

**ETHICS & STANDARDS IN THE MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSION WITH
PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION
PSYC0641-550 (crn 10027), Winter 2014, ONLINE January 2-15**

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Text: There will be no textbook for this course. Reading and viewing materials will be available for you online as part of your registration.

Welcome to the on-line Ethics & Standards for Mental health Professionals! This *preliminary* syllabus will give you some information on how the course is being structured, what you can expect from an online course, and what is expected from you. Our course will make use of a course management system called PLATO. If you haven't done so already, you might want to try the tutorial that is posted on the main web page for the on-line courses. You'll find it is really helpful for understanding how the system works and some of the features we'll be using.

IMPORTANT: Please note that this class begins on the 1st day of classes during winter session 2014 at Westfield State University, which is Thursday, January 2nd. The material will be released (available to you), beginning at 8:00 a.m. on January 2nd. There is not an option of beginning the coursework before January 2nd. While the course will formally end on January 15th, I will be flexible with accepting your final work through January 19th, giving you an extra weekend (if needed). You will have five blocks of work. You should complete them consecutively. I estimate you will need approximately 5-6 hours to complete each block, plus time for examinations described below. You have complete flexibility from January 2nd to 19th for structuring the time to complete this online course.

If you have a personal question, you may send me a message through the PLATO site or call my office at 413-572-5488 to leave a message. During winter session, email is the best way to contact me at rhayes@westfield.ma.edu. I will begin checking and responding to messages daily beginning on January 2nd, and will check them only occasionally before January 2nd.

Class Overview

This course will review several professional Codes of Ethics and the standards of ethical practice involved in working with clients. With these codes as guidelines, students will develop their own ethical awareness, problem solving abilities using case studies, and a knowledge of the use and limitations of these ethical codes. The course will also include topics related to professional identity and orientation, human service's management of community programs, managed care, and the interaction and relationship of the mental health profession and public policy.

What You Can Expect & What Is Expected Of You

You can expect that I will be available to you many times throughout the defined session, which is Jan 2 – Jan 15, 2014, however not 24/7. There are a number of ways to be in touch with me. Online office hours are listed above. For online office hours, you can contact me through the email link on the course page in PLATO. I am also available to schedule an electronic, phone, or in-person conversation with you that meets the needs of both our schedules. If you email me, I will typically get a response to you within 24 hours, but always within 48 hours. If you have a question related to the course, one in which the response would benefit the entire class, I ask that you pose the question in the “Ask Dr. B” link of the main course page. All class members will then have access to the dialogue. Of course, if you have a more private matter you may contact me by one of the means above.

You can expect that you will have considerable freedom to structure your own time with considerable control over when you do the course work. In this course, you will be working with a set a material (A MODULE) presented to you. There will be five “blocks” of material. Because the course is so compact, I plan on having all five blocks open for you on the first day of the course, keeping them open for you through January 19th. You can do the work at your own pace, spread it out, do it all at once – it’s up to you. Please keep in mind that while you have significant flexibility in scheduling your work and participation, you should plan for 36-40 hours of online work between January 2nd and 19th.

You can expect that you will need to be proactive in your participation as a student. You will be joining in discussions, posting information, and finding many different ways to be a part of the class. You can expect that some discussions may extend over numerous days, as your student colleagues also engage in each module. Participation and discussions are done through “Threads” which are online. Since students will not be online all at the same time, it is possible that you can discuss an issue in real time with a student electronically, but also possible that you will have a delay in the discussion as you wait for student to sign in again.

Feedback from you throughout the course is a necessity. As you have enrolled in an on-line course, I won’t know if you are having a problem with material or with this learning format unless you tell me. If you have technical difficulties, there are supports that can address them right away. If you are having difficulty grasping some material, additional support from me or tutoring can also be arranged. Please let me know immediately if there is a problem with which I can help – the sooner you tell me, the sooner I can help you fix the problem.

You will need to visit the course web page frequently. I’d recommend at least once a day (if only briefly), to at least check to see if there are messages or updates from me.

You can expect that content will be presented to you in a variety of forms. These include lectures, discussions both online and asynchronous, film, voiced-over powerpoints, and reading files. It is important to note that this is not a correspondence course where you will only be sending me written material for a grade. You will be required to engage all formats provided within a block of material, as well as engage in discussion with your online classmates. Granted, that discussion may not always be in real time.

Policies

Class Participation:

Participation is necessary for learning. Material presented will include additional material to the text book (all linked and available to you when you need it). This additional material may be on exams. Personal emergencies (e.g., death in the family, sickness) are recognized as valid reasons for being absent for an extended period of time, however it is **your responsibility** to let me know if your personal circumstances are keeping you away from this online course in a manner to which you cannot make the closing date of the course. Participation includes reading, listening, **interacting in discussions, offering your own viewpoints** and feedback, and taking part in group exercises, if applicable. Your participation is tracked electronically by me, and I have access to read and “drop in” on any and all forums built within this class structure.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to demonstrate their own aptitudes when completing class assignments and examinations. Any student suspected of plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt with as outlined under WSU guidelines.

<http://www.wsc.ma.edu/prospective-students/campus-life/student-handbook/academic-life/academic-honesty-policy/>

These policies are subject to change. In the event that policies are changed, you will be notified in advance.

Class Structure

The course makes use of a set of subunits called “blocks.”

You can do the work at your own pace: you can do it all at once, finishing the block work quickly, or you can do it at a slower pace. How you use your time is entirely up to you, so long as all the work is done for all five blocks, and exams completed, by the end of the course.

What Will I Find In Each Block?

Each block will have a clearly numbered set of activities so you’ll know what to do first, second, third, etc. The blocks will vary in content, but you can expect each of them to typically include:

Instructor Guidance. I will introduce you to each block and provide some guidance very early, i.e. **“a checklist”**. **It is important to follow the checklists as they are provided to you within the blocks.** You will likely have some kind of multimedia presentation from me, usually in the form of a narrated PowerPoint presentation, and there occasionally may be a film or some other online modality.

Reading. Readings will be provided in each block. There is no text book. You will find the appropriate links to this additional material in each block.

Participation. You will have occasional exercises to which you will contribute comment, analysis, and discussion in online, asynchronous (we are not all online at the same time) discussion forums. You will be asked to post a message to the rest of the class about your

comment on questions I will ask you all to react to, or to something someone else posted. A significant portion of your final grade (14%) will be based on your class participation, as evidenced through your contributions to the course in on-line discussions, posting to the discussion boards, or other contributions in class. **Class participation** defined as one or both of the following:

Active, substantive participation on the class web page through discussion. By "active" I mean you regularly contribute to the course through the class discussions that will be offered with each block. By "substantive" I mean you do all these things based on the reading and other block materials.

Active, substantive contributions to class participation by making contributions. Recommending a link to everyone to a newspaper article relating to class discussions, recommending something you've found on television or the web that is interesting, showing an example from experiences (general life experience, observations of behavior, through a job, internship, volunteer work, and so on) relating to our work all count as class participation as well.

Please note: Your grade for class participation will be assigned by me, based on my evaluation of your contribution through the criteria mentioned above. I'll be happy to give you feedback at any time on this part of your grade. By remaining in the course, you are giving your consent to that evaluation.

"A" level participation means you are both active and substantial in each block (12-14 points);
"B" level participation means you are active, but do so without substance from the material (8-11 points);
"C" level participation means you do the same as "B" but with less regularity (4-7 points);
"D" level participation will be the result of contributing even less (1-3 points).
Extremely low or non-participation will result in 0 points.

Projects & Assignments. Each block will include at least one project or assignments associated with the material presented. These may be a more formal written assignment, an essay, or it may simply be your participation in electronic discussions.

Will There Be Examinations?

Examinations. Yes. Exams will be multiple choice and essay. Exams will cover readings *and additional material presented online*. A pretest will not be part of your grade. It is used only as a baseline indicator of your knowledge. You will have a midterm exam about halfway through the course, and a final examination. Each examination may be completed "open book", i.e., you may use all material available to you. However, you must not communicate with each other about examinations (honor system). As the exams are open-book, they are not weighted as much as other projects and assignments assigned in your learning blocks. **The exams will have a time limit, therefore you should plan to complete them in one sitting. The time allotted to complete the exam once it has been started will be based on the number of questions.**

If you have a learning need which requires untimed examinations, your circumstances should be registered with the Banacos Academic Center at Westfield State University. You should

additionally notify me, in private, at the beginning of the course so we might discuss how an accommodation may be made for you.

Grading

<i>Open-Book Examinations</i>	26%
<i>Pretest Exam</i>	<i>Not Graded</i>
<i>Midterm Exam</i>	10%
<i>Final Exam</i>	16%
<i>Projects and Assignments</i>	60%
<i>Block 1</i>	12%
<i>Block 2</i>	12%
<i>Block 3</i>	12%
<i>Block 4</i>	12%
<i>Block 5</i>	12%
<i>Class Participation</i>	14%

Preliminary Block Topics

[Note: These are being built by me at this time and are subject to change. A fuller list of requirements will be supplied with each checklist on opening day. Again, you should plan on about 36-40 hours of work over the course period.]

Block 1	<i>Introduction to Ethical Codes, Complaints, Issues, Dilemmas, & Problem-Solving Models</i>
Block 2	<i>Confidentiality</i>
Block 3	<i>Multiple Relationships; Psychological Testing</i>
Block 4	<i>Responsibilities in Therapy</i>
Block 5	<i>The Business of Psychology</i>