



CO5910 Practicum I
2 Credit Hours

Tuesday 8am – 12:00pm
Spring 2026
Reformed Theological Seminary: Charlotte

Professor Information

Keith A. Evans, PhD
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TA/Assistant

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Practicum I focuses on the counselor, providing the student an opportunity to develop as a biblical counselor. The student grows in counseling self-awareness within the context of both understanding and practicing the process of biblical counseling so that he or she will become more effective in caring for the Lord's people.

The first segment of this course will focus on observing counseling. Live observation and observation videos from various sources will be used to give students exposure to the scope and texture of counseling interactions. The professor will lead class discussions on the observed counseling.

The second segment of the course will involve short role play sessions, where the professor (and other helpers) take on the role of the counselee, and the students take turns engaging in the counseling dynamics. These role plays will be based upon case studies and other preparatory material to help the student be ready for the in-class role play portion.

The final segment of the course will give students the ability to counsel one another in the classroom setting and receive feedback from the instructor and other observers. Students will be set up in groups, with the option to use real or fictitious scenarios and practice counseling those scenarios in the group settings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- For the student to apply biblical principles in order to engage in self-counsel.
- For the student to be able to observe and analyze the counseling of a variety of counselors and methods of counsel.
- For the student to have a hands-on experience practicing the basic skills of counseling including establishing and building rapport, offering hope, data gathering, note taking, discerning root heart problems, offering bible-saturated and gospel-centered instruction, and designing homework.
- For the student to have a sense of what it is like to be the counselee so that he/she can be a more understanding counselor.
- For the student to be prepared for Practicum II in which he/she will engage in actual real-world counseling.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSESSMENTS

This course is entirely electronic in its submitting of assignments. Each assignment will be uploaded to Canvas in the appropriate portal. If you are unfamiliar with this process, make sure you schedule a time in advance with the professor to learn how to use Canvas.

1. Attendance & Role Play

As a lab course, attendance is of the highest importance. Students are expected to arrive on time to every class meeting without fail. Every unexcused absence will reduce the student's overall grade. Absences that have not be discussed in advanced with the professor will not be excused besides that of a medical emergency. The professor reserves the right to decline to excuse absences, should the reason be of an insufficient weight.

Students will be participating in counseling role-plays, assuming the role of counselor, counselee, and observer throughout the semester. This will give students the ability to practice, give feedback to one another, and receive input on how to grow as a counselor.

2. Observation and Observation Reports

For each live observation outside of class, video observation, and in-class live counseling, students are to complete the Observer's Organizer Form and an Evaluation Form. The professor may request they be uploaded to Canvas for evaluation.

For live observation outside of class, the counseling offices offer cases to be observed on an "as-available" basis. You must sign up to observe a case at the beginning of the semester with the counseling offices if you have interest in observing live counseling. Students will observe Dr. Evans or others, depending upon availability.

3. Observation Log

Students are to keep a record of cases they have observed, including video observations.

4. Counsel & Report

Students are to engage in at least six “counseling encounters” with people in the context of your life and ministry during the semester and fill out the Counseling Encounter report. These are to be uploaded to Canvas.

5. Get Counseled

Students are to choose an issue in their own life for which they desire counsel. They are to meet at least three times for an hour each with a pastor, a biblical counselor, a professor, or a fellow student. The student will turn in a two-page reflection paper describing the benefit they received from the experience of being counseled.

6. Counseling Role Play Case Study and Preparations

Students will find a case study document on Canvas with roughly 14 different case studies. There are also 2 PDIs of fictitious counselees uploaded to Canvas. Please prepare an agenda for the first session of each case as well as the PDI case, for a total of 11 agendas. Bring those preparatory documents to class and be ready to engage in role play elements of those fictitious cases.

7. Personal Data Inventory

Students will fill out a PDI for a case in which you will be the counselee. This could be a personal issue for which you would like counsel, or you could choose to play the role of someone else who has a different problem. More will be discussed about this in class.

8. Reading

Books:

Scott, Stuart and Heath Lambert ed. *Counseling the Hard Cases*. B&H, 2015, 336 pgs.

Susie Orbach, *In Therapy: The Unfolding Story*. IPS, 2019, 304 pgs.

Jay Adams, *Insight and Creativity in Christian Counseling: A Study of the Usual and the Unique*. Institute for Nouthetic Studies, 2020, 170 pgs.

Articles:

1. “X-Ray Questions”, *JBC* 18.1, pages 2-9: David Powlison
2. “How to Counsel a Psychologized Counselee”, *JBC* 15.1, 2-7: David Powlison
3. “When NOT to Do Marriage Counseling”, *JBC* 27:1, 72-76: Winston Smith
4. “How to Disarm an Angry Person”, CCEF Blog Post, April 14, 2016: Ed Welch

9. Reading Summary and Report

Students are to turn in a two page-double spaced paper, for each book read—the articles do not require any reading summary or report. State the percentage read of each book according to the following guide: 1. Percentage of the book read, word-for-word; 2. Percentage of the book skimmed. Then for the paper itself, page one will consist of a summary of the salient points of the

book. Capture the thesis as well as the main points of the author's argument. Write it in such a way that if the author of the book read your summary, he could agree you understood what he was saying. Page two will simply be your personal interaction with the book—was it useful to you, is it applicable in your ministry, were there things you found helpful or troubling, etc. These 2-page reports will be due throughout the course at the appropriate reading deadlines, uploaded to Canvas.

The expectation is that students will read every word of these books to receive full reading credit. Students will be expected to come to class ready to discuss the contents of the book on the date the reading assignment is due.

10. Reflection Paper

Write a 2 to 3-page double spaced reflection paper in which you express what you learned about yourself and what you learned about counseling through this class. Main takeaways from the observations, role plays, or counseling experience—not from the readings. Highlight things you will take with you into your future counseling and ministry.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class indicated in the Course Schedule. Assignments not submitted at this time are considered late and are penalized 3% for the first day late, and 1% for each day late thereafter.

Extensions Policy for Assignments: In extenuating circumstances, a deadline extension of **up to one week** may be granted at the discretion of the professor. Requests for extensions of **more than one week** must be submitted to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Dean in consultation with the professor. Extensions are granted only for significant emergencies or unforeseen circumstances, and a grade penalty may be applied. *All extension requests must be made prior to the assignment deadline.* No retrospective extensions will be granted.

COURSE GRADING

Course grades are according to the following percentages.

Participation in classroom discussion	10%
Counseling role-plays	20%
Counseling encounters	15%
Reflection paper on being counseled	10%
Reflection paper on class	10%
Counseling preps	15%
Reading and Interaction Papers	20%

Grading Scale:

Standard RTS Grading Scale

Additional Details:

Special Needs

In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., recordings, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or test-taking needs) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course to make appropriate arrangements.

Disclaimer

During the course of the semester the professor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as deemed necessary to the professor because of events and circumstances that occur during the term.

Classroom Policies

1. All classroom policies at RTS Charlotte are expected to be followed.
2. Guidelines for papers (including reflections and exams) submitted in this course can be found as a separate document on Canvas. **Reading this document and following its instructions is essential for you to pass this course.**
3. Students are required to cite all sources consulted for a written assignment. Students who plagiarize or cheat in any other manner are guilty of academic misconduct and will be reported to the Dean of Students. This will result in disciplinary action up to and including failure of the course and academic dismissal.
4. Laptops are welcome in class for note taking only. Only word processing programs may be open during class; no browsers, email programs, social media feeds, or any other program is to be used. Please silence cell phones and do not text, Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, or whatever else desperately beckons for your attention during class.

Please also adhere to the following RTS internet usage protocol:

RTS Charlotte Classroom Technology Usage

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student's own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.

Schedule

*Please note that the course schedule is subject to change at the prerogative of the professor

Date	Topics	Assignments Due
02/03	Introduction to the course Video 1	
02/10	Video 2	Reading Due: All Articles
02/17	Video 3	Counseling Encounter 1
02/24	Video 4	
03/03	Video 5	Reading Due: <i>Insight and Creativity</i>
03/24	Preparation for Role Plays Role Play 1	Counseling Encounter 2 All case studies and agenda preps due
03/31	Role Play 2	Counseling Encounter 3
04/07	Role Play 3	Reading Due: <i>In Therapy</i> Students' PDI due for counseling groups
04/14	Counseling Groups 1	Counseling Encounter 4
04/21	Counseling Groups 2	
04/28	Counseling Groups 3	Counseling Encounter 5
05/05	Counseling Groups 4	<i>Being Counseled</i> reflection paper due
05/12	Counseling Groups 5	Counseling Encounter 6 Reading Due: <i>Counseling the Hard Cases</i>
05/14	Final Exams (no class)	Course Reflection Paper Due 05/14



Course Objectives Related to MACC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Practicum I
 Professor: Keith A. Evans
 Campus: Charlotte
 Date: Spring 2026

<u>MACC Student Learning Outcomes</u> <i>In order to measure the success of the MACC 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>	<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<u>COUNSELING KNOWLEDGE</u> Demonstrate knowledge of counseling theories and modern anthropology.	Moderate	Course emphasizes the application and practice of communicating counseling knowledge on an understandable level to counselees.
<u>COUNSELING SKILL</u> Ability to apply biblical truths and common-grace insights in a variety of counseling settings.	Strong	Students actively counsel and are evaluated based upon their counseling skill. Emphasis is placed upon growth as a counselor.
<u>SCRIPTURE</u> Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Strong	Scripture is essential to the counseling done by students in the classroom setting.
<u>REFORMED THEOLOGY</u> Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Moderate	Reformed theology is the framework through which counsel and care is understood and expressed.
<u>SANCTIFICATION</u> Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	This course functions as a laboratory class and an opportunity for students to be counseled on areas of personal concern. Personal sanctification ought to be expected through this experience.
<u>WINSOMELY REFORMED</u> Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos.	Moderate	Reformed theology is the framework through which counsel and care is understood and expressed. Counsel and feedback is to be winsomely delivered to their fellow classmates.