Adler Graduate School
1550 East 78th Street
Richfield, MN 55423

Course Syllabus

AGS Course 521
Values, Ethics & Legalities

1. **Course Designation**

1.1 Adler Graduate School (AGS) – Master of Arts
1.2 Course # 521
1.3 Values, Ethics and Legalities
1.4 Three (3) credits
1.5 Prerequisites: None

2. **Course Description**

This course provides an overview of the laws, ethics affecting the professional practice of Marriage & Family Therapy, Professional Counseling, School Counseling, and Art Therapy.

Students will be provided with opportunities to examine dilemmas and apply ethical principles through lecture, discussion, audio-visual cases, and written assignments. This integrative approach suggests that effective clinical and counseling behavior depends as much on practice in managing professional standards as on practice with various intervention strategies and techniques. Because much ethical decision-making occurs in the “grey area” of practice this course also offers an opportunity to develop complementary aspirational ethics and a systematic strategy for making complicated ethical decisions.

Professional maturation based on an understanding of both legalistic and aspirational ethics, combined with an awareness of one’s own personal values and selfhood can result in an increasingly stable and consolidated professional identity that will be unique but consistent in its ethical application. Without a doubt, it is incumbent upon each of us to engage in this integrative growth process if we are to responsibly accept the clinical challenges presented to us as licensed mental health professionals.

**NOTE TO SCHOOL COUNSELORS:** This course will combine all students for the first 6 units. After unit 6, school counselors will meet separately for units 7, 8, and 9 with a school counseling instructor.
3. **Texts, Materials and Resources**

3.1 Required texts for all students:


Burns, John (Trans.) (1989). Individual Psychology as Applied Ethics. *Alfred Adler Internet Homepage Berlin*. Retrieved from [http://home.arcor.de/g.mackenthun/ip/en/ethik_e.htm](http://home.arcor.de/g.mackenthun/ip/en/ethik_e.htm) *(This article is included in the course manual).*

**Required text for Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Students Only:**


**Required for Licensed Professional Counseling Students Only:**


**Required for Licensed School Counseling Students Only:**


**Recommended Readings only for School Counseling Students from the Text Above:**

**Text format:**

- Introduction to each chapter’s subject
- Summary of the ethical and legal implications of the topic
- Sections of the ACA and ASCA codes of ethics that relate to the topic are identified and discussed
- Related ASCA position statements are summarized
- All articles contained within the chapter are summarized and discussed.

**Suggestions for risk management (xiv):**

1. Always try to do what is best for your clients; keep their welfare in mind.
2. Know the ethical standards of ACA and ASCA and consult those documents when dilemmas arise.
3. Consult with other school counselors when making difficult practice decisions that might be considered ethical in nature.
4. Request legal advice from administrators when dealing with problems or issues that have legal dimensions.
5. Purchase and maintain your own personal professional liability insurance policy that covers your activities as a school counselor.

**Overview:**

- Ethics are ideal behaviors. Law is the minimal, acceptable behavior society will tolerate.
- Seldom do absolute answers exist for ethical and legal questions. Every situation is different.

Test to determine if a counselor has behaved legally: “What would a similarly educated, reasonable school counselor in this locality have done in a similar situation?”

Consulting with two or more colleagues and following the consensus is evidence of meeting this test.

Make sure to document the consultations and the exchanges that took place.

When legal issues arise, ask the principal for legal advice. Once advised by the principal, the counselor must follow the advice (unless it is either illegal or clearly unethical.)

(Students on dual-licensure tracks will read both required texts above for each chosen license)

3.2 Optional Text:


4. **Learning Outcomes:**

4.1 Understand and distinguish legalistic and aspirational ethical standards; 1a
4.2 Understand and apply a model for ethical decision-making; 2f, 5b
4.3 Understand a broad continuum of professional ethical issues and obligations; 1g, 2d, 5h
4.4 Understand the application of ethical standards in the context of ambiguous situations; 5b, 9d
4.5 Understand legal and aspirational ethics related to licensure standards; 1b, 1c, 1d, 1g, 9d
4.6 Understand multicultural and diversity themes associated with the application of ethical standards; 2b, 2d, 5a
4.7 Understand legal and ethical standards concerning counseling and consultation utilizing online and other technological media; 5a, 5g, 9d
4.8 Understand legal and ethical standards as applied to counseling modalities, supervision, and consultation; 1b, 2b, 5a, 6g, 9d
4.9 Understand legal and ethical standards related to diagnosis, testing, assessment, and research; 1b, 3e, 7f, 7g, 7i, 8a, 9d
4.10 Understand the ethics of professional advocacy for the profession and social justice; 1c, 1e, 1f, 2d

5. **Course Outline and Reading Assignments:**

5.1 – **Unit 1**

1) Administration (grades, assignments, attendance, lectures, papers)
2) Introductions and personal goals for course
3) Psychotherapy and Moral Responsibility (Doherty text)
4) Hippocratic Oath and Oath of Affirmation
5) Seven Moral Principles of ethical decision-making
6) Overview of ethics: legal and aspirational
7) Decision-making models and styles
8) Overview of professional codes of ethics

**Reading Assignments:** Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapter 1; Doherty: Chapter 1
5.2 – Unit 2

1) Commitment (Doherty text)
2) Ethics and the counselor as a therapeutic tool
3) Self-awareness (motives, values, temperament, attachment style)
4) Transference and Counter-transference
5) Personal counseling and counselor impairment
6) Counselor neutrality
7) Spirituality
8) End-of-Life decisions

**Reading Assignment:** Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapters 2 & 3; Doherty: Chapter 2

**Website:** (Optional) [www.advisorteam.com](http://www.advisorteam.com) (complete the Kiersey Temperament Sorter II)

**Website:** [http://www.web-research-design.net/cgi-bin/crq/crq.pl](http://www.web-research-design.net/cgi-bin/crq/crq.pl) (complete Attachment Style)

5.3 – Unit 3

1) Justice (Doherty text)
2) Malpractice-legal and ethical dimensions
3) Informed Consent-legal and ethical dimensions
4) Records, documentation, information management-legal and ethical dimensions
5) Online counseling, tele-health, and technology-ethical and legal concerns
6) Regulation of practice and licensing-state laws/professional associations
7) Professional competence and scope of practice-LMFT, LPCC, LSC, ATR

**Reading Assignment:** Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapters 5 & 8; Doherty: Chapter 3

**Locate and review your board website:** (LMFT) [www.bmft.state.mn.us](http://www.bmft.state.mn.us); (LPC/LPCC) [www.bbht.state.mn.us](http://www.bbht.state.mn.us); (LSC) [http://education.state.mn.us](http://education.state.mn.us); (ATR) [www.atcb.org](http://www.atcb.org)

5.4 – Unit 4

1) Truthfulness (Doherty text)
2) Confidentiality and Privileged Communication
3) Counseling, technology and HIPPA
4) Ethical issues in professional writing and publishing
5) Tarasoff Decision, Duty to Warn, Duty to Protect & Dangerousness
6) Ethics, Objectivity and Managed Care
7) Ethics in diagnosis, testing, assessment, and research
8) Reporting an impaired professional
9) Suicidal Clients
10) AIDS related issues

**Reading Assignment:** Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapters 6 & 10; Doherty: Chapter 4
5.5 – Unit 5
1) Community (Doherty text)
2) Ethics in multiculturalism and cross-cultural counseling
3) Cultural empathy, encapsulation, counter-transference
4) Ethics of Social Interest: multiculturalism.
5) Types of diversity and ethical practice
6) Cultural influences, assumptions, and biases of counselors
7) Ethics, Self-disclosure and cultural norms

Reading Assignments: Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapter 4; Doherty: Chapter 5

5.6 – Unit 6 (Last unit for school counselors who transition to school counseling instructor)
1) Caring (Doherty text)
2) Ethical and legal issues in clinical supervision
3) Ethical and legal issues in consultation
4) Collaborating with other professionals
5) Community counseling and multicultural settings
6) Counselors as change agents and community advocates
7) Case management
8) In-class practice exam

Reading Assignments: Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapter 9 & 13; Doherty: Chapter 6

5.7 – Unit 7
1) Courage (Doherty text)
2) Dual and multiple relationships in counseling
3) Multiple relationships in rural communities
4) Sexual attraction and boundary issues in counseling
5) Bartering and gifts
6) Couples and family counseling: confidentiality and informed consent
7) Coordinating care and referrals with other professionals
8) Professional Associations and Participation

Reading Assignments: Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapters 7 & 11; Doherty: Chapter: 7

5.8 – Unit 8
1) Prudence (Doherty text)
2) Ethics in the training and competence of group workers
3) Screening clients for group work
4) Distinguishing types of groups and matching clients
5) Confidentiality in group counseling
6) Use and abuse of group counseling techniques
7) Issues in termination of group counseling
8) ACA for specialists in group work
**Reading Assignments:** Corey, Corey & Callanan: Chapter 12; Doherty Chapter 8

**Prepare** a 3-minute informal description of your selected SPT paper topic for the last class, **Prepare** to share in the last class meeting two ethical strength areas and two ethical growth areas, and your plan for ongoing ethical maturation and competence.

**5.9 – Unit 9**

1) Final Exam
2) SPT: present an informal 3- minute description of your topic or get help choosing one.
3) Identify two ethical strengths and two ethical growth areas: how will you keep developing?
4) Course evaluations by students.

6. **Special Project Time**

Special Project Time (SPT) allows students the opportunity to integrate the course concepts. SPT is meant to be a self-contained 30-hour assignment. SPT generally focuses on either: (1) a research paper on a selected topic in ethics, (2) an ethical review of a movie, television episode, or novel which is **clearly related to a mental health topic or situation** or, (3) an art project and a 5-page paper which integrates the art work with the course material.

SPT experiences may be constructed in such a way that they pertain to students’ unique degree plans. For example, LMFT, LPCC, LSC, or AT-R students may construct a project/paper unique to their chosen disciplines. This is done in consultation with the course instructor.

7. **Writing Guidelines including APA Format.**


1) **All papers must be written according to the APA Style Manual.**
2) Papers may be written in the first person (using “I”) due to personal nature of the assignment.
3) **Do not submit papers by email.**
4) Do not exceed the page limit.
5) Staple both papers together and clearly label which paper it is (personal code or SPT).
6) No binders, folders, clips, or covers.
7) Pencil student number on the lower right corner of cover page, plus your course section.
8) The cover page and references page count toward your total number of pages.
9) Mail papers to my home address or place them in my mailbox at AGS.
10) Papers may be mailed the day they are due.
8. **Assessment/Evaluation Procedures:**

6.1 Lectures  
6.2 Reading response groups  
6.3 Audio-Visual resources  
6.5 Papers/Projects  
6.6 Final Exam

1) **MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMS** (Combined = 15% of final grade)

The mid-term and final exams will be completed as a class. The exams are focused on the Corey text only. The school counseling students will take the same final exam in the school counseling ethics class to which you transfer after Unit 6.

2) **PERSONAL CODE OF ETHICS OUTLINE** (25% of final grade)

Read the code of ethics pertaining to your future professional discipline and prepare a 6-page personal ethical code with reference to at least five topics listed below. Review what the ethical code for your profession requires, any related state law, and then write about what it means to you, and how you will carry it out in practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiculturalism</th>
<th>Professional relationships</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td>Assessment techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>Research with human participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Duty to Warn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public statements</td>
<td>Multiple and Dual Relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>Boundary issues with clients</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welfare of clients</td>
<td>Informed Consent</td>
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3) **SPECIAL PROJECT TIME PAPER** (60% of final grade)

*(NOTE: THE SCHOOL COUNSELING SPECIAL PROJECT TIME PAPER WILL BE GRADED BY YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELING ETHICS INSTRUCTOR WHO WILL ALSO SIGN YOUR LOG.)*

All students will devote 30 hours to their SPT component (10-12) pages including title page and references). Keep a log of your hours indicating the time spent and on what activity related to your special project. Submit the original log with your finished project to me or your school counseling instructor *(first make and keep a photocopy)*. Your time log will be signed and returned to you with your final project. You will want to keep the time log and this syllabus for future reference should you be asked to account for this out-of-classroom time by a licensing board, employer, or doctoral program. **Use the time-log format in the back of the course manual.**
Example Special Project Time Topics for Non-school counseling students:

1. What professional discipline(s) do you intend to identify with and how will you stay current and competent with the changing ethical codes, legal rules, and licensure requirements of your selected discipline? Include both legalistic and aspirational ethical concerns.
2. An extended case study illustrating how state rules, legalistic and aspirational ethics, and personal values pertain to the case and your ethical decision-making. Utilize the decision-making model you plan on using in your practice. Choose the case from the textbook or your work or internship setting.
3. Identify areas of ethical practice that you know right now are growing edges for you and describe why these areas are difficult and what your plan is to monitor your reasoning in these areas. Include your plan to learn and grow in these areas.
4. Using the seven moral principles as a foundation, address how you will promote each one in your practice based on your professional code of ethics. Include how you plan to address situations in which two or more principles conflict or compete.
5) An ethical/legal discussion of a movie, television episode, or book that is clearly related to mental health counseling and the course material.
6. Topic of your choice (consult with instructor before beginning).

Art Projects

Students may choose to do an art project for their SPT. This will consist of an art project clearly related to the material of the course. The project will include a 5-page paper in which the student integrates the art work with the material from the course.

Novels, Movies, or a Television Episode

Students may do an SPT paper on a novel, movie, or television episode if it clearly and directly relates to the practice of counseling and raises an ethical issue that can be discussed in light of the course material. Provide a paragraph or more describing the overall plot at the beginning of the

Special Project Time (SPT) for school counseling students:

The paper should be structured in the following way: (1) an introduction that summarizes the focus for the paper and highlights its importance and relevance; (2) a section of the paper that elaborates the various arguments and ethical issues associated with the topic area you have chosen, (3) a narrative that presents where you stand with respect to a particular issue, drawing on material presented in section 2 and your own considered judgment/experience, and (4) a conclusion that outlines a number of practical implications/recommendations that follow from your discussion in sections 1-3.

Address your own thoughts on the subject as well as facts as presented in professional publications. Support your opinion with properly cited references, including peer reviewed journal articles or other writings on the subject (minimum of two professional references other than the textbook).
Example Research Paper Topics

- Dual Relationships in Therapy
- Special Ethical and Legal Concerns in Therapy with Minors
- Ethical Issues in Documentation and Counseling Records
- Ethical and Legal Problems Regarding Confidentiality Issues
- Therapists and Sexual Boundaries
- Ethical Issues Regarding Informed Consent in Counseling
- Ethical Problems In “Duty to Warn”
- Ethical Issues in Multicultural Counseling
- AIDS and the Duty to Warn
- Preventing Malpractice Suits
- Ethical Issues in Imposing Values on Clients
- Ethical Issues in Supervision

Grades

1) This is a competency-based course.
2) Grades are calculated as: A= 90-100 points; B= 80-89 points; C=70-79 points.
3) Final grades are based on combined exams, personal code of ethics paper, and SPT paper.
4) Grades are available 3 weeks after the last assignment is due.
5) Assignments are due two weeks after the last class session.
6) Grades will be available four weeks after the due date for course assignments.
7) If there is any delay in the assignment of grades students will be informed of the new date.
8) Contact instructor if an extension past three weeks after last class meeting is needed. Grades during extensions will be “I” up to the 45-day limit after which “R” is given unless extreme circumstances can be substantiated. Ask for extensions before they are needed.

9. Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. When a student is unable to attend class notify the course instructor in advance using either e-mail or phone. A student can miss two class units without explanation (i.e., two weeknights or one weekend day). If a student misses more than two out of the nine course units, he or she should meet with the course instructor. Retaking the class is a possibility.

10. Participation Disclaimer

Active participation in class discussions is encouraged. As with other AGS courses, in this course individual students must determine for themselves their level of disclosure in class.
11. **Academic Integrity Policy**

Honesty and trust among students and between students and faculty are essential for a strong, functioning academic community. Consequently, students are expected to do their own work on all academic assignments, tests, projects, and research/term papers. Academic dishonesty, whether cheating, plagiarism, or some other form of dishonest conduct may result in failure for the work involved. Academic dishonesty could also result in failure for the course and, in the event of a second incident of academic dishonesty, suspension from the Adler Graduate School. Here are examples of academic dishonesty:

- **Cheating** - Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit.

- **Fabrication** - Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

- **Facilitating academic dishonesty** - Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of academic integrity.

- **Plagiarism** – The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas or words or statements of another person as one’s own without acknowledgment.

12. **Internet/On-Line Activity**

On-line components of Adler Graduate School classes provide an opportunity for open and insightful dialogue. As in face-to-face discussions, there are differences in opinions concerning topics discussed. We view these differences as a welcomed attribute of a good scholarly discussion. Respect for differences will also be viewed as a sign of scholarly debate.

Following are guidelines governing on-line discussions:

Never post content that is known to be illegal. Never post potentially harassing, threatening, or embarrassing statements, as well as statements that might be potentially offensive and seen as disrespectful in any way.

Faculty members monitor discussion and intervene when requested or as deemed necessary.

On-line communication presents a significant level of ambiguity, as verbal content of communication is not well supported by its non-verbal (including contextual) components. If a student feels threatened or offended by a statement made by another student during the on-line portion of a class, please address the issue immediately with the other student(s) to clarify their position and your reaction. If this does not work, contact your class instructor so actions can be taken if necessary.
13. **Nondiscrimination Clause**

The Adler Graduate School is an equal opportunity educator and employer. The Adler Graduate School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or physical disability in the employment of faculty or staff, the admission or treatment of students, or in the operation of its educational programs and activities. The institution is committed to providing equal education and employment opportunities in accordance with all applicable State and federal laws.

14. **Learning Accommodations (including students with disabilities)**

If a student in this course has a documented learning disability, tell the instructor during the first week of class. The instructor needs to know on the front end so that he or she can work with you. The Adler Graduate School is committed to helping all students be successful, as best as can be reasonably accommodated. Documenting a learning disability occurs at the student’s expense. When documented appropriately, the Adler Graduate School makes all reasonable accommodations.

15. **Instructor Contact Information:**

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Revised 3/12