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# COUN 511.01: Counseling Theories and Techniques

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SYLLABUS -- UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

COUNSELOR EDUCATION 511: COUNSELING THEORIES AND TECHNIQUES

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**INSTRUCTOR  
INFORMATION:**

**John Sommers-Flanagan, Ph.D.**

Office: Education Building Room 206

Office Hours: Tuesday 2-4pm, Wednesday 11-1pm  
and by appointment

Telephone: 243-5820 (off) 721-6367 (hm)

Email: john.sf@mso.umt.edu

**SCHEDULED CLASS MEETINGS:** Class will meet on Tuesdays from 4:10pm to 7:00pm, beginning Tuesday, September 2, 2003. Finals week is Dec 15-19.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is an overview of major theories and techniques of counseling and psychotherapy. Students will read about, experience, and practice skills and techniques associated with major counseling theories.

**PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:** The overall purpose of this course is to introduce you to the theories and techniques used by professional counselors. In particular, we will explore and discuss the major theories and their practical application. Primary course objectives and corresponding Section II, Subsection K CACREP Standards are listed below:

- To acquire an overall view of historical, contemporary, and future theoretical perspectives that serve as the foundation for counseling practice (1a )
- To identify and understand common theory-based ethical challenges faced by practicing counselors (1h, 2f, 3e, 4i, 5g, 7i).
- To understand how specific theories of counseling, including multicultural theories, address or fail to address contemporary multicultural and pluralistic trends (2a, 2e).
- To understand a wide variety of divergent theories of development, personality, and learning and their relevance to counseling practice (3a, 3b).
- To apply and integrate theoretical perspectives into your understanding of counseling relationships (5a, 5b, 5c, 5e, 5g).
- To understand how specific theory-based techniques can affect different clients, including clients of divergent cultural backgrounds (2b, 2c, 2d).
- To be able to identify psychopathology, as defined by specific

theoretical perspectives, and apply a variety of strategies for facilitating psychosocial development across the life-span (3c, 3d).

- To understand characteristics of a helping relationship as defined by various schools of thought (5a, 5b, 5c).
- To be able to understand and implement theory-based assessment procedures (7a, 7h).
- To acquire knowledge pertaining to research procedures for evaluating treatment effectiveness and the challenges therein (8a, 8e).

**TEACHING METHODS:**

1. Lectures/class demonstrations.
2. Guest lectures/ student presentations.
3. Video presentations.
4. Class activities.
5. Class discussions.

**TEXTBOOK:** Sommers-Flanagan, J., & Sommers-Flanagan, R. (2004). *Counseling and Psychotherapy Theories in Context and Practice: Skills, Strategies, and Techniques*. New York: Wiley. (We will be using the page proofs from this upcoming text as our main textbook).

Additional readings will be assigned on an occasional basis. Our plan is to have regular 15-20 minute discussions of supplementary readings. During these discussions, you will be expected to show reasonable recall of the readings and their historical and practical implications. Your class participation grade will be partly dependent on your performance during these occasional discussion periods.

**GRADING PROCEDURES AND COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:** Grades will be based on completion of class assignments, midterm and final examination scores, and class participation/attendance. If individual students have specific concerns about the grading procedures or require special assistance due to a disability, please meet with me within a week of the initial class period. Course assignments include: (1) Initial Theories Reflection Paper (10 pts); (2) Book Review/Critique (30 points); (3) Personal Change Project/Paper (50 points) (4) Midterm Examination (75 points); (5) Final Examination (75 points); and (6) Attendance and Relevant Participation (20 points). There is a total of 260 points available to earn during the course. Grades will be assigned on a percentage basis (with some modification or curving depending upon overall class performance).

A = 93-100%    B = 85-92%    C = 77-84%    D = 69-76%    F = Below 68%

### APPROXIMATE SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week	Date	Assigned Reading	In-Class Topic	Assignments Due
1	9/2		Syllabus distribution. Defining counseling and exploring research.	
2	9/9	SFs Ch. 1-2	Psychoanalytic-oriented theory and therapy.	
3	9/16	SFs Ch. 3	Individual psychology	Reflection paper due (10 pts).
4	9/23	SFs Ch. 4	Jungian concepts and approaches.	
5	9/30	SFs Ch. 5	Existential theory and therapy. Ethics reading class discussion.	Read ethics reading.
6	10/7	SFs Ch. 6	The Person-centered approach.	
7	10/14	SFs Ch. 7	Behavioral theory and therapy.	Book reports begin (30 pts).
8	10/21	SFs Ch. 8	Cognitive approaches.	
9	10/28	Review readings to date.	Midterm examination (covering chapters 1-8, plus readings and lectures).	Midterm exam (75 pts).
10	11/4	SFs Ch. 9	Choice theory and reality therapy.	
11	11/11	Vet's day	Holiday	Be happy.
12	11/18	SFs Ch. 10	Feminist theory and therapy.	
13	11/25	SFs Ch. 11	Constructivist theory and therapy.	
14	12/2	SFs Ch. 12	Multicultural theory and therapy.	Personal change project is due (50 pts).
15	12/9	SFs Ch. 13	Counseling integration.	
16	12/16	Review all readings.	Final examination (covering all chapters/readings/lectures emphasizing chapters 9-13).	Final exam (75 pts).