Evaluation methodologies in Counseling and Psychotherapy Across the Lifespan

1. Course Designation and Identifier Information

1.1 Adler Graduate School
1.2 Course number 561
1.3 Evaluation Methodologies in Counseling and Psychotherapy Across the Lifespan
1.4 Three (3) Credits
1.5 Prerequisite: previous coursework in clinical assessment, experience in therapeutic techniques

2. Course Description
This course examines the history and philosophy of outcome evaluation in psychotherapy, various ways outcomes can be assessed, and key variables that appear to moderate therapeutic processes. Students will be asked to consider what Wampold has called “The Great Psychotherapy Debate” from the perspective of key stakeholders in the therapeutic relationship. Prerequisite: graduate-level course in clinical assessment.

3. Textbook
3.1 Required Text

4. Learning Outcomes
Students in this course will:
4.1 Understand the history of modern psychotherapy and how measuring outcomes has become a primary focus in clinical practice.
4.2 Understand how and why “evidence based practice” came to be a force within psychotherapy, including its strength and limitations. This includes the ability to appreciate the concerns and requirements of 3rd party payers and the impact these have on clinical practice.
4.3 Understand and articulate the reasons for measuring outcomes in psychotherapy and why this has been adopted by the mental health community.
4.4 Understand and identify general types of outcome assessment procedures and most common methodologies used in creating of assessment instruments.
4.5 Understand, identify and articulate key findings from the research on the efficacy of psychotherapy, including current issues under debate.
4.6 Understand, identify and articulate which specific therapeutic interventions have empirical support for specific diagnoses, which are under investigation, which have been deemed as ineffective and which have not yet been studied.

4.7 Understand, identify and articulate psychotherapy outcome issues relate to culture, race, gender, language, age, sexual orientation and physical abilities.

4.8 Understand and articulate which variables in the therapeutic relationship have been identified in the literature as playing primary and secondary roles in creating successful change.

4.9 Understand and articulate the anti-evidence based position taken by some psychotherapeutic models, including the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments.

**AGS Online Course Overview**

5.1 AGS online courses have the same total duration as residential courses – 7 weeks (5 weeks of coursework plus two weeks for completing final assignments). You should expect to spend approximately 135 hours on all course-related activities. Your instructor will be actively available for all class activities and individual consultations for the duration of the coursework and as needed until final papers grades are submitted.

5.2 Your course instructor will respond to your questions or comments within 48 hours (barring unforeseen circumstances). You will be expected to observe the same response time-- replying within 48 hours. During the class, your instructor will post specific office hours on your class webpage.

5.3 Please stay current in the class. Generally, you will be expected to complete reading assignments, submit at least two substantive postings per week (in response to the questions and/or tasks by your instructor), and – in some cases - engage in experiential activities, per syllabus. These expectations are very general, as you will find unique teaching style and specific expectations presented in each online class.

5.4 Although you will likely find that you have a lot of experience in the discussed topics, please remember that the most convincing position is the one supported by the most current and relevant research. You will find these sources in peer-reviewed journals. Use APA style and format requirements in referencing sources.

6. Course Outline

   **Week One: January 6-12 2014**
   - **Unit 1:** History of Psychotherapy, How EBP came to force and Standards of Practice
     - Reading: Hubble et al: Prologue and Chapter 2
   - **Unit 2:** Models in perspective
     - Reading: Hubble et al: Chapter 5 and 9

   **Week Two: January 13-19, 2014**
   - **Unit 3:** Lessons from cognitive research and social psychology
7. Special Project Time

Special project time (SPT) is meant to be a self-contained involving 30 hours of experience. Special project time allows students the opportunity to integrate course materials, to involve additional reading and experiential activities, to use academic knowledge and professional experience related to their chosen degree plan, and to practice research and presentation skills.

For this course you will be given four articles to read, evaluate and analyze. For each article you will be expected to provide a short review of the useful information in the article, discuss the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the article to the author uses to make their point, discuss whether you agree that the information is analyzed in the best statistical light and what is your opinion of the benefit of this article to further the art and science of mental health.

8. Assessment/Evaluation Procedures
   (Detailed descriptions of these assignments are available on Moodle)
   Assignment Overview
   a. Credit is given to students who successfully meet all of the requirements at the level of proficiency acceptable to the instructor. The evaluation is based on the following:
   b. Participation on moodle that is timely and substantial (54 points)
c. Three times during the course present a relevant question about the material for the instructor and classmates to respond.

d. Special Project Time will consist of the analysis of four research articles (40 points)

e. More information on all of these assignments will be posted on moodle when the course begins, as well as the specific weekly topics you will be discussing.

f. Original Forum Posting Submissions

Original posts are graded on a scale of 0-4 points. Responses posted after the deadline will not be graded. You can earn a maximum of 36 points in this required activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
<th>Grading Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Comments a) are accurate and relevant; b) demonstrate original thinking; c) use appropriate scholarly support; d) are well written, with no significant grammar and punctuation errors and no violation of “netiquette.” Four point comments contribute substantially to the course discussions and stimulate additional thought and further discussions about the topic discussed in the particular unit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Comments lack at least one of the above qualities, but are above average overall, with regard to their content, and make a good contribution to our understanding of the issue being discussed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Deficient</td>
<td>Comments lack two or three of the required qualities. Comments which are based upon personal opinion but not supported by scholarly research or personal experience and/or comments violating important “netiquette” rules often fall within this category.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Comments present little or no new information, lack three or more of the above qualities. However, one point comments may provide important social presence and contribute to a collegial atmosphere.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td>The comment lacks all four qualities or in violation of AGS academic integrity policy</td>
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g. Peer Responses

Peer responses can earn 1.0 point per each peer response (with the total of 2 points per unit, and a maximum of 18 points per course). Peer responses are graded on accuracy, relevance, presence of scholarly support, and delivery (including compliance with major grammar and punctuation rules and netiquette). Peer responses posted after deadline will be not be graded.
In these responses, you will a) bring another aspect to the discussion, add a new insight to already offered ideas; b) find additional scholarly support for your classmate’s position and demonstrate that you have done some good additional reading on the issue; c) reply to a group of your classmates by comparing or contrasting their stated positions, or probing, offering a counter-thought; and/or d) integrate your classmates’ observations into your original position (whether supportive or not).

In meeting at least one of the above (a-d) requirements, a good peer response will bring the discussion to an advanced level and will parallel what you might observe in a live scholarly debate. While offering a good challenge in your peer responses, please don’t forget that validation and respect are two integral rules in any scholarly conversation.

h. Grading

A 90-100 points
B 80-89 points
C 70-79 points
R Retake- Needs more time or instruction to master the requirements of the class
NC Quality of work or participation falls below minimum expectations, including:
  • Not attending class.
  • Not properly notifying registrar of a withdrawal
  • Missing class periods in excess of the number allowed by AGS’s course attendance policy
  • 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.

9. **Online Discussions or Activities**

Online classes provide an opportunity for open and insightful dialogue. As in any dialogue, these discussions demonstrate many facets of diversity, including diversity of values, opinions, and experiences. We view these differences as welcomed and needed attributes of a scholarly discussion. Acknowledgement of and respect for these differences is a sign of mature scholarly debate.

Following are guidelines governing online discussions;

a. Faculty members monitor discussions and intervene when requested or deemed necessary.

b. NEVER post to the course room content:
   o That is known to be illegal,
   o That is potentially harassing, threatening, or embarrassing,
o That might be offensive and might be received as disrespectful in any way.
o That is vulgar or sexually explicit
c. The tone of the exchange is one of respect for individual differences. If you disagree with an opinion expressed by a classmate or instructor, respond in a scholarly manner, arguing about the subject of discussion vs. the person who posted it.
d. Students are encouraged to not overuse exclamation marks!!!!!!, CAPITAL LETTERS, or other marks of emotional reaction that may be received as yelling, etc.
e. Online 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 online 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.
f. During online discussion, follow the same rules concerning protection of confidential information as you would follow in face-to-face discussion. Confidential client information is not appropriate in forum postings. Further, mental health related issues pertaining to you or your family members must be used with caution, if at all.
g. Be aware that some agency-specific information, such as descriptions of programs that have been developed or specialized treatment approaches, may potentially be a subject of copyright law. Although it is not always possible to know whether information is protected, the minimum expectation is to always identify and credit the source of information.

10. Writing Guidelines including APA Format
   b. Strict APA publication rules in Online Peer Discussions might prove difficult, if not impossible, to maintain. Following the “letter” of the Manual (i.e., not using “I”, or passive voice, keeping proper margins, or complying with headings requirements) may be either difficult or counterproductive in forums such as peer discussions. However, it is still important to adhere to the “spirit” of the APA Manual (i.e., grammar, orderly presentation of ideas, reducing bias in language, and presenting scholarly statements and arguments).
   c. Prior to submitting a response, please proofread carefully. Grammar and spelling errors may make your response difficult for other students to appreciate.

9.4 Please keep in mind that, while the internet offers a lot of exciting and up-to-date information, not all internet sources are considered scholarly. For example, Wikipedia is not an academically peer-reviewed source. Rather, it is an “anybody-reviewed” source and, therefore, can’t be used in presenting your argument in AGS classes-related tasks.

10. Attendance and Participation Policy

10.1 At the beginning of each course, please complete or update your student profile on Moodle and get familiar with your classmates and the instructor by visiting their profile information.
10.2 You are expected to attend all the course learning activities. In the AGS asynchronous online courses, you attend the class by complying with posting and other submission deadlines.

10.3 In most of the courses, you will have two deadlines per week during the five weeks of coursework. For each week, and in conjunction with online instruction and other learning activities, your course instructor will announce two discussion questions or topics corresponding with two of the units in the course outline. The questions will appear in Moodle each Monday morning for the five weeks of coursework. You will have until Tuesday night (11:59 PM CST) for the first question and Friday night (11:59 PM CST) for the second question to submit your original response.

10.4 Your original response will be at least 350 words, with at least one scholarly reference. Through discussions supported by in-text citations and other references, your response will reflect critical thought related to the topic and specific assignments for that unit.

10.5 You will then have until Wednesday night (11:59 PM CST) and Saturday night (11:59 PM CST) to respond to at least two of your classmates’ postings for each question (four responses per week). These peer responses have to be substantive. In these responses, you will bring another aspect to the discussion, find additional scholarly support for your classmate’s position, reply to a group of your classmates by comparing or contrasting their stated positions, integrate your classmates’ observations into your original position. In sum, an ideal peer response will bring the discussion to an advanced level and will parallel what you might observe in a live scholarly debate.

10.6 You can post your peer responses at any time between Monday and Wednesday (for discussion topic One) and between Thursday and Saturday night (for discussion topic Two), but not before you post your original response. Your course instructor will acknowledge your participation and will grade the quality of it by responding to your original pasting, whether individually or in a summary format.

10.7 It is the AGS attendance policy that students have to attend at least 80% of the class sessions in order to be eligible for a letter grade. Not complying with posting deadlines or not posting at all will be counted as a missed class.

11. Participation Disclaimer

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.

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 readily available.

12. 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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   (outside of moodle, the preferred way to contact me is by email or office phone)