

PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY  
UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

## CO 5020 - Counseling Skills

Class Meetings will be held in SRH, Room 323  
Thursdays - 6:30pm to 9:00pm

Instructor: Mike Mariska, PhD, NCC, LCMHC

Cell Phone: 203-671-7667

Office Hours: Thursdays 5:30pm-6:30pm and by appt.

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to help students develop basic counseling skills. Through role-play, practice interviews, and tape reviews, students will have the opportunity to learn and practice basic counseling skills. The relationships among theory, case conceptualizations, and counseling interventions will be examined. Ethical and culturally-responsive practice will be emphasized

### KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL COURSE OUTCOMES

Students are expected from this course to be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate competency in basic counseling micro skills (professionalism and service)
- 2) Develop appropriate intervention plans (scholarship and action/application, leadership and advocacy)
- 3) Articulate counseling skills used and theoretical underpinnings that inform intervention strategies (professionalism and service)
- 4) Develop intervention strategies that take a holistic and developmentally-appropriate perspective (scholarship and action/application, leadership and advocacy)
- 5) Demonstrate an appreciation for diversity considerations in their work (global awareness and social responsibility, leadership and advocacy)

### REQUIRED RESOURCE: (used in place of a textbook)

**Theravue:** an online resource used for practicing and evaluation of counseling skills.

You will receive a link to sign up for an account via email before the class begins.

The cost is a one time fee of \$59. You will need a webcam & mic to record practice sessions.

### 2016 CACREP STANDARDS, METHODS OF DELIVERY, AND ASSESSMENT

CACREP Standard/Goal	Methods of Delivery	Assessment
2.F.5.d. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for establishing and maintaining in-person and technology-assisted relationships	Classes on Skills & Class on Telehealth Counseling	Theravue Skill Videos Journal Entries
2.F.5.f. counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process	Lecture on Invitational Skills	Theravue Skill Videos Journal Entries

2.F.5.g. essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills	Classes on Skills	Theravue Skill Videos
2.F.5.j. evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention	Classes on Skills	Theravue Skill Videos Journal Entries
5.C.2.b: etiology, nomenclature, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders	Classes on Skills	Theravue Skill Videos Journal Entries
5.C.3.b: techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues	Classes on Skills	Theravue Skill Videos Journal Entries
5.G.3.f: techniques of personal/social counseling in school settings	Classes on Skills	Theravue Skill Videos Journal Entries

## **PLYMOUTH STATE UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is the foundation of the pursuit of knowledge. All members of the academic community are expected to be dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in an honest, responsible, respectful, and ethical manner. Every violation of academic integrity is an affront to the academic community. Violations of academic integrity make fair evaluation impossible and cast doubt upon the seriousness with which students accept the responsibility of acquiring an education. Members of the academic community are expected to report all instances of those violations that come to their attention. Both faculty and administration consider it their duty, as guardians of academic standards and intellectual honesty, to enforce the policy by prosecuting all cases of violations of academic integrity to the fullest extent. Students are urged to consider that it is the toleration of violations of academic integrity, and not the reporting of it, that is dishonorable. Visit <https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/graduate-academic-policies/> for more information on University policies and procedures regarding academic integrity. In addition, please review APA guidelines on what constitutes plagiarism.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

<https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/>

Policy is listed under the “Academic Integrity” tab.

### **ADA Statement**

Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you should contact Campus Accessibility Services (CAS), <https://campus.plymouth.edu/accessibility-services/>, (603-535-3300) to determine whether you are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for

students who have registered with CAS. If you have authorized CAS to electronically deliver a Letter of Accommodations for this course, please communicate with your instructor to review your accommodations.

### **Inclement Weather**

Sign up for PSU alerts for notification of weather-related cancellations and provide your instructor with a phone number that is the most reliable way of contacting you in the event he cancels class on a night when PSU remains open. Class members regularly commute from a wide area of the state where weather conditions may vary significantly from those in Plymouth. Travelling in inclement weather is always at your discretion. It is your responsibility to initiate making up missed material if you miss a class due to weather.

### **Sensitive Material**

Material in this course, in some instances, may be sensitive or emotionally provocative. As you review the syllabus, or at any time during the course, please let the instructor know if you anticipate, or are having, a problem with any assignment or classroom activity. It can then be discussed how this assignment or activity is necessary for meeting course competencies and whether an alternative assignment or activity can be considered. Campus resources that may be helpful in dealing with your concerns can also be discussed.

## **Counselor Education and School Psychology Policies**

Plymouth State University's Counselor Education and School Psychology (CESP) Programs are charged with the task of preparing individuals to become professional counselors or school psychologists in a variety of settings and to assume positions of leadership in the field. In order to fulfill these responsibilities, faculty will evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. The PSU CESP programs attempt to establish a learning community where students can develop professionally. This is done by providing an environment in which students' rights and responsibilities are respected, and by respecting the dignity and worth of each student.

**Student Monitoring:** A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with education/training and client care related to requirements for self and others. For example, in order to ensure proper training and client care, counselors/school psychologists-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. These factors are evaluated based on academic performance and the ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, accept personal responsibility, be able to express feelings appropriately, and evidence professional judgment in decision making relative to issues and situations encountered in the program. See the student handbook for both the long and short versions of the student monitoring form.

**Student Responsibilities in Monitoring Peer Professional Competency:** As a CESP student, it is important to learn how to support your fellow classmates and future colleagues. Professional codes of ethics highlight the importance of protecting the profession and those it serves by recognizing unethical behavior, consulting with colleagues, and reporting to institutional hierarchies if necessary. If you are concerned about a classmate's ethical conduct, counseling competency, or psychological stability, you are encouraged to follow the policy in your program's student handbook to guide you in ethically dealing with these situations.

**Communications:** Prompt and professional communication between students and professors is important and valued in the CESP programs. To that end, it is your responsibility to regularly check your PSU email account. As stated in the student handbooks, all university communications will be to that address. We aspire to be a community that responds to each other in a prompt and respectful way. To that end, we ask that you respond to professor or department emails within two business days. Likewise, faculty will aspire to respond to your emails within two business days. Note, we understand that there are circumstances in which students and faculty may be unable to respond in a timely manner. During these periods, we will inform others when we will become available to respond.

**Computers and Cell Phones Use in the Classroom:** Computers and cell phones may be brought into the classroom but their use should be appropriate. Computers should be limited to academic class-related uses. Computer and cell phone use must be limited during in-class role-play activities. During speaker presentations, videos, and any student presentations please make sure you're engaged and focused on the person speaking to be respectful of your classmates. Finally, cell phones play an important role in emergency situations, but they should be kept on vibrate or silent mode and text messaging should be kept to a minimum.

**Late Assignments:** Consistent with graduate level expectations, all assignments are expected on their due dates. However, exceptions to this rule may be made due to circumstances beyond the control of students such as family emergencies, illness, injury, power outages, computer malfunctions, accidents and other situations. Because of these possibilities, students are strongly advised to complete their assignments in advance of the due date. Also, students should back up their work so that computer crashes will not delay assignments. Unless impossible, all requests for extensions for assignments must be made before the assignment is due. If an extension is granted, the assignment should be submitted no later than one week from the due date. In cases where the reason for the delay may require a longer time period to complete, the decision to allow a longer extension will be made on a case-by-case basis. Students may be asked to provide documentation to verify their request for an extension.

*If an assignment is handed in past the due date, the final grade for that assignment will have 10% of the grade deducted for each day it is late.*

**Canvas Assistance:** For assistance navigating Canvas, visit the online knowledge base at <https://td.unh.edu/TDClient/63/plymouth/KB/ArticleDet?ID=809&SIDs=2518>, or contact the Help Desk at (603) 535-2929, or get in-person help at the Help Desk in Lamson Library.

**Fair Grading Policy:** <https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/> Policy is listed under the "Fair Grading" tab.

**Writing:** APA formatting is required for all papers unless otherwise indicated. APA review materials are available on the course Canvas page. Page length requirements for papers do not include the title page and reference page. I will review any paper for APA formatting errors, content, or both before the due date if given enough time to do so. At least 3-4 days is requested, and feedback will be given on a first-come / first-served basis. The paper does not need to be complete for an APA review.

**Assignments will be accepted via Canvas upload or email only.** Accepted formats for papers are MS Word, PDF, OSX Pages, and Open/LibreOffice files. WordPerfect files and Text files are not acceptable. If you do not have a word processing program, I recommend LibreOffice, which is a free word processor (much like MS Word) that works on both PC and Mac. It can be downloaded at [www.libreoffice.org](http://www.libreoffice.org)

**Assignment File Names:** Please title the file name for each of your submitted writing assignments and recordings with your last name first, then the name of the assignment.

Examples for each assignment are as follows using my last name.

*Weekly Journal: Mariska Journal 1, Mariska Journal 2, etc.*

*Self-Evaluation: Mariska Self Evaluation*

### **STUDENT EVALUATION:**

This course is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. The assignments and their weighted point value are listed below, and will be graded like in a traditional course. A total score of at least 70 points is needed for a passing grade, however special circumstances such as a failing score on multiple Theravue recordings, failure to complete assignments, or ethical/professional concerns may result in a “Fail” grade and a requirement to repeat the course.

Attendance and Participation	20 points
Theravue Skill Recordings	45 points
Reflective Journal	20 points
Final Reflection Paper	15 points
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Total	100 points <b>(70 = Passing grade)</b>

## **ASSIGNMENTS:**

### **Attendance and Participation**

This is a skill-based course, and as such primarily involves experiential and hands-on learning to gain mastery in the basic counseling skills. Because of this, your attendance and participation is vital to your learning experience in this course. Missing a class is a very big deal for this course, and will impact your Attendance and Participation grade by 5 points per occurrence. If you need to miss a class due to emergency circumstances, please contact me ASAP to discuss making up the missed course content.

In addition, since it is not possible to make up missed class activities and practice, more than two missed classes will result in you being asked to repeat the course. Full participation in course activities and class discussions is also critical, and a lack of participation can also impact your grade. Your attendance and participation grade is not based on how “well” you do in class activities however – we often learn the most from our mistakes! If you attend every class, and participate in activities and discussions, you’ll get full credit.

### **Being a Client**

You will never be required to share any personal information while acting as a client for your fellow students during this class. Those who choose not to share personal information will often instead role-play a character from a work of fiction, or discuss a “made-up” issue of their own design. Many students, however, find that using their own, real-life experiences is easier and often beneficial to their learning process. If you choose to share personal information, please keep in mind that you are sharing it with a counseling trainee and not a professional counselor. Everyday frustrations, anxiety about being a counselor, navigating relationships, or other issues that you feel “safe” discussing are appropriate. Larger problems, such as clinical depression or anxiety, trauma, substance abuse, divorce, etc. are more suited for a licensed professional. Your student “counselor” and/or the professor of this course may note that an issue being discussed is better suited for a professional counselor, though ultimately it will be your choice to visit one.

### **Counseling Skills**

The basic counseling skills reviewed in this class are designed to help you establish a therapeutic relationship with your clients. They have been split up into three categories, and will be introduced in these groups as we progress through the semester.

#### **Invitational Skills**

Nonverbal Communication	Encouragers
Vocal Tone	Observation
Silence	

#### **Attending Skills**

Questions	Clarification
Paraphrasing and Summarizing	Reflecting Feelings

Normalizing

Goal Setting

### Influencing Skills

Immediacy

Reflecting Meaning and Values

Interpretation

Directives & Psychoeducation

Challenging

Reframing

Self-Disclosure

Homework

### **Theravue**

Theravue is an online resource that will be used throughout the course to evaluate your developing skills. While in Theravue, you'll view pre-recorded "client" vignettes and respond to them using the skills you've learned that week.

Each week, your Theravue recordings for the previous class's skills must be submitted before class begins. If you've missed a class, you're responsible for watching the recording of that class's lecture, and recording and submitting your responses for that week. I am available for appointments to discuss questions, and even to practice, but will not walk you through your response to a Theravue recording. Each Theravue Module is worth 3 points on your final grade.

A review of how to use Theravue to view the vignette and record your response will happen on the first day of class. You will also be sent a link that you can use to create and pay for your account. Please contact me with any questions or technical issues.

### **Feedback**

The skills in this class will be reviewed in class and demonstration of these skills will be required on a weekly basis via Theravue.

#### **Please note:**

- I am not looking for perfection! This class is about *starting to develop your skills*. If you knew what you were doing already, you wouldn't need this class! I am very mindful that skills development is a process, and I do grade accordingly. Primarily, I'm looking for you to grow in competence over time, and respond to feedback from myself and peers.
- **Please do not panic** about your demonstration of these skills and whether they're "good enough". We all develop our own style of counseling as we go, and this is the start of that process for you – I'm very mindful of this! If you have concerns about your grades, please feel free to bring them up to me. Remember: This is a pass-fail class, so achievement is not my focus in grading your work as much as mastery and intentionality of using the skills.
- Academic integrity in the context of this class will look different than what you are used to. Of course, I expect you to abide by Plymouth State University Policies, and this also extends to practicing these skills as naturally as possible in the Theravue videos.

Respond as you would “in the moment,” as if you were working with a real client. Do not collaborate with each other on Theravue responses – and only submit your own work.

### **Reflective Journal**

You are required to keep a reflective journal as you move through this course, submitting an entry each week as indicated on the calendar to the provided dropbox on Canvas. Each journal entry should be about 1-2 double-spaced pages in length, and **do not require APA formatting**. Each journal should focus mainly on (1) your counseling skill development and (2) your continuing self-care throughout the term. Other topics may be included as needed. Journals will be graded upon completion, not content. This assignment is worth 20 points on the final grade, and each journal entry is worth 2 points of that grade.

### **Self-Evaluation**

On the last day of class, you will submit a reflective self-evaluation paper of 4-5 pages. This paper is worth 20 points on your final grade. Basic APA formatting is required (no citations or references are needed though), and your paper should cover the following topics:

- Review your previous journal entries, and reflect on how your understanding of the skills, counseling itself, and yourself as a counselor has changed over the course of the term. Focus on concepts like confidence, accepting feedback, conceptualization, and personalization.
- Discuss the skill-based areas that you think are strengths for you - areas where you think you're doing well, and why. What do you see as your major challenge or “growth” areas moving forward? How will you plan to improve on these over the next year?
- Review your self-care throughout the term. What was successful, and what wasn't? How will you adjust your self-care as you move forward into your clinical or school experiences?

### **Simulated Client Experience**

At the end of the semester, you will have the opportunity to practice your new skills with a simulated client specially trained in PSU's undergraduate Theatre program. **This is an ungraded portion of the course.** The experience is here to give you a chance to practice with a realistic client, build your confidence in using skills, and get feedback from someone not trained as a counselor about their experience as your client. More information to come!



**COURSE CALANDER**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPICS</b>	<b>READINGS / ASSIGNMENTS</b>
Class 1 9/2/21	Course & Syllabus Review  Counselor Self-Care  Invitational Skills	Syllabus Review
Class 2 9/9/21	Phases of the Counseling Session  Questions and Clarification	<b>Journal 1 Due</b>
Class 3 9/16/21	Paraphrasing  Summarizing	<b>Journal 2 Due</b>
Class 4 9/23/21	Goal Setting	<b>Journal 3 Due</b>
Class 5 9/30/21	Reflecting Feelings  Normalizing	<b>Journal 4 Due</b>
Class 6 10/7/21	<b>Online Class!</b>  Telehealth Counseling Practice Meeting via Zoom	<b>Journal 5 Due</b>
Class 7 10/14/21	Influencing Skills Intro  Immediacy  Challenging	

Class 8 10/21/21	Reflecting Meaning and Values	<b>Journal 6 Due</b>
Class 9 10/28/21	Self-Disclosure Feedback	<b>Journal 7 Due</b>
Class 10 11/4/21	Interpretation Reframing	<b>Journal 8 Due</b>
11/11/21	<b>Veteran's Day – No Class</b>	<b>No Class</b>
Class 11 11/18/21	Directives and Homework	<b>Journal 9 Due</b>
11/25/21	<b>Thanksgiving – No Class</b>	<b>No Class</b>
Class 12 12/2/21	Psychoeducation Termination (Adjourning)	<b>Journal 10 Due</b>
Class 13 12/9/21	Simulated Client Experience	
Class 14 12/16/21	Simulated Client Experience	<b>Self Evaluation Paper Due</b>

## References

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