

CO5580 PROFESSIONAL, ETHICAL, AND LEGAL STUDIES
Reformed Theological Seminary
Spring 2024
3 Credit Hours

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Office Hours: Available on request before or after class

Meeting time: Wednesday 1-4

Class Location: Classroom TBD

Course Description

This course is designed to give students ethical, legal and practical guidelines for the practice of professional counseling in various settings. Students completing the course will develop a sensitivity to the ethical and legal aspects of the counseling process, better appreciate ethical constraints under which a counselor works, and develop skills to critically examine how they conduct themselves as counselors. Professional identity and advocacy issues pertinent to individual counseling, group counseling, and marriage and family counseling will be addressed.

Course Objectives (Knowledge and Skill Outcomes)

For students to gain and demonstrate comprehension of the following (applicable CACREP standard in parenthesis):

- CO1. **History and Philosophy** - history and philosophy of the counseling profession and its specialty areas concerning individuals, groups, couples and family systems (2.F.1.a; 2.F.5.b.)
- CO2. **Professional Roles** - the multiple professional roles and functions of counselors across specialty areas, and their relationships with human service and integrated behavioral health care systems, including interagency and interorganizational collaboration and consultation. (2.F.1.b, 5.C.2.m)
- CO3. **Community Responsibility** - counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of interdisciplinary community outreach and emergency management response teams (2.F.1.c)
- CO4. **Professional Advocacy** - the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of the profession. (2.F.1.d)
- CO5. **Client Advocacy** - advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients. (2.F.1.e)
- CO6. **Professional Orientation** - professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues. (2.F.1.f)
- CO7. **Credentialing** - professional counseling credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues. (2.F.1.g)
- CO8. **Labor Market** - current labor market information relevant to opportunities for practice within the counseling profession. (2.F.1.h)

- CO9. **Ethical Standards** - ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, the ethical foundational principles undergirding those standards and the applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling. The application of ethical standards to individual, couples, family systems and group clients will be considered. (2.F.1.i; 2.F.5.b.)
- CO10. **Technology** - technology's impact on the counseling profession. (2.F.1.i,j; 2.F.5.e)
- CO11. **Self-evaluation** - strategies for personal and professional self-evaluation and implications for practice. (2.F.1.j,k)
- CO12. **Self-care** - self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role. (2.F.1.k,l)
- CO13. **Supervision** - the role of counseling supervision in the profession. (2.F.1.l,m)
- CO14. **Legal Considerations in Professional Counseling** - the legal interface with ethical counseling practice as well as legislation and government policy relevant to clinical mental health counseling. (2.F.1.m,i; 5.C.2.i)
- CO15. **Legal Considerations in Professional Counseling** – the legal interface with ethical counseling practice as well as legislation and government policy relevant to clinical mental health counseling (2.F.1.i.; 5.C.2.i, 5.C.2.l.)
- CO16. **Organizations** - professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling (5.C.2.k)
- CO17. **CMHC Ethics** - legal and ethical considerations specific to clinical mental health counseling (5.C.2.l)
- CO18. **Mandated Clients** - strategies for interfacing with mandated clients which are primarily from the legal system (court-referred clients) but can occur in other contexts, e.g., school systems (5.C.3.c)

Methods of Instruction

This course will be taught in the following format: traditional classroom, may include guest lecture, role play and case discussion, small-group discussion, triad role play, and/or student research presentations according to professor discretion.

Required Readings

- M1. Corey, G., Corey, M. S., Corey, C. & Callanan, P. (2018). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*, (10th ed.). Cengage. ISBN: 978-1337406291
- M2. Herlihy, B., & Corey, G. (2014). *ACA ethical standards casebook*, (7th ed.). American Counseling Association. ISBN: 978-1556203213
- M3. Kocet, M. M., & Herlihy, B. J. (2014). Addressing value-based conflicts within the counseling relationship: A decision-making model. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(2), 180-186. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00146.x (Available on Canvas)
- M4. Richardson, W. (2018). *Ethical courses of action for complex, yet common ethical issues*. Paper presented at the 2018 RTS Christian counseling conference. (Available on Canvas.)
- M5. American Counseling Association (2014). *ACA code of ethics*. Retrieved from <https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf> (Available on Canvas)
- M6. American Mental Health Counselors Association, (2015). *AMHCA code of ethics*. Retrieved from: <http://connections.amhca.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=d4e10fcb-2f3c-c701-aa1d-5d0f53b8bc14> (Available on Canvas).

- M7. American Psychological Association, (2017). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct*. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf> (Available on Canvas).
- M8. Weikel, W. J. (2010, July) A brief history of the American Mental Health Counselors Association. Retrieved from <https://www.amhca.org/about/about-us/aboutamhca/history> (Available on Canvas).
- M9. American Counseling Association. Our history. Retrieved from <https://www.counseling.org/about-us/about-aca/our-history> (Available on Canvas).
- M10. Wilkinson, T., Smith, D., & Wimberly, R. (2019). Trends in ethical complaints leading to professional counseling licensing boards disciplinary actions. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 97(1), 98-104. (Available on Canvas).

Suggested Readings

Wilcoxon, S., Remley, T., Gladding, S. (2012). *Ethical, legal and professional issues in the practice of marriage and family therapy*, (5th ed.). Pearson.

Assignments (Student Performance Evaluation Criteria)

The program assesses its progress toward MAC program objectives using key performance indicators (KPIs). The KPIs addressed in this course are in parenthesis.

- A1. **Corey Mid-term and Final Exams (20%) (Ethics KPI 1).** Students will have a Mid-term (A1a.) and a Final Exam (A1b.) covering chapters of the Corey text (M1) as indicated on Course Schedule. Questions will come only from distributed Corey multiple-choice test banks. Students will complete the exams on Canvas.
- A2. **Informed Consent (10%).** Students will create an informed consent for three modalities of counseling (Individual, Couple/Family, and Group). Students may use the template provided on Canvas. See Rubric #1 for how points will be assigned.
- A3. **Licensure Law Digital Outline (10%).** Students are to obtain and read the current LPC/LMHC licensure law (including “Rules and Regs” attachments) from one state of their choosing. Students are to prepare an organized summary/outline of that law primarily specifying the clinical and academic requirements for obtaining licensure and the disciplinary aspects of that particular licensure law, i.e., a practical guide on how to obtain and how to lose that mental-health-provider state license. Outline (4-page-max), include exact website address. Digital Copy Due on Canvas prior to class on May 1. See Rubric #2
- A4. **Code of Ethics Assignment (20%).** Students are to immerse themselves in professional ethics codes throughout the semester. Towards this end, this assignment will include three steps as follows (see Rubric #3 for grading details):
 - Step 1:** Students are to read the ACA code of ethics (Week 1). Students will come to class #2 prepared to discuss at least one code that caused confusion, curiosity, discomfort, or surprise (to be completed during week 1).
 - Step 2:** Students will (individually or in a group) conduct research on one of the codes/ethics that surfaced in step 1. Towards this end, students are to find at least one scholarly source (journal article, textbook, etc) that sheds light on the ethic/code. Additionally, students are to read the Codes of Ethics published by the American Psychological Association and the American Mental Health Counseling Association as a means of comparison/contrast.

- Step 3:** Students will present in class on March 6 (individually or in a group). The presentation will cover the information generated from steps 1 and 2 (see rubric #3 for grading details).
- A5. **Professional and Ethical Identity Packet (20%).** This assignment has 2 components:
- Digital Bookmark: Students will create a digital bookmark that demonstrates integral and essential elements of their identity as an ethical counselor. Further instructions and examples provided on Canvas.
 - Professional Organization Exploration (See Canvas “Professional Organization Discussion” for more instruction): Students will identify and explore a professional counseling organization (suggestions will be discussed in class). Students will then engage via Canvas Discussion, covering at minimum, the following:
 - Organizational History
 - Journal and Conference
 - Include a topic for an Article or Presentation that you might propose/submit for the Journal/Conference
 - Benefits from Membership
 - Professional Greenhouse: Students will outline a “Professional Greenhouse” wherein they outline a trajectory of professional involvement including, but not limited to trainings, professional organizations and conferences, supervision modalities, and other professional involvement. See Canvas for more details.
- A6. **Self-Reflection, In Class Exercises, and Reading (20%).** Throughout the semester, students will participate in case study reflection and discussion from the ACA casebook. Students will interact in dyads, triads, small-groups, and large group discussion as well as written reflection. Students will complete a reading report in which they self-report reading completion percentage. The reading report is due May 6.
- A7. **Course Evaluation Completion (0% but required for the course completion).** Course evaluations are crucial for assessing and improving the MAC program. Therefore, each MAC course includes an assignment to complete an anonymous online course evaluation. You will verify whether you have completed the evaluation through a Canvas quiz. This will not count toward your grade but is necessary for successful completion of the course.

Course Process and Schedule

Class #	Lecture Topics	Corey Chapter	Assignments	2016 CACREP Standard
1 1/31	Course Introduction: Foundations of Ethics, Professional Identity, and Principles/Process of Ethical Decision-Making	1 & 6	A4. ACA Code of Ethics Assignment (Step 1): read ACA code of ethics (PDF found on Canvas) Read Wilkinson et al. (2019) (PDF on Canvas)	2.F.1.a,f,i,j,k,l 2.F.5.b,j
2 2/7	Confidentiality, Reporting, and Informed Consent	5	A4. ACA Code of Ethics Assignment (Step 2): Consult Herlihy and Corey (2014) (Part II) and begin conducting research. Case Study: (1, 2, 5, or 6 assigned in groups)	2.F.1.i,j,k,l 2.F.5.b,j
3 2/14	Navigating Groups and Families	11 & 12	Case Study: 9 or 10 assigned in groups	2.F.1.i, 2.F.5.b

				5.C.2.i,l
4 2/21	Values and the Helping Relationships	3	A2. Informed Consent Assignment Due: March 1 Read M3. (Kocet & Herlihy, 2014) and M4. (Richardson, 2018) Case Study: 7 or 8 assigned in groups	2.F.1.i, 2.F.5.b 5.C.2.i,l
5 2/28	The Person and Professional Counselor, Self-Care, and Burnout		A1a. Corey mid-term, chapters 1-3, 5-6, 11-12. Mid-Term Opens 2/28 and Closes 3/6 A4	
6 3/6	Professional Identity: Competence and Training	2	ACA Code of Ethics Assignment (Step 3)	2.F.1.b,k,l,m 5.C.2.m
7 3/13	Professional Identity Development: Supervision	8	A5b. Part 2 (in class) Read History of AMHCA and ACA	2.F.1.f,g,i,j,k,l 2.F.5.b,j 5.C.2.l
7 3/20 Spring Break		9		2.F.1.f,g,i,j,k,l 2.F.5.b,j 5.C.2.l
8 3/27	Dual Relationship and Boundaries in Counseling	7	Case Study: 13 or 14 assigned in groups	2.F.1.i,j 2.F.5.b,j 5.C.2.i,l
9 4/3	Multicultural Perspectives: Diversity and Advocacy	4 & 13	Case Study: 3 or 4 assigned in groups	2.F.1.c,d,e,i 5.C.2.i,l 5.C.3.c
10 4/10	Ethical Issues in the 21 st Century: HIPAA, HIV, social media, and Technology, and the Legal System		Case Study: 17 or 18 assigned in groups	2.F.1.i,j,k 2.F.5.e 5.C.2.i,k,l
11 4/17	Professional Practice, Labor Market, and Interfacing with the Legal System		Case Study: 23 or 24 assigned in group	2.F.1.h,i 5.C.2.i,k,l
12 4/24	Diagnosis, Treatment Planning, and Theoretical Orientation: Active Case Study	10	A3: Licensure Law Digital Outline: Due May 1 (submit on Canvas)	5.C.2.k
13 5/1	Course Wrap Up and Active Case Study		A5a. Due May 1 (In Class) A6. Reading Report: Due May 6 A1b. Corey Final Exam: Chapters 7-10, 13 (due 5/6)	

Student Learning Outcome Table

The table below shows how the objectives of this course will be met, and how they relate to CACREP Standards. Details about specific course objectives, assignments, and evaluation methods can be found in later sections of this syllabus.

CACREP Standard	Course Objective	Material *	Lecture / class meeting #	Assignment / Evaluation **
2.F.1.a 2.F.5.b	CO1. History and Philosophy	M1: 1; M1: 8	1	A1a; A1b**; A2
2.F.1.b 5.C.2.m	CO2. Professional Roles	M1: 1; M1: 8; M2	1, 5	A3
2.F.1.c	CO3. Community Responsibility Issues	M1: 13	9	A6
2.F.1.d	CO4. Professional Advocacy	M1: 13; M2	9	A6
2.F.1.e	CO5. Client Advocacy	M1: 13	9	A6
2.F.1.f	CO6. Professional Orientation	M1:10	1, 6, 7	A2, A4, A5
2.F.1.g	CO7. Credentialing	M1: 8	6, 7	A3, A5
2.F.1.h	CO8. Labor Market	M1: 13	11	A3
2.F.1.i 2.F.5.b	CO9. Ethical Standards	M1: 4-7	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8	A3, A4
2.F.1.i,j 2.F.5.j	CO10. Ethical Decision Process	M1:4-6, M2	1, 2 6,7,8	A1, A2, A3
2.F.1.j,k 2.F.5.e	CO11. Technology	M1: 5-6	10	A2, A3, A4
2.F.1.k,l	CO12. Self-evaluation	M1: 2	1, 2, 5, 6, 7	A4, A6
2.F.1.l,m	CO13. Self-care	M1: 2	5	A6
2.F.1.i,m 5.C.2.i	CO14. Supervision	M1: 8-9; M2: 12	7	A6
2.F.1.i 5.C.2.i,l	CO15. Legal Issues	M1: 6; M2:10-12; M10	3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11	A1, A3
5.C.2.k	CO16. Organizations	M1:1,13M2: 11;	10,11,12	A5
5.C.2.l	CO17. CMHC Ethics	M1, M2	6,7,8	A1, A6
5.C.3.c	CO 18. Mandated Clients	M2:10-12	8,9	A6

* A quick reference to Materials and Assignments is listed below.

** A1a. and A1b., The Corey, et.al. Midterm and Final, together Literally cover every CACREP Standard of Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice (2.F.1.a-m). This Assignment will not be listed on each row of this Table. (Other materials are used to provide more in-depth considerations where Corey, *et.al.*, do not give fuller treatment.)

Quick Reference to Materials and Assignments

Materials

M1. Corey Textbook
M2. ACA Casebook
M3. Kocet & Herlihy Article
M4. Richardson Paper
M5. ACA Code of Ethics

Assignments

A1. Corey Mid-Term and Final Exams (30%)
A2. Informed Consent (10%)
A3. Licensure Law Digital Outline (10%)
A4. Codes of Ethics Assignment (20%)
A5. Professional/Ethical Identity Packet (20%)

Materials

M6. AMHCA Code of Ethics
M7. APA Code of Conduct
M8. AMHCA History
M9. ACA History
M10. Wilkinson, Smith, and Wimberly Article

Assignments

A6. Self-Reflection Exercises

Policies and Important Information

Written Work Format. All written work must conform to current American Psychological Association (APA) style (7th ed.) unless otherwise specified. If a student does not have a copy of the APA manual, one should be purchased, or students may use one of the many APA style websites available online (e.g.,

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.htm)

Assessment will include how well students represent their thoughts on paper, craftsmanship in writing, and organization of all written work.

MAC Program Disability Policy. If you have a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects your academic performance) and would like to receive academic accommodations, please inform your instructor prior to the start of this course. You must provide a letter from the Dean of Students that verifies your disabled status. The instructor and student will discuss the available accommodations for the course. If the student with a disability does not disclose that s/he has a disability, then the student is agreeing to take full responsibility for any related consequences that may occur.

Access to Research Database. RTS provides Jackson MAC students access to the Ebscohost Psychology & Behavioral Science Collection of full text journal articles. You can access this collection from computers in the library or from your home computer by following the link below and logging in with a username and password to be provided in class.

<http://search.ebscohost.com/>

Submission of work. All assignments should be submitted on the Canvas course webpage.

Late work. All assignments are due as scheduled regardless of attendance unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be deducted 1/3 letter grade for each late day.

Return of work. All work will be returned to students via Canvas. Additionally, if students would like additional feedback, they may set up time before or after class to meet with the professor.

Grading Scale.

A (97-100)	B- (86-87)	D+ (75-77)
A- (94-96)	C+ (83-85)	D (72-74)
B+ (91-93)	C (80-82)	D- (70-71)
B (88-90)	C- (78-79)	F (Below 70)

Attendance Policy. Class attendance is expected and required. Each hour of the intensive that is missed will deduct 3 points from the final grade. If serious illness or an emergency prevents a student from attending any class, please notify the instructor before the class begins. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain any materials handed out or presented during the missed class time from a classmate.

Class Participation. Students are expected to participate in all components of the class and will be evaluated on the quality and quantity of discussion. Each student is expected to read all of the assigned materials in advance for each class and have prepared written comments and questions for class discussion. Contributions should reflect knowledge of the reading assignments or other sources.

Rubrics

Rubric 1: Informed Consent Grading Rubric

Criteria	Points Possible	Course Objectives
Information included in Consent: The following areas are covered in the consent according to the instructions of the assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heading with name, agency • Introduction (Education, supervisor, etc) • Counseling Services/Theoretical Orientation • Confidentiality • Explanation of multiple relationships • Length of sessions • Fees/payment methods • Billing/Insurance reimbursement • Complaint Procedures • Signatures for consent 	30	CO2, CO9, CO10
Writing/Organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing is clear and concise, easy for clients to understand. • Consent is within page limits (2-2 ½ pages). • There are no spelling/grammar issues in the consent. 	10	
Specific to population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consent is specific to the population assigned (individual, group, or couples). • The consent covers the needed material for that population. 	10	
Total	50	

Rubric 2: Licensure Law Digital Outline

Criteria	Points Possible	Course Objectives
Content Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clinical Requirements for Licensure Academic Requirements for Licensure Requirements for Record Keeping Scope of Confidentiality Disciplinary Processes (what might lead to loss of licensure?) 	2 2 2 2 2	CO7, CO8
Total	10	

Rubric 3: Code of Ethics Presentation

Criteria	Points Possible	Course Objective
Content To Be (minimally) Covered In the Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly Name the Issue(s) (What is the code/ethic? What were your questions or areas of discomfort during initial exploration? Etc) Clearly Name the Answers (What did you find in the relevant literature? How have others addressed this issue? Etc) How This Process Shaped Your Ethical Understanding Compare and Contrast Various Ethics Codes Other Possible Areas to Address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When/Where This Issue Might Come Up in Counseling? Create a Case Study? 	8	CO2, CO6
Length and Referencing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations are to be 5-10 minutes in length Create a Reference Sheet (APA Style) to be given to classmates and professor. Reference sheet minimally includes citations of all content covered and must include at least 1 academic source (textbook or professional journal) 	2	
Total	10	

Course Objectives Related to MAC* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: CO5580 PROFESSIONAL, ETHICAL, AND LEGAL STUDIES

Professor: Matt Casada, Ph.D.

Campus: Orlando

Date: Spring 2024

MAC* Student Learning Outcomes <i>In order to measure the success of the MAC curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAC outcomes.</i>		Rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None 	Mini-Justification
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	Understands and applies the basic knowledge needed to be an effective counselor including: the history and philosophy of counseling, ethical standards of practice, personal career development, advocacy for clients, consultation & collaboration, and a Reformed, biblical and theological framework for counseling.	Strong	Explores laws and ethics codes related to professional counseling. Additionally, explores the development of a professional counselor identity.
Social & Cultural Diversity	Understands and demonstrates how living in a cultural/global society affects clients who are seeking counseling and clinical mental health services, as well as the effects of sin such as racism, discrimination, sexism, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client.	Moderate	Explores codes of ethics and best practices related to multicultural competence as well as role plays oriented around issues of broaching and values in counseling.
Human Growth & Development	Understands and applies knowledge of various theories of individual and family development, and factors affecting human development. To include biological, neurological, physiological, systemic, and environmental factors, addiction, and effects of crisis, disasters, and traumas.	Minimal	Introducing and applying developmental frameworks as well as ethics/legal issues related to working with diverse age ranges.
Career Development	Understands and applies theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making.	None	None
Counseling & Helping Relationships	Understands and applies theories and models of counseling, strategies for understanding and practicing consultation, and developing relevant counseling treatment and intervention plans.	Moderate	Numerous triadic role plays as a means of applying course material
Group Counseling & Group Work	Understands and applies theories and models of group counseling and group work, dynamics of the group process and development, and therapeutic factors that contribute to group effectiveness.	Minimal	Class discussion on the ethical issues related to confidentiality in group counseling.
Assessment & Testing	Understands and applies clinical knowledge effectively, including various models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses. To include diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments, and is sensitive to the complications of diagnosis and interpretation of formal and informal evaluation.	Moderate	Discussion and role play surrounding intake, informed consent, and safety planning.
Research & Program Evaluation	Demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate research through a biblical worldview and integrate it into counseling practice. Understands the process of program evaluation and its integration into the	Minimal	Students conduct personal research related to ethical codes and issues.

	practice of counseling and clinical mental health counseling.		
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Demonstrates the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling.	Strong	Case conceptualizations and role plays provide tangible application of material related to ethical and competent practice.
Integration (Biblical/Theological)	Knowledge of and integration of Reformed, biblical and theological concepts with counseling practices.	Moderate	Utilizing a Christian worldview and ethic as the foundation for ethical and competent counseling.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the triune God.	Minimal	Applying appropriate care for clients demonstrates a love for the triune God