whether to submit to instructor Continue learning the technology for your website	CV to instructor (optional)
<b>Week Three</b> Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> (Post in DF for review by Sat. Jan. 27 <sup>th</sup> )	Mission statement and definition of counselling	Peer group feedback due <b>Feb. 2nd</b>
<b>Week Four</b> Jan 30 <sup>th</sup> to Feb. 3 <sup>rd</sup> (Post in DF for review by Feb. 2 <sup>nd</sup> )	Theoretical perspective Biographical sketch	Peer Group feedback by <b>Feb. 9<sup>th</sup></b> Portfolio structure to Instructor by <b>Feb. 7<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Week Five</b> Feb 6 <sup>th</sup> to 10 <sup>th</sup> (Post in DF for review by Feb. 9 <sup>th</sup> )	Long and Short Term Goals	Peer group feedback due <b>Feb. 16<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Week 6</b> Feb. 13 <sup>th</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup>	Post presentation in Specialty area of DF by Tuesday Feb. 12 <sup>th</sup> Upload to your E-Portfolio website at the end of the week.	
<b>Week 7</b> Feb. 27 <sup>th</sup> to March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Add to E-Portfolio Summary of your graduate coursework Videoconference	Videoconference Friday <b>March 1<sup>st</sup> (tentative)</b>
<b>Week 8</b> March 6 <sup>th</sup> to March 10 <sup>th</sup> (Post in DF for review by March 9 <sup>th</sup> )	Summarize Practica Section	Peer Feedback by <b>March 15<sup>th</sup></b> on graduate coursework
<b>Week 9</b> March 13 <sup>th</sup> to March 17 <sup>th</sup>	Review your website and add practica section once peer feedback received.	Peer Feedback by <b>March 16<sup>th</sup></b> on practica experience
<b>Week 10</b> March 20 <sup>th</sup> to 24 <sup>th</sup> (Post in DF for review by March 23 <sup>rd</sup> )	<b>Activity Seven:</b> Developing My Five-Year Professional Development Plan; Draft Five Year Professional Development Plan	
<b>Week 11</b> March 27 <sup>th</sup> to 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Easter weekend</b> – two days online only	
<b>Week 12</b> April 3 <sup>rd</sup> to April 7 <sup>th</sup>	Final Call Peer Feedback on your website or on any documents	Peer feedback due <b>April 7<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Week 13</b> April 10 <sup>th</sup> to April 13 <sup>th</sup>	Final Portfolio and Final Pro-D Plan are due. Tentative Video conference	Final Review of E-Portfolios due on <b>Friday April 12<sup>th</sup>.</b>