Adler Graduate School  
Richfield, MN  
AGS Course 525  
Essential Interviewing Skills

1. Course Designation and Identifier

1.1 Adler Graduate School  
1.2 525  
1.3 Essential Interviewing Skills  
1.4 Three (3) credits  
1.5 Prerequisite: None

2. Course Description

This course focuses on the development and maintenance of therapeutic relationships, with focus on essential interviewing. Students learn the evidence-based skills necessary for the development of therapeutic alliance, including the core conditions of accurate empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard, as well as non-directive and directive listening skills, and will practice using these skills in the different stages of an interview. Special attention is paid to ethical considerations and cultural aspects that impact the interviewing process. Adlerian Life Style data serves a primary content in developing the interviewing skill, and life style assessment is incorporated throughout the course.

3. Texts, Materials and Resources (required and optional)

3.1 Required materials:

E-book: 978-1-118-42125-3

Powers & Griffith. (2012). *The Key to Psychotherapy*  
ISBN-10: 0918287189  

3.2 Recommended materials

ISBN-10: 1892005034

Additional handouts may be provided in class, see weekly schedule for details

4. Competencies and Learning Outcomes
In this class students will address the following standards:

CACREP Standards addressed:
II.F.5
   a. Ethical and culturally relevant strategies for developing helping relationships
   b. Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the helping process
   c. Essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills

CACREP Standards – School Counseling:
A1 The major theories, assumptions, professional challenges and ethics, individual and group counseling methods, skills and techniques that are central to professional school counseling.
A7 Individual and group appraisal techniques
A8 The need for and ability to demonstrate effective communication and human relations skills
E1 Interpersonal Dynamics in Individual and Group counseling settings.
F1 Theoretical approaches and applications of appropriate counseling communication skills in classroom settings.

COAMFTE standards addressed:
1.2.3 Recognize issues that might suggest referral for special evaluation, assessment, or care
1.3.4 Explain practice setting rules, fees, rights, and responsibilities, of each party, including privacy, confidentiality policies, and duty to care to client or legal guardian.
1.3.6 Establish and maintain appropriate and productive therapeutic alliances with the clients
1.3.7 Solicit and use client feedback throughout the therapeutic process
2.3.3 Apply effective and systemic interviewing techniques and strategies
3.3.3 Develop a clear plan of how sessions will be conducted
3.4.5 Monitor personal reactions to clients and treatment process, especially in terms of therapeutic behavior, relationship with clients, process for explaining procedures, and outcomes
4.3.3 Reframe problems and recursive interaction patterns
4.3.4 Generate relational questions and relieve comments in the therapy room
4.3.5 Engage each family member in the treatment process as appropriate
5.3.2 Develop and assess policies, procedures, and forms for consistency with standards of practice to protect client confidentiality and to comply with relevant laws and regulations

5. Course Outline

5.1 Unit 1 Initial Engagement

**Discussion:** Role of the Therapist / Client Interaction

**Readings and Resources:** Sommers Ch. 1-2, Yalom handout during class.

Informed consent example previewed in class (link in PowerPoint for the week)

**Assignment:** Groups of 3 formed in class

1) Identify key concepts, techniques, and skills involved in initial client interaction
2) Recognize the ethical concerns when initializing the informed consent process

5.2 Unit 2 Joining

**Discussion:** Verbal/Non-verbal response, initial interviewing

**Readings and Resources:** Sommers Ch. 3, Powers and Griffith Ch. 3 & 11

In class activity: Practice basic attending and listening skills, Yalom Video in Class, Handout and discuss directions on how to upload video to YouTube, Lifestyle Video viewed in class

**Assignment:** Work on video outside of scheduled class with group. First quiz at beginning of class

1) Begin to recognize varying types of therapist/client interactions
2) List basic counseling skills present in therapeutic interactions

5.3 Unit 3 (Same day as unit 4) Basic Counseling Skills

**Discussion:** Interactional process/techniques, continued discussion of ERs

**Readings and Resources:** Powers and Griffith Ch. 4, Somers Ch. 4-5. Peer response to activity of “telling a story” at beginning of class. 2nd half of class ER Exercise

**Assignment:** Video emailed to instructor prior to the start of class. ER handout due by end of class

1) Identify strategies for building the therapeutic relationship
2) Respond and identify therapeutic skills/techniques
3) Begin to recognize patterns of interactions between therapist/client

5.4 Unit 4 Basis Counseling Skill Cont. (Same day as unit 3)

**Discussion:** Interactional process/techniques

**Readings and Resources:** Sommers Ch. 4-5

**Assignment:** See Unit 3

1) Identify strategies for building the therapeutic relationship
2) Respond and identify therapeutic skills/techniques
3) Recognize patterns of interactions between therapist/client

5.5 Unit 5 Content of Client Interaction
Discussion: Ethical requirements for interactions
Readings and Resources: Sommers Ch. 6-7, Powers and Griffith Ch. 5-6.
Come to class with computer.
Assignment: 2nd Quiz at beginning of class. In class activity of designing informed consent

1) Demonstrate knowledge of ethical requirement
2) Practice interpreting and applying ethical considerations to practical interactions with client
3) Demonstrate ability to independently find and apply relevant ethical standards

5.6 Unit 6 Initial and Continual Assessment
Discussion: Types of Assessment
Readings and Resources: Sommers Ch. 8-9, Powers and Griffith Ch. 8, Rosenberg Ch. 9. In class activity, Video on Assessment (link in PowerPoint for the week)
Assignment: Work in designated groups outside of class for final video project

1) Practice using therapeutic techniques and skills for client interaction
2) Respond to evident techniques and skills from peers

5.7 Unit 7 Techniques/Skills for Particular Populations (Same day as unit 8)
Discussion: Multicultural world, Working with distinct population
Readings and Resources: Sommers Ch. 11-14
Assignment: In class activity on area of study. Third quiz at beginning of class. Identify cultural context of client interactions
1) Clarify learner’s barriers in effectively demonstrating therapeutic technique/skills with varying populations
2) Provide examples in class of alternative skills needed for area of study

5.8 Unit 8 Holistic view of Therapeutic Session (Same day as unit 7)
Discussion: Ethical/Therapeutic implication of Termination
Readings and Resources: Same as unit 7
Assignment: Video Review/Presentations Due

1) List ethical requirements for successful termination of the therapeutic relationship
2) Determine scenarios necessary for therapeutic termination
3) Determine and list evidence of therapeutic skills/techniques in class examples
5.9 **Unit 9 Integrating Process/Skills/Techniques**

**Discussion:** Documentation/Record Keeping

**Readings and Resources:** Sommers Ch.10 Powers and Griffith Ch. 12 &13

Samples of documentation given prior to class

**Assignment:** Video Review/Presentations Due

1) Determine and list evidence of therapeutic skills/techniques in class examples

**In Class Activities**

**Informed Consent:** Complete informed consent using examples given in class, previous examples from personal experience, or online information. Must be turned in at end of class.

**ER:** Interview peer using handout available in class the day of activity. Handout to be turned in at the end of class.

These activities are in class and will not be made up as they are group activities for the day assigned only.

**First Assignment:**

**Group Video:** *(Rubric to be emailed to class)*

Groups of three shall be formed the first night of class. Each group will be responsible for a group video. The video shall build on the concept of initial engagement of a client, while including skills and techniques that may be used across the entire therapeutic process. The video shall include but not be limited to: the informed consent, attending behavior, questioning, and directives.

The entire group video shall consist of 3 separate videos, each 10 minutes in length.

**Content of Video:**

Each member of the group shall role play three different roles of a therapy session.

1. A client
2. Therapist
3. Observer

Each role shall take 5 minutes for the role play of the therapist.

The observer will then give a minimum of 5 minutes of feedback to the group.

Videos will not be accepted that are less than 10 minutes.

Each member of the group will submit a 10 minute video where they play the role of therapist.

Real life experiences should NOT be used for this video. Scenarios that are made up, but have a basis in practical counseling should be used.

YouTube link will be emailed to the instructor before the start of class on date due.

**Second Assignment:**

**Reflection Paper on Group Video**

Each observer will write a 3 page (not including title and reference page) reflection paper noting the skills they noted as the **observer** during the group practice video. A minimum of 3 academic sources will be sited for the reflection paper using APA format.
**Quizzes:** There will be three 10 question quizzes at the start of Unit 2, 5, and 6/7. The quizzes will cover material up to that week’s reading assignment. You must be present during the quiz to take it. Retakes and makeups to this quiz will not be allowed.

**Final Assignments:** (Rubric to be emailed to class)

**Final Video** Uploaded to YouTube and emailed to instructor day before presenting the final video in class.

This will include a video building off skills used in original video. For this video ongoing sessions/interactions or termination of therapy will be used for the “session”.

This interaction should clearly demonstrate feedback taken from instructor and peers (as observer). This video must incorporate a lifestyle assessment in some form.

**Based on the session you choose** the video shall demonstrate the skills from feedback and discussed in class examples may include: (The Rubric will provide further details)

Greeting for particular session, Directive/Non-directive questioning, any assessments given, closing statements, rapport building, positive and negative attending behavior

Video needs to be able to be heard and viewed during class presentation. You must be present for feedback when your video is viewed.

**Group Feedback**

Peers will write down and share feedback with “therapist” of each video during class, form to use will be shared during class. Peers will receive points for giving each group feedback that day as well. If peers are not present for video no feedback points will be given. Derogatory or inflammatory feedback shall receive 0 points

**Reflection Paper** Emailed to instructor 14 days from the last class date

Final reflection paper shall include:

1. A transcription of final video
2. A minimum of 3 pages in addition to the transcript (not including title and reference page).
3. Reflecting on areas of improvement that occurred for yourself as the therapist and areas you would still like to improve. Thoughts should reflect on the transcript.
4. Skills/techniques present in video and skills/techniques learner would still like to add to video.
5. Three sources cited using APA format.

6. **Special Project Time (SPT) (Final Reflection Paper)**

6.1 Special Project Time (SPT) allows students the opportunity to integrate course materials. SPT is meant to be a self-contained experience requiring 30 hours to complete. SPT generally focuses on either (a) an experiential exercise paired with a short integrative writing component or (b) a research exercise and a short integrative writing component.
6.2 An integrative, SPT experience can be based on an individual project or a group project. Once again, the individual or group completes an experiential or a research oriented exercise, followed by a short integrative writing assignment.

6.3 SPT experiences may be constructed in such a way that they pertain to students’ unique degree plans. For example, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist students, Licensed Professional Counselor students, and Licensed School Counselor students may construct a SPT experience unique to their chosen disciplines. This is done in consultation with the course instructor.

7. Writing Guidelines including APA Format

All written assignments in courses at the Adler Graduate School, including those submitted in online courses, must be in APA format unless specifically noted by the course instructor (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th edition), 2009, American Psychological Association. ISBN 1-4338-0561-8).

8. Assessment/Evaluation Procedures

8.1 Participation Expectations:
Students are expected to participate in the course as is required to turn in graduate level work. Please review the due date for all assignments and contact the instructor prior to any work turned in late.
This class is graded A-F. An R will be received if all coursework is not completed and turned into the instructor according to assignment dates.

8.2 Assignment Overview:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment or Activity</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In Class Activities</td>
<td>Session 3/4</td>
<td>40 (for both)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Group Video</td>
<td>Session 3/4</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Paper on Initial Group Video</td>
<td>Session 3/4</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz in class</td>
<td>Session 2, 5, 7</td>
<td>60 (total for all 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Video Feedback form</td>
<td>Session 8/9</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Video</td>
<td>Session 7/8 or 9 depending on presentation date</td>
<td>105</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Summary Paper/With Transcript</td>
<td>2 weeks after last</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8.3 Grading: [Based on total points for the class]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>450-500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>400-449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>350-399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Retake</td>
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<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Quality of work or participation falls below minimum expectations, including:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Not attending class.</td>
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<td>• Not properly notifying registrar of a withdrawal</td>
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<td>• Missing class periods in excess of the number allowed by AGS’s course attendance policy (see section 9 below)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Not resolving a grade of incomplete within 45 days after the last class meeting (not the assignment due date) and an agreed upon extension has not been arranged by the student and instructor. The Incomplete turns to No Credit (NC) and the course must be repeated at full price.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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8.4 Late Assignments:
Assignments received late will be graded on the following guideline:

1-5 days late minus 10%
6-10 days late: minus 20%
7-15 days late: minus 30%
Over 15 days late: No points

Assignments will not be accepted two weeks after the end of class

9. Attendance Policy

Since courses are structured according to an intensive five-week format, regular and punctual attendance is of prime importance. Students are expected to attend all class meetings. When a student is unable to attend class, it is a courtesy to notify the course instructor in advance using the e-mail or phone information provided at the end of this syllabus. As groups are formed the first night of class missing the first class is not advised and the professor must be notified prior to class.

Most courses are divided into nine units. One unit is equal to one evening class session, ½ of a weekend day session, one unit/ posting in an online class or, roughly, 3 ¼ hours of class time. If a student misses more than 2 class units, the decision whether to allow a grade or issue a retake is left to the discretion of the instructor. Students who miss four class sessions are automatically not eligible to receive a grade for the class and are expected to retake the class.

It is the instructor’s prerogative to allow or not allow make up work or to deduct points or issue a lower grade based on missed class sessions.
Questions or appeals about the implementation of the attendance policy may be directed to the Academic Vice President.

10. Participation Disclaimer

13.2 Active participation in class discussions/exercises/demonstrations is encouraged. As with other AGS courses, in this course, individual students must determine for themselves the level of disclosure/intimacy that is appropriate for them.

13.3 Whenever confidential information/material is used in any AGS course, students and faculty members are expected to observe AGS policy concerning the handling of confidential information/material. Full descriptions of these policies are available.

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.

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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