EDU 457: Counseling Theory and Practice I
University of Rochester
Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development
Department of Counseling and Human Development
Fall 2011
WELCOME!

Instructor:
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Class Meeting Times: Wed 4:50-7:30
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Course Description:
This course is the first semester of a two-semester, integrated approach to teaching counseling theories and practice. As such, this course will introduce you to the major theories of counseling, such as psychodynamic, humanistic, behavioral, cognitive, and systems perspectives. The historical development, philosophical foundations, and views of human nature for each theory will be addressed, as well as the counselor’s role in facilitating client change. This course has been developed to guide you in your awareness of, and competence in, the reflexive use of theory to inform practice and practice to advance theory, as well as to help you develop a critical perspective about the activity of theorizing as a professional endeavor within the counseling profession. You will also be introduced to various professional issues related to the field of counseling, such as professional organizations, licensure, counseling ethics, and multicultural competence and awareness. The course is also designed to develop your basic counseling skills. Class meetings will be partly didactic and theoretical, with emphasis on dialogue and discussion, and partly experiential, with emphasis on “doing”/practicing basic counseling skills. In small groups and dyads outside of class meeting times, you will practice various counseling skills, discuss and role play counseling and crisis intervention strategies, and present your own practice sessions for discussion and evaluation.

Course Objectives:
1. Overall, to inquire into, explore, and develop praxis – the translation of theory into practice – from as many different perspectives as possible, with the ultimate goal of commencing a systematic integration of the different theoretical approaches into your own approach to counseling. To this end, the AQAL model of Integral Psychology will be discussed throughout the semester as a conceptually orienting aid. Note: you are beginning a process that will likely never reach an end (at minimum, this process will take 10-12 years). The emphasis will be on developing your conceptualizing skills and capacities so that they inform your intervening and implementation of counseling skills. More specifically, the goals of this course are to help you:

2. To gain an understanding of and appreciation for the major counseling theories (which are all theories of personality, human behavior and change processes), including the historical development of each theory as well as its associated therapeutic goals and techniques (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 &CMHC-A.5).
3. To compare and contrast the different theoretical models – both historical and current -- of personality, human behavior, and human development on several dimensions pertaining to counseling and to evaluate the strengths and limitations of each model. This includes the ability to conceptualize the client’s presenting situation and the role that philosophical foundations, research, assessment, and the use of different intervention strategies play in each model. Such conceptualization of people and their struggles are intended to help you select appropriate counseling interventions.

4. To understand the theories and processes of effective counseling and wellness programs for individual students and groups of students (SC-C.1).

5. To critically examine the various theories in order to begin formulating your own theory of counseling, as well as to gain a deeper and broader understanding of yourself as an individual. This will involve your exploring and becoming more aware of your own nature and the significant personal, biological, cultural, and social events, influences, and factors that have contributed to your being the person you are, as well as what you can do to facilitate realizing your full (developmental) potentials. This will, in turn, better your ability to understand the developmental history of others/clients (including both nature/nurture and individual/societal components) and how, optimally, to help them with the issues, dynamics, and struggles with which they present.

6. To gain an understanding of counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes (IIG.5b).

7. To gain an understanding of how contexts – both cultural and systemic – affect individuals. For example, family systems, feminist, and integral theories, including their radically different approaches to helping, will be covered.

8. To develop basic interviewing and counseling skills, including assessing clients and their suffering, setting goals in counseling, practicing various counseling interventions, and assessing one’s own effectiveness as a counselor (IIG.5c).

9. To examine the legal, ethical and cultural issues related to the practice of school and clinical mental health counseling (IIG.1j, CMHC-A.2 & SC-A.2). Throughout the two semesters, you will be exposed to a variety of professional journals in counseling and closely related fields, in part through readings available through Blackboard.

10. To cultivate an appreciation for the ways that developmental, biological, cultural, and systemic/ecological factors interact and impact clients and the change process.

11. To demonstrate self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and the skills needed to relate to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms (SC-D.1).

12. To develop your writing, presenting, critical thinking, and self-evaluating skills.

**Pedagogical Methods:**
I will attempt to balance and integrate the following: mini-lecture; small group and class discussion/critical thinking; dyadic and small group application/practice of counseling skills; observation of, and critical analysis of, master counselors from various approaches. Overall, these different teaching methods are designed to provide you with a rationale for your own experiential learning and self-reflection. Instructor lectures are NOT the primary modality for learning in this course. Thus, you are expected to immerse yourself in the multiple opportunities for learning that facilitate change processes in counseling and to perceive the instructor primarily as guide/consultant.
**Required Texts**


**these texts are for both 457 & 460 (you will likely have to purchase one more text for EDU 460 in the Spring of 2009). Also, we will not read Mahoney (2003) until Spring 2009, so you need not buy that text now.**

**Attendance and Participation:**
The intensive nature of adult learning and graduate instructional methods necessitate your full and committed participation for the sake of your own learning as well as that of your fellow classmates. Because much of your learning will occur during classroom activities and discussions, attendance is mandatory. One excused absence is permissible but your grade will be reduced by ½ letter grade for each additional absence. Students should come to class having completed all assignments and be fully prepared to participate in discussions and activities. Although there will be a brief lecture during each class, the bulk of your time will be spent discussing course content with peers, viewing video demonstrations by experts, and practicing/role-playing counseling scenarios. *Actively participating* in class activities involves some level of personal disclosure. It is important that confidentiality regarding classroom activities be maintained. Due to the interactive nature of this course, it is crucial that students conduct themselves professionally during activities that involve challenging peers and constructively critiquing one another. Additionally, out of respect for other students, please make sure to *turn off cell phones, beepers, and pagers before entering class.*

**A note on confidentiality:**
Learning in this course is facilitated by working with material that is authentic to your own experience. To this end, students are likely to disclose personally meaningful thoughts, feelings, and events during the process of practice sessions geared toward your learning to offer professional counseling. Because this is a class situation, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Thus, you should exercise your judgment in choosing what to disclose in practice sessions. I am available to you if you are in doubt or conflicted about what to share. This being said, it is also the expectation of any pre-professional helping community that students will practice the professional behavior of maintaining each other’s confidentiality - both during and after this course. You should also practice obtaining informed consent in sessions held with peers. Breaches of confidentiality are a serious violation of ethical standards for counseling practice and will likely affect your successful completion of the course.

**Weekly Reflection Journals:**
These are not merely summaries of what you read for the class meeting. Rather, they should entail highlighting what you deem key points in the readings, followed by a *critical reflection upon the underlying assumptions and implications of those points.* These weekly journals are not required (I will not pick them up and they are not part of
your grade). However, they serve several important functions: to consolidate your learning; they provide excellent ideas, viewpoints or questions to share with the class to facilitate discussion and dialogue of important aspects of each week’s readings, and they make your Reflective Essays (see below) MUCH easier to write.

**Weekly Quizzes:**
I have learned from many years of teaching this course that unless I regularly quiz students over their reading assignments, many of them will not read them. This hurts not only the students that don’t read (students learns less from a lecture on X if they haven’t read about X than if they had read X), it also hinders the quality of discussion that week, which has a negative impact on everyone in the classroom. Thus, a short (10 item) multiple-choice quiz – which covers the reading material for that evening -- will be given nightly at the beginning of class. Make-ups will not be given to those who arrive too late to finish it before we begin grading it (approximately 10 minutes after I hand it out). You can drop your lowest scores such that only your 10 highest quizzes are counted toward your grade.

**Reflective Essays:**
For each part of the course, you will turn in a 3-5 page essay in which you critically reflect upon your learning. At the end of the Spring semester, you will complete a Final Paper that explores your current-yet-developing theoretical approach to counseling. These reflective essays represent your evolving process of exploring the different approaches to conceptualizing human nature and how that is related to ameliorating clients’ suffering and/or behavioral problems.

**Midterm and Final Exam:**
It is important that students demonstrate general knowledge of key concepts and terminology for each theory covered in the course. One way this will be assessed is by multiple-choice exams - the format used by licensing and credentialing boards. Toward the end of EDU 460 (Theory and Practice II), a 100-item, M/C exam of highly similar content (many of the questions will be the same) will be given to help you assess how your current knowledge of theories will enable you to score on exams such as the NBCC and NY LMHC exams.

**Counseling Skills Video and Critique:**
Throughout the semester, you will practice various counseling skills outside of class meetings (these practice sessions are ESSENTIAL to your learning in this course). You will tape as many of these practice sessions as is feasible. I also strongly encourage you to take notes and/or journal after each practice session; this will not only help you monitor your progress and process, it will also help you discern patterns and themes in your “client.” You will pick the session that represents the best demonstration of your counseling skills and analyze/critique your counseling skills. More detailed instructions for this assignment will be given early in the semester. In small groups, I, or a doctoral student, will give you feedback on your sessions at least 2-3 times (this applies for next semester as well). If you are not meeting satisfactory standards, I will meet with you one-to-one for more in-depth supervision of your basic counseling skills [this will involve our watching and analyzing your videotaped session(s)].
Grading:
Grades will be given in accordance with the guidelines for graduate study as outlined in the “Graduate Studies Official Bulletin.” This course is taught on a pass/fail basis, with 70% or higher required to pass. Grading weight will be calculated as follows:
- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Weekly Quizzes: 20%
- (3) Reflective essays: 20%
- Midterm exam: 10%
- Counseling Skills Video & Critique: 30%
- Final exam: 10%

In all cases, page lengths refer to double-spaced, 12 font, with 1” margins.

Students may receive a grade of “Incomplete” (I) only by arrangement with the instructor. Failure to make such arrangements will lead to a grade being assigned on the basis of the work completed by the student. Once assigned, such a grade cannot be changed. Work for courses with grades of “Incomplete” must be completed no later than one year after the course concludes, although instructors may require that work be submitted sooner. If the work is not completed within the designated time, the instructor will grade the student on the basis on the work completed at that time, and this grade will be permanent. Extensions will be granted only for documented cases of illness or disability.

Classroom Environment:
Aspects of class discussions may be difficult or challenging. We share, as a classroom community, the task of negotiating the dual priorities of authentic free speech and active regard for all others. Given the nature of our discussions, we need to have these discussions in a safe and supportive environment. It is important that we listen to each other about how our words and actions are affecting one another and that we talk about a class moment in which something may feel hurtful. Therefore, racial, sexual, gender, or abled slurs and personal attacks on other’s ideas will not be permitted. It is appropriate, even expected, for you to disagree with and critique the ideas of me and other students, but you should focus on the ideas, not the person who said them. We will negotiate other guidelines about classroom discussions throughout the course.

Accommodations:
Students requiring special accommodations due to a disability should contact the instructor as soon as possible. It is important that students requiring special needs contact the Office of University Disability Resources, which is the department responsible for maintaining the Universities compliance with regulations under Section V of the Rehabilitation Act.

Tentative Course Calendar

Part 1: Foundational issues in counseling theory and practice

Aug 31: Orientation to course; Syllabus; My approach to teaching & learning
  - Introductions
  - What is counseling?
  - What are theories?
Sept 7: **Role of Theory; Praxis (the joining of theory and practice)**
- Fall, Holden, Marquis ch 1
- Yalom - Introduction and ch 12
- Prochaska & Norcross – Defining and comparing the psychotherapies: An integrative framework (Bb)
- Polkinghorne (1999) – Traditional research and psychotherapy practice (Bb)
- Recommended reading: Atwood & Stolorow – Personality theory and subjectivity (Bb)

14: **The helping profession and the moral domain; is counseling a health care profession? What about “empirically-supported treatments” and “best practices”**?
- Cormier & Hackney ch 1
- Marquis (in process): Psychopathology, Suffering, and the Moral Domain (Bb) (read the first 11 pages AND the conclusion)
- Hansen (2007) Should Counseling be Considered a Health Care Profession? (Bb)
- Marquis & Douthit (2006) (Bb)
- Recommended reading: Van Hesteren & Ivey (1990) (Bb)

21: **The personhood of the counselor – “Counselor – Know Thyself”; Ethical issues in counseling; multicultural factors (IIG.1j, IIG.5b, CMHC-A.2, SC-A.2 & SC-D.1)**
- Corey ch 2 & 3 The counselor: Person and professional; Ethical issues in counseling practice (Bb)
- Yalom ch 3-5, 63-64
- Yalom “Fat Lady” (Bb)

28: **Person-Centered Counseling and the helping relationship (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)**
- Fall, Holden, Marquis ch 6
- Yalom ch 1
- Cormier & Hackney ch 2
- Practice the 3 core conditions
- Video: Three Approaches to Psychotherapy (Rogers)
- I will provide you with materials for the Counseling Skills Video and Critique
- **Tape 1 is due**

Oct. 5: **Person-Centered Counseling, attending skills, and building the helping relationship (IIG.3b, IIG.3f & IIG.5c, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)**
- Cormier & Hackney ch 3, 4
- Yalom ch 37-40
- (maybe) Carl Rogers and the Person-Centered Approach (Kirschenbaum) RC481 .K578 2003
Practice attending skills, 3 core conditions, and recognizing communication patterns

Part 2: The behavioral & cognitive-behavioral tradition, including the “third wave”

12: Behavioral Counseling and skills of assessment and diagnosis (IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)
- Fall, Holden, Marquis ch 8
- Yalom ch 2, 62, 69-73
- Reflective essays for Part 1 are due

28: Cognitive counseling and skills of exploration (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)
- Fall, Holden, Marquis ch 9
- Yalom ch 76
- Video: Cognitive therapy with Aaron Beck
- Tape 2 is due

26: Mid-term Exam (1st ½ of class), then Reality therapy; facilitating action and the importance of how we word our comments to clients
- Fall, Holden, Marquis ch11
- Cormier & Hackney ch 8
- Wachtel (1980) (Bb)
- Video: Reality therapy with Wubbolding
- Midterm Exam

Nov. 2: Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)
- Butler: Revolution on the Horizon (Bb)
- Kabat-Zinn: Mindfulness Based Interventions (Bb)
- Cormier & Hackney ch 6

9. Multimodal therapy and ACT; managing the counseling session (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)
- Lazarus - Multimodal therapy (Bb)
- Hayes (2004b) Acceptance and commitment therapy and the new behavior therapies (Bb)
- Cormier & Hackney ch 5
- Yalom ch 53-54, 56

Part 3: A small taste of the psychoanalytic tradition

16. Classical Psychoanalysis; Freud was NOT always wrong! (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)
- Fall, Holden, Marquis ch 2
• Yalom ch 74, 75, 77-83
• Reflective essays for Part 2 are due
• Tape 3 is due

23. Thanksgiving holiday – NO CLASS

30: Adlerian Counseling (phenomenology, cognition, existentialism, constructivism and optimism – all in one!); Self Psychology and empathic attunement (IIG.3b, IIG.3f, IIG.5d, SC-C.1 & CMHC-A.5)
• Fall, Holden, Marquis ch 4 and ch 3
• Yalom ch 59, 6-9, 20
• Counseling Skills Video and Critique is due

Dec. 7: Final Exam; Consolidating and saying good-bye until next semester
• Final Exam
• Reflective essays for Part 3 are due
• Course Evaluations

HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!!!

This may seem antithetical to the last statement above, but please read chapters 2 & 10 from Mahoney (2003) for our first meeting next semester. Thank you. You can buy Mahoney’s Constructive Psychotherapy via the web or at most bookstores for less than most university bookstores.

***The professor reserves the right to modify these guidelines in order to promote optimal learning opportunities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CACREP Standard</th>
<th>Learning Objective</th>
<th>Observable Outcome</th>
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</table>
| SC-C.1. knows the theories and processes of effective counseling and wellness programs for individual students and groups of students | (EDU 457: Objective 4) To understand the theories and processes of effective counseling and wellness programs for individual students and groups of students  
(EDU 457/460: Objective 2) To gain an understanding of and appreciation for the major counseling theories (which are all theories of personality, human behavior and change processes), including the historical development of each theory as well as its associated therapeutic goals and techniques | Assessed via both exam questions and the video critique assignment                |
| SC-D.1. demonstrates self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and the skills needed to relate to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms | (EDU 457: Objective 11) To demonstrate self-awareness, sensitivity to others, and the skills needed to relate to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms  
(EDU 460: Objective 15) To gain an understanding of self and others -- and ability to eliminate or lessen -- biases, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination | Tape supervisors will complete a rubric for each student on these qualities and skills |
**Reflective Essay Rubric**

In your reflective essays, you should demonstrate the ability to:

- Ask and ponder relevant and meaningful questions
- Follow a course of thinking, hopefully leading to some increase in awareness or knowledge – both theoretical and practical
- Demonstrate thinking that goes beyond the surface of issues or problems
- Make connections between what is discussed in class, readings, life experiences, and practice sessions in class
- Demonstrate graduate-level writing which is focused, well-organized and uses standard English conventions

\[n/o = \text{Not Observable} \quad 1 = \text{Insufficient} \quad 2 = \text{Emergent/needs improvement} \quad 3 = \text{Basic proficiency} \quad 4 = \text{Outstanding}\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Unacceptable/Insufficient (1)</th>
<th>Needs improvement (2)</th>
<th>Basic proficiency (3)</th>
<th>Target proficiency (4)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflective thinking n/o 1 2 3 4</td>
<td>Does not reflective thinking</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a narrow understanding of the topic discussed. Student makes conclusions without justification or exploration of multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a basic understanding of the topic discussed. Student is able to identify, and raise questions about concepts she does not fully understand. Student is able to justify his opinions and consider alternative perspectives.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates a deep understanding of the topic discussed. Student is able to identify, and raise questions about concepts he does not full understand and draws upon course readings and class discussions to propose answers. Student is able to reflect upon her own process of thinking and learning.</td>
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<td>Connections to readings, coursework and experiences n/o 1 2 3 4</td>
<td>Reflections are irrelevant to topics discussed in the course. No connection is made to class readings, activities, or presentations.</td>
<td>Student makes some connection to coursework or experiences, but is unable to apply them to counseling/learning situations.</td>
<td>Student makes basic connections to coursework and experiences, and is able to apply them to counseling/learning situations.</td>
<td>Student draws interesting connections to coursework and experiences, and provides specific examples of how they have applied them to counseling/learning situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical relevance n/o 1 2 3 4</td>
<td>Reflections are not related to the purpose of the journal.</td>
<td>Reflections are related to the purpose of the journal, but include extraneous, unrelated information.</td>
<td>Reflections are related to the purpose of the journal and include supporting and relevant content.</td>
<td>Reflections reflect and in-depth understanding of the purpose of the journal, and the student draws connections between experiences and relevant theory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity of expression n/o 1 2 3 4</td>
<td>Reflections are poorly written and difficult to comprehend. Writing is not focused and errors in English language conventions distract from the meaning of the text.</td>
<td>Reflections barely reflect graduate-level writing and many are not logically organized. The topic of the writing is seldom clearly identified and there are numerous errors in usage and English conventions which distract from the meaning of the text.</td>
<td>Reflections reflect graduate-level writing and are logically organized. The topic of the writing is identified, but loosely focused. There are some errors in usage and English conventions, but they do not distract from the meaning of the text.</td>
<td>Reflections are well-written and organized. The topic of the writing is clearly identified and focused throughout the entry. There are very few or no errors in usage or English conventions.</td>
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COUNSELING SKILLS VIDEO CRITIQUE RUBRIC (SC-C.1 & SC-D.1)

STUDENT NAME_____________________________________________________________

n/o = Not Observable  1 = Insufficient  2 = Emergent/needs improvement  3 = Basic proficiency  4 = Outstanding

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Responses to scaffolding questions

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Evidence of critical reflection, including an awareness of one’s own strengths and areas for improvement (SC-D.1)

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Demonstrates an understanding of how theoretical conceptualization relates to the application of concrete counseling skills and interventions (SC-C.1)

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Generates questions for further reflection and/or discussion

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Writing follows standard conventions and is clear to the reader

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Demonstrates basic counseling skills (overall evaluation)

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Listens attentively and empathically to both content and affect; demonstrates the skills needed to related to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms; and communicates such (SC-D.1)

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Is genuine/authentic with the “client”

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Expresses warmth and care to the “client”

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Is able to reflect feelings and does so frequently

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Uses interpersonal strengths appropriately, including humor and self-disclosure

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Is able to tolerate and deepen the exploration of unpleasant affective expressions of the “client”

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Provides support to the “client” when appropriate

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Challenges the “client” when appropriate

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Is able to identify and address cognitive components of client issues

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Is able to identify and address affective components of client issues

n/o  1  2  3  4 - Is able to identify and address behavioral components of client issues
My Teaching Manifesto: A Declaration of Interdependence

When I reflect upon my life and contemplate the people who have most influenced me, I am struck by how many of them have been my teachers. I truly consider teaching to be a sacred profession – one with great privilege and, therefore, great responsibility. I feel fortunate to be an educator, and I will strive to bring my enthusiasm and passion for learning and inquiry into each lecture, class discussion, and dialogue with students. My goals are to guide, to inspire, and to be present in a way that communicates my respect for the process of inquiry, the role of community and dialogue in the learning process, and the importance of maintaining a humble sense of awe and wonder at the entire venture. To this end, I want to make my perspectives on teaching and learning explicit, so that we may discuss them and you may help me remain accountable to my intentions and commitments as a teacher. What I teach is powerfully influenced by my own continual learning and I attempt to learn from my students each time that I teach them.

My philosophy of teaching is fundamentally a perspective on learning and development - and all learning and development require a journey beyond that which is comfortably known or assumed. If the journey goes too far or proceeds too quickly, the learner may become lost and may retreat or become discouraged by the process. If the journey is too small or too slow, the learner may become bored or disengaged from the quest. When the journey affords an optimal dose of “developmental frustration” – the appropriate balance of what can be assimilated and what must be accommodated – people can explore the edges and horizons of new lessons and, hopefully, integrate them in a manner that enriches and expands their conceptual base camp. I believe that, optimally, this process continues endlessly, helping us lead actively-engaged, dynamic and ever-developing lives.

I will strive to create a community of inquiry in which all members, including myself, recognize the intersubjectivity between themselves, as well as the interdependence of teaching and learning. Thus, I encourage all of us to continually re-examine our embeddedness within various contexts, hopefully creating a space in which, and from which, we may shed more light upon our tacit and overly-conservative commitments to keep our thinking and understanding at its present level and order.

I hope to intentionally foster a feeling of safety and a willingness to take risks, which depends, in part, upon our capacities to respect differences of all kinds. Learning always involves novelty and expansion. Thus, we must be willing to renounce our grasping to our old ordering processes, even though they offer security by reinforcing the illusion that we “have the answers.” Practicing this, I hope to continually develop my pedagogical abilities such that I do not teach simply as a dispenser of information or “beacon of knowledge.” Rather, I desire to explore transformational learning experiments from first-, second-, and third-person perspectives and methodologies.

I hope to genuinely honor as many different views as possible, exploring their strengths as well as their limitations. I will strive to model openness and receptivity to critical feedback - especially regarding my assumptions and commitment to Integral Studies and other theoretical and practical disciplines to which I subscribe. Consonant with my commitment to integral/pluralistic inquiry, I aspire to honor body, mind, and spirit as they manifest in self, culture, and nature. I hope to communicate this intention with a variety of exercises and practices for first-, second-, and third-person experiences.
I expect all of us to give and receive feedback – both positive and constructive/critical – throughout the semester. This class is designed not only for you to learn specific content, but also to further your critical thinking skills. Thus, I will challenge you in class, but I will challenge your intellectual views and practical interventions – not you personally. As such, I will ask you to support or justify your views and practices. I hope that both my communicative skills and your attitude toward learning allow you to not receive or perceive my challenges as personal. I have provided you with my intentions so that you may give me feedback as to how I am living up to my goals. In return, I hope that you make commitments of your own regarding your processes of inquiry and learning. Perhaps the following can serve as a guide for your own intentional commitments:

I hope that our experience together will be a catalyst for your own personal development. Such development always requires some discomfort and frustration. Thus, I am asking that you not run away from material or challenges that do not “fit” with your worldview. Whenever something strikes you intensely, I encourage you to reflect upon your reactions to it, as well as the material itself, rather than quickly discounting it. Avoiding the frustrating aspects of learning is, truly, an abortion of our own development. Instead of being preoccupied with “truth” and the “answers,” I want all of us to become much more interested in the process of continual inquiry – the art and science of asking, considering, and pondering important and relevant questions. Rather than settle for premature claims to truth, let us quest together, wary of overly simplistic answers and thinking. Together, we can discover more inclusive, encompassing, and compassionate ways of being, both within ourselves, and with one another.

I feel privileged to be a teacher of yours and I hope that our work together will communicate both the excitement and humility with which I approach this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Andre Marquis, Ph.D.