



On-Campus Course Syllabus

CSL 616

Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling

Spring 2025

Class Information

Day and Time: Mondays at 7:30 pm

Room Number: E204

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Gilma Y. Martinez, MA, NCC, LPC

Instructor Email: gmartinez@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: (210) 685-1021

Instructor Office Hours: Call or email to schedule a Zoom Meeting or phone meeting

Course Description and Prerequisites

Examines the legal and ethical issues related to the practice of counseling including records management, an overview of business and family law, and the study of current board rules. Focuses on resolving ethical conflicts and preparing students for real world ethical dilemmas. (Prerequisite: MAC Committee Evaluation & Oral Exam)

Course Objectives

- Review historical foundation of mental health treatment, psychology, and counseling
- Identify ethical standards in current mental health practice, being able to compare/contrast the specific ethical standards in each mental health identity
- Build solid ethical decision-making model to insure strong foundation of ethical consideration, collaboration, and risk management
- Explore professional organizations, networking, collaboration, and consultation and the importance of their involvement in ongoing practice
- Understand the role of the State Licensing Boards, review board policies, credentialing, certification, licensing processes, and their power to investigate ethical claims
- Examine therapist's role in social justice, advocacy, and promoting effective social and policy change
- Explore cultural self-awareness, cultural competency, personal bias, prejudices, intentional and unintentional discrimination, as well as how to address these issues in the therapy room while maintaining ethical standards
- Challenge student self-awareness, exploration, and growth regarding personal beliefs as they inform professional roles and boundaries

Required Textbooks

Cottone, R. R. & Tarvydas, V. (2016). *Ethics and Decision Making in Counseling and Psychotherapy*, 4th Edition. Springer Publishing Company: New York.

Knapp, S., Younggren, J.N., VandeCreek, L., Harris, E., & Martin, J.N. (2013). *Assessing and Managing Risk in Psychological Practice: An Individualized Approach*. (2nd Ed). The Trust: Rockville, MD.

Recommended Reading

Pope, K. S. & Vasquez, M. J. T. (2016). *Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling: A Practical Guide*. (5th Ed). John Wiley & Sons, Inc: Hoboken, NJ.

Course Requirements and Assignments

- **Weekly Ethical Discussions (50 points total):** Developing a strong sense of ethical intelligence is about regularly considering real life circumstances and then grappling with legal and ethical issues as well as personal perspectives. Students will be presented with real life ethical conflicts of various situations and be expected to formulate thoughtful, coherent responses to these discussions. Students will be expected to come to class having completed all required readings as well as demonstrate an engaged thoughtful examination and exploration of the key ethical and legal issues. Each week students will be graded on their participation in and contribution to the discussion and earn up to 5 points per discussion. Failure to engage in the discussion in a meaningful way or missing class will result in a loss of points for that week. Given the course calendar, there are built in 2 extra days to accommodate an absence or 'off' week.
- **Ethical Discussion Papers (50 points each):** Students will be provided 3 formal case studies for individual response. These responses need to incorporate thoughtful discussion, presentation, and reference to applicable legal standards and ethical codes which apply to the case discussion. Students should explore all aspects of the case as it can be viewed from both an ethical and legal perspective and then arrive at their own decision point regarding one's best action. Justification for why the student believes this to be the best legal and ethical choice should be well developed and supported with both ethical codes as well as personal integrity points.
- **Quizzes (100 points each):** There will be 3 quizzes over the course of the semester which will be a combination of multiple choice, matching, short answer, and discussion questions. Given that much of ethical discussions result in 'it depends', students will be expected to formulate meaningful discussion on quizzes to justify aspect of legal and ethical application. Students' grades on quizzes will depend on completeness of response and incorporate key points of the discussion question. Each quiz will be taken online through Canvas and students will be permitted to use any course materials when taking a quiz, but there will be a time limit of 120 minutes to complete each quiz. Thus, students should appropriately study and prepare for each quiz in order to complete it in the allotted time. A quiz will lock at the 120-minute mark and the completed work will be graded at that point. Quizzes must be completed by 11:59pm on the assigned due date. **No late quizzes will be graded without prior approval from the instructor. There will not be a face to face meeting the week of an assigned quiz.**
- **Research Paper (100 points):** Students will choose an area of ethics applicable to the field of mental health to explore in this paper. The paper should be 8-10 pages in written length (not including title, abstract, and reference pages which are in addition to written length). Papers must incorporate a minimum of 8 professional references published **within the last 5 years** which reflect current ethical considerations in the field. The two required readings for this course can be used as

references for this paper, but the additional references should be professional publications in refereed journals in order to adequately reflect current ethical thoughts regarding the applicable topics. Papers should fully explore the chosen area, it's appropriate legal and ethical points, consider/contrast multiple perspectives regarding the ethical issue presented, and consider how legal and ethical perspectives compare and contrast to one's Christian morality and perspectives of integrity. Ideas for papers are endless, but it is strongly encouraged that students get instructor feedback on your topic before you begin actively writing on the topic.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

Internet use is required to complete course lectures, obtain additional reading, and video assignments, as well as to complete required course assignments. Remote learning environments depend heavily on the student to complete all expected readings, videos, pre-recorded lectures, and other assigned tasks for the weekly zoom module. These have been developed to add to and expand one's understanding of the material for this course and all readings and additional materials are considered REQUIRED for this course. Failure on the student's part to review all course materials and readings will likely result in poor course performance. Attendance via scheduled remote lectures requires students to be signed in during the scheduled time period, with camera enabled to confirm attendance. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions via Zoom during scheduled remote lectures. Failure to log into the scheduled zoom discussion or to actively participate in the zoom discussion will be counted as an absence. Students will be expected to keep up with the readings, lecture recordings, and additional assignments throughout the semester to be fully prepared for these live discussions.

LATE WORK - All assignments are expected on or before the deadline indicated in the syllabus. If unforeseen, extenuating circumstances arrives, students should contact me as soon as possible to discuss the potential impact of the situation. In general, late assignments will not be accepted without prior approval from the instructor, and then may incur a penalty depending on the circumstances. It is strongly encouraged that students do not wait until the just before a due date to submit assignments or complete tests through Canvas. IT issues may jeopardize your ability to complete the assignment by the due date, and extensions for technical issues are typically not granted unless the problem is extensive and affects class wide availability. Waiting to submit an assignment until just before class begins and then experiencing IT issues DOES NOT automatically guarantee your assignment will be accepted. Late work not given prior approval to be submitted after the due date will be given a grade of 0.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS – All assigned work and quizzes must be completed through Canvas and be submitted prior to beginning of class time (do not email written assignments. Upload your .docx files through Canvas). Assignments not submitted by the start of class, may not be accepted for grading. It is strongly encouraged that students do not wait until the last minute to submit graded work. It is the instructor's preference that students submit all work in .docx format for uniformity of submission. It is strongly encouraged that students submit all work consistent with APA formatting as it is considered a standard presentation format within the field. However, APA formatting is not a requirement on the shorter response papers. It is a graded element on the longer research paper and lack of attention to this component will likely cost students a letter grade on the assignment.

Extra credit work is not permitted. Students are expected to plan and execute assigned work sufficiently throughout the semester to earn the grade they wish from the course. Students are welcome to seek tutoring or additional help from Mrs. Martinez during office hours at any point during the semester (appointments are recommended). If students are not scoring well on quizzes or written work, Mrs. Martinez is very accessible to discuss ways in which the student may improve scores on future work.

COMMUNICATION WITH Mrs. Martinez - My goal is to respond to email within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on the weekend. Should you have a pressing question or more immediate issue, you are welcome to text me, but recognize it may still take some time for me to respond to questions asked. As such, students are strongly encouraged to begin assigned tasks well before the due date so as not to jeopardize completion of an assignment on time because of technology problems or other complications. I strive to have all papers graded within 5 days of the due date for a written assignment. This allows for expedient feedback which students can integrate into future assignments. If texting, students are asked to be respectful of the time of day. Due to the potential for emergencies with active therapy clients, my cell phone is on audible throughout the night. Please make every effort to only text me during reasonable time periods during the day. Students are also encouraged to schedule an appointment during my office hours to discuss questions, concerns, or guidance they may need. Voicemails left on my official campus voicemail will be checked during office hours only. If your issue is pressing and cannot wait, texting or emailing is likely going to get you a quicker response.

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they (1) anticipate being able to attend every on-campus class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, or (2) participating in academically related activities as identified in online-course schedules including synchronous class sessions conducted remotely by video, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any missed information. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades. Professors apprise students of such information in course syllabi.

Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships must meet specified requirements of various departments at the college and should consult relevant sections of the *Academic Catalog*. To ensure such funds will not be forfeited, students are responsible for contacting the proper departments to ascertain any specific course participation requirements and consequences of not meeting such requirements. Students receiving grants, loans, or scholarships should consult the Financial Aid office.

While Criswell College is a non-attendance taking institution, it nevertheless must demonstrate that students begin their courses in order to comply with Federal Aid regulations. Accordingly, students must participate in academically related activities during census periods. Failure to meet this requirement will result in students being administratively dropped from courses.

Academically related activity is defined as any course-related activity that may be used as evidence of attendance. Examples include:

- physical presence in a classroom during a class session with the instructor present,

- participation in a synchronous remote video class session with the instructor present,
- submission of an academic assignment, quiz, or exam,
- participation in an interactive tutorial or computer-assisted instruction,
- participation in a study group or discussion board that is assigned by the instructor,
- documentation showing that the student and a faculty member corresponded about the academic subject of the course.

NOTE: Logging into a Canvas course alone and logging into a Synchronous Online class session without active participation or with the camera off are not considered attendance.

NOTE: A census period begins on the first day of a semester/term and runs through the end of the last day to drop courses. During the census period, attendance data is collected in order to demonstrate compliance with Federal Aid regulations. There is no census period for winter terms since there is no last day to drop courses.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

| | | |
|----|--------|------------------------------------|
| A | 93-100 | 4.0 grade points per semester hour |
| A- | 90-92 | 3.7 grade points per semester hour |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.3 grade points per semester hour |
| B | 83-86 | 3.0 grade points per semester hour |

| | | |
|----|-------|------------------------------------|
| B- | 80-82 | 2.7 grade points per semester hour |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.3 grade points per semester hour |
| C | 73-76 | 2.0 grade points per semester hour |
| C- | 70-72 | 1.7 grade points per semester hour |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.3 grade points per semester hour |
| D | 63-66 | 1.0 grade point per semester hour |
| D- | 60-62 | 0.7 grade points per semester hour |
| F | 0-59 | 0.0 grade points per semester hour |

All grades are final. Grades are based on performance. Grades are non-negotiable.

Assignment Weights

Each assignment group will be averaged and weighted for the computation of the final grades as follows:

Quizzes 20%

Weekly Ethical Discussions 20%

Ethical Discussion Papers 30%

Research Paper 30%

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the "I" will become an "F."

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting.

Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and

- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college's academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student's course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student's work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu. Login credentials are emailed to students near the beginning of the semester.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly (<https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>) or by visiting the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203. For questions, call 214.818.1373 or email at tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

| | | Reading | Topic | Assignment Due |
|---|------|--|---|---|
| 1 | 1/20 | Cottone Ch 1 & 2 Trust 1 & 2 Pope Ch 1 & 2 (optional) | Introduction to Ethics Ethical Intelligence Risk Management | Weekly Discussion 1 |
| 2 | 1/27 | Cottone Ch 3 Pope Ch 3, 4, & 13 (optional) | Values and the Human Therapist | Weekly Discussion 2 |
| 3 | 2/3 | Cottone Ch 4 Pope Ch 5, 6, 7, & 17 (optional) | Ethical Decision-Making Models | Weekly Discussion 3 |
| 4 | 2/10 | Cottone Ch 5 Ethical and legal standards Pope Ch 8 & 9 (optional) | Ethical Principles | Weekly Discussion 4 |
| 5 | 2/17 | | Cottone Ch 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Trust Ch. 1, 2, 5 | Quiz 1 Weekly Discussion 5 |
| 6 | 2/24 | Cottone Ch 6 Trust Ch 5 | Confidentiality vs. Privilege Who is the Client? | Discussion Paper 1 Weekly Discussion 6 |
| 7 | 3/3 | Cottone 7 & 8 Trust Ch 6 Pope Ch 18, 19, 20, & 24 (optional) | Informed Consent and Confidentiality | Weekly Discussion 7 |
| 8 | 3/10 | Trust Ch 7, 9 Pope Ch 25 (optional) | Breaking Confidentiality Ethics in Forensics | Weekly Discussion 8 |
| | 3/17 | SPRING BREAK | NO REQUIRED ACTIVITIES | |
| 9 | 3/24 | Cottone Ch 13 & 14 Trust Ch 11, 12, 13 Pope Ch 11, 14, 18, 19, 24 (Optional) | Office Setting, Administrative, Technology, and HIPAA | Discussion Paper 2 Weekly Discussion 9 |

| | | | | |
|----|------|---|---|--|
| 10 | 3/31 | | Cottone 6,7, 8, 13, 14 Trust 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13 | Quiz 2 Weekly Discussion Post 10 |
| 11 | 4/7 | Cottone Ch 9 Trust Ch 4 | Roles and Relationships | Weekly Discussion 11 |
| 12 | 4/14 | Cottone Ch 10 Pope Ch 21, 22 (optional) | Multiple Relationships and Sexual Attraction | Weekly Discussion 12 |
| 13 | 4/21 | Cottone Ch 11 & 12 Trust Ch 3, 10 Pope Ch 10, 12 & 23 | Cultural Competency Morality Conflicts | Discussion Paper 3 Weekly Discussion 13 |
| 14 | 4/28 | Pope Ch 20, 26, 27 Appendices A & B | Ethics in Research, Academic settings, and supervision | Weekly Discussion 14 |
| 15 | 5/5 | Cottone Ch 15 Pope Ch 15,16 | Ethical Complaints and One's Response | RESEARCH PAPER DUE Weekly Discussion 15 |
| 16 | 5/12 | | Cottone Ch 9,10,11,12,15 Trust Ch Appendices A&B | FINAL QUIZ DUE Weekly discussion 16 |