HISTORY & SYSTEMS
OF PERSONALITY & PSYCHOTHERAPY (PSYC 830)
FALL 2011

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00-11:00 or by appointment
Class Time & Location: Wednesdays 9:00-11:40am Clinic

Course Description
This course provides an overview of the history of the field of psychology, particularly as it relates to current practice in clinical psychology. Through lecture, readings, and student research and presentations, we will review the history of major theories of personality and psychotherapy, the contributions of major figures and theories in the field, and applications to clinical work.

Goals
In this course, students will:

- Gain a broad understanding of the history of the subject matter and field of psychology
- Use this understanding as context for critical thought about current trends in the field
- Gain an understanding of major schools of thought (re personality and psychotherapy) in psychology
- Glean specific concepts from these schools of thought useful for clinical work
- Practice applying various theories to their own clinical work (case conceptualization)

Requirements:
Participation (10%). Your attendance and engagement in class is required, and will be evaluated through your participation during class time. Your participation should be both active and informed (by course readings).

Discussion Questions/Position Paper (15%). The first three weeks of class, students will identify a link between the readings and a current issue in psychology. He/she will write a short summary of that link and two questions designed to provoke thought and discussion (about 1 page total). The summary should bring in points from more than one reading (even if it is pulling from a prior week), and can also integrate material from other classes or personal experience. The student will e-mail her/his summary and questions to the instructor by 6pm Tuesday night, so that they may be incorporated into class the next day. Evaluation will be based on the thoughtfulness of the summary and questions, and the degree to which they integrate material. The position paper (details to be distributed through Blackboard) will be assigned in connection with the class on empirically-based treatment.

Useful Concepts (15%). For the theory weeks (beginning 10/5), students will choose two concepts from the readings and write a short description of how they are useful in understanding a specific client (from your own work or from case material). The concept should be related to a particular problem the client struggles with, and should help to explain the development and maintenance of this problem. The goal is for you to read actively, thinking about how these ideas can be useful for clinical work. Students will e-mail these descriptions to the instructor by 6pm.
**Tuesday night.**

*Contributors to psychology in historical context (30%):* By September 14, pairs of students will choose a person or school of therapy they are interested in learning more about. Dates for presentations will be set once topics are chosen. On the date of the presentation, each pair will have approximately half the class time to do the following: (1) Overview this person/theory’s contributions to the field of psychology; (2) describe the historical context of the person or theory (What pre-existing schools of thought influenced their ideas? What in their life or the relevant time in history influenced their ideas?); (3) using (real or fictional) case examples, describe the ideas attributed to this person or theory that are most useful for clinical work. In addition to relevant articles or chapters, students should read at least one book in their research. Students should provide the class with an annotated bibliography of important sources by and about this person or theory, and a copy of the slides. You may provide these things electronically or on paper. More detail and evaluation criteria are posted on Blackboard.

*Case conceptualization (30%):* Students will again pair up to choose a client one person has worked with, and will remove all identifying information in order to write a paper and make a presentation in one of the final two classes. For the paper (15%), use the format suggested by the Ingram book (SOAP) to integrate whatever theories we have covered that seem most applicable, excluding CBT. For the presentation (15%) you should briefly overview the client’s history and problem list, present a conceptualization that accounts for the problem list as a whole, and a plan that flows from that conceptualization. For both the paper and presentation you must use at least two theories, but can use more. Detail and evaluation criteria are posted on Blackboard. **Please note:** if you are going to complete the clinical comprehensive exam in the spring, the case you conceptualize for this class cannot be the same case you will use for comps.

**NOTES ON PAIR WORK:** In order to maximize everyone’s learning experience, please follow these guidelines: (1) All third year students should pair with second year students; (2) all students should present once; (3) both students in the pair should do all relevant reading for the assignments; and (4) make sure to integrate your presentation – do NOT divide up tasks in a way that leads to a disjointed presentation.

**Grading:**
I will calculate your final grade on your point total as follows:
93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 65-69 = D; below 65 = F.

**Honor code:**
The Honor Code of George Mason University deals specifically with cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Students should be familiar with the code and connected policies, set out at [http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies](http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies). This course will be conducted in accordance with those policies.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:**
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All accommodations must be arranged through that office, and must be initiated immediately, prior to any anticipated need.
Required Texts:


*I recommend you buy this book, but in order to use it for this class, you are only required to read the preface chapters 1 and 5. You can then borrow and copy from mine as needed, if you choose not to buy it.

Course Outline

**8/31 – Introduction and philosophy of science**
*Skim Ingram readings*

**9/7 – Philosophical underpinnings (submit dq)**
Hergenhahn pp.117-124 and pp. 168-172


**9/14 Early “scientific” psychology (submit dq)**
Hergenhahn pp. 264-278, 286-9 (Ebbinhaus), 297-329, 334-347, 358 (Sumner) -366

**9/21 History of clinical psychology & current landscape (submit dq)**
Hergenhahn pp. 495-510.


**9/28 Current landscape (ctd) – evidence-based practice (submit position paper)**


**10/5 Behaviorism, Cognitive psychology (submit concepts)**
Hergenhahn pp. 388-394, 397-412, 442-452


**10/14 9:30-12:10 ACT (submit concepts) SPEAKER – NOTE DATE**

commitment therapy skills-training manual for therapists. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications. Intro & ch 1

10/19 Psychodynamic theories 1 (submit concepts) (student presentation)
Hergenhahn ch. 16


10/26 Psychodynamic theories 2 (submit concepts) (student presentation)
Hergenhahn ch. 17


11/2 Psychodynamic theories 3 (submit concepts) (student presentation)


**Watch before class: Time-Limited Dynamic Therapy with Hanna Levenson (Johnson Center Library). Persistent link: [http://magik.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=1297327](http://magik.gmu.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?BBID=1297327).**

11/9 Humanistic theory (submit concepts) (student presentation)
Hergenhahn ch. 18


11/16 Existential theory (submit concepts) (student presentation)


11/23 HAPPY THANKSGIVING

11/30 Case Conceptualizations

12/7 Case Conceptualizations

* Last day to add classes is Sept 6, last day to drop is Sept 30