

Syllabus

MF 530 II Professional Ethics

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

Summer 2009 1 Unit

Time: 9:00 am to 12:30 pm

Dates: August 10 - 13, 2009

Instructor: David Bruce Rose, Ph.D.

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Course Description:

Real life is complex. Too often ministers and counselors find themselves caught in situations where it appears that in order to comply with a valid professional ethical principle, they must violate another valid professional ethical principle. At other times, our personal values appear to conflict with legal or societal requirements of our profession. Professional Ethics II focuses on the application of major ethical principles found in the codes of ethics of major professional mental health organizations (AAMFT, CAMFT, APA, ACA, CAPS) to address these dilemmas.

This course will focus on identifying and resolving ethical dilemmas, the relationship of religious and personal values with ethical practice, and the philosophical and theological foundations of ethical practice.

While this course is designed to contribute to meeting the California BBS curricular requirements for essential knowledge about ethics in professional counseling, general knowledge of professional ethics is assumed. Therefore, **MF 530 I Professional Ethics is a prerequisite for this course.** *Students who did not complete MF 530 I may attend only with permission of the instructor and will be expected to complete all of the exercises in Corey, Corey, and Haynes (2003) or similar professional ethics program before the course begins.*

Learning Objectives:

As a result of this course, students will:

1. Identify the philosophical and theological assumptions within their

personal ethics and professional codes of ethics.

2. Describe appropriate strategies to address ethical dilemmas in professional counseling, including: sources for consultation and resources for additional information.
3. Demonstrate competence in professional counseling ethics by responding in clinically and ethically appropriate ways to specific vignettes presenting common ethical dilemmas, and providing a rationale for their responses based on commonly accepted professional codes of ethics.

Related Degree Objectives:

As a result of this course, students will:

1. Articulate integrative views of humanity, theology, and counseling (4.1)
2. Demonstrate the use of one's personal self in response to human need. (4.3)
3. Demonstrate practice consistent with the laws and ethics that apply to marriage, family, and child counseling. (4.4)
4. Demonstrate proactive commitment to a community of witness, justice, and peace. (4.7)

Resources:

Required textbooks for students preparing for licensure as marriage and family therapists include:

Knapp, S. J., and VandeCreek, L. D. (2006). *Practical ethics for psychologists: A positive approach*. Washington, D. C.: APA.

Sanders, R. K. (Ed.) (1997). *Christian counseling ethics: A handbook for therapists, pastors, and counselors*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity.

Recommended textbooks include:

Bennett, B. E., Bricklin, P. M., Harris, E., Knapp, S. VandeCreek, L., & Younggren, J. N. (2006). *Assessing and managing risk in psychological practice: An individualized approach*. Rockville, MD: The Trust.

Bersoff, D. N. (2008). *Ethical conflicts in psychology*, 4th Ed. Washington, D.C.: APA.

Students who are preparing for ministry **and are not intending to pursue licensure as a counselor** may substitute the following textbooks for the required textbooks above:

Lynch, G. (2002). *Pastoral care and counseling*. London: Sage.

Trull, J. E., & Carter, J. E. (2004). *Ministerial ethics: Moral formation for church leaders*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Course Format:

MF-530 II will meet in an intensive format, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday August 10, 12, and 14, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 pm. Students are expected to complete all assigned readings before each class. Students will be expected to participate in class exercises and complete any written assignments. This course is designed around an interactive learning environment that includes case studies, discussion, and guest presentations. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. As noted in the Student Handbook, class participation is one of the most significant parts of the shared learning experience at MBBS. Any student who misses more than 25% of the class time in a course may have their grade reduced by a full letter grade and may be at risk for failing the course.

Assignments:

Grades will be based on the following:

I. Class Participation – 5%

II. Reading Outlines – 6% Due at beginning of each class

A summary of the content of the required reading assigned for that class, not more than one page long, due at the beginning of each class session. Extra credit will be awarded for additional reading from the recommended readings listed below. **If a student has read an assignment previously, they are expected to substitute other appropriate reading from the bibliography below.**

III. Participation in online discussion of “Therapist Movie” – 5% Extra Credit will be awarded for participation in additional forums, to be completed by 9:00 am August 21, 2009.

On August 4, students will divide into groups. Each group will watch a film where a therapist is a significant character. On the Forum section of the class web page, the group will discuss the film. Initial postings to the group discussions must be done by Monday morning, August 17. Final postings to the forum must be done by Friday morning, August 21.

The **Discussion Forum** will help students to engage the ideas within in the film more deeply through analysis and discussion with other students on the forum section of the course site. It is expected that you will spend the equivalent of a weekly three hour class session writing your posts and discussing the posts with other students. It consists of four types of postings:

- **Initial postings** in response to the questions regarding the film by Monday August 17, 8:00 AM Pacific Time
- **Responses** to at least one student's initial posting by Wednesday evening, August 19.
- **Conversation postings:** at least two for each question in response to any postings including at least one visit to the forum in addition to the previous two and your final posting.
- **Final postings** on each question, by Friday August 21, 9:00 AM Pacific Time

Detailed description of each of these four postings follows.

Initial postings: Write a 300-600 word response to the film in which you answer the following questions: identify the (a) legal issues, (b) professional ethical issues, and (c) personal ethical issues faced by the therapist character in the film, (d) describe conflicts between the issues, and the (e) philosophical system the therapist character used to address these conflicts. Finally (f) discuss what you think the therapist character should have done and why. (Hint: screen writers appear to be afraid of therapy and so usually describe therapists as unethical and dangerous. Therefore, the therapist character probably should have done something differently.)

You may post these any time after you have watched the assigned movie. They should, however, be posted by Monday August 17, 8:00 AM Pacific Time. You will be graded on clarity of thought and communication, depth of analysis and reflection, and the degree to which you engage the question asked (rather than straying off topic). This is a relatively short post—significantly shorter than one page. Therefore part of the challenge of this assignment is thinking carefully before you write about what you will say and how to say it concisely. A post receiving a grade in the “A” range will stand out for both its depth of insight, excellence in writing and for in some way doing something extra—such as making connections to other class sessions or biblical material, or bringing in helpful content from another course. A grade in the “B” range will give evidence of having reflected on the question and written about it in a way that moves beyond a superficial response. It is imperative that this assignment is done punctually so that other students may interact with the postings.

Response and group discussion: By Wednesday evening, August 19 each student will respond to the initial post of at least two other students in the discussion group for each question. This response does not need to be long, but should be more than just: “good point, I like your comments.” Please put “response” in the subject line. You should seek to drive forward the substance of the discussion. You can do this in a variety of ways: you might elaborate on something the other person said; you might ask a question that probes at a point the person made; you might inquire about the evidence used or the logic employed; you might even say that you disagree and give your evidence. In all cases you will express your ideas carefully and respectfully to one another—even when you strongly disagree. Students are expected to further the group discussion by contributing at least two conversational posts. These conversational posts may be responses to any of the other postings. Please put “conversation” in the subject line. The expectation is that you will visit the forum at least one other time in addition to your initial post, your two responses and your final post. You will receive a grade in the “B” range if you

fulfill the requirements for quantity of participation and make contributions that contribute to and enhance the discussion. You will receive a grade in the “A” range if your contributions go beyond the minimum expectations in quantity and display excellence in “listening” to and understanding others as well as depth of insight and integration in your contributions.

Final postings: write a final statement (150-200 words) about the film to your group in which you describe how your thinking has changed, improved, or become more confused, since your first posting and as a result of the group interaction. You can approach this however you want. You can give statements, refined positions, arguments you did not think of before, ask new questions, etc. Put “My Final Posting” in the subject line of your post. This should be posted by 9:00 am Pacific time Friday August 21. You are not obligated to have changed or come up with new insights to get a good grade on this posting, but in order to get a grade in the “A” range there will have to be evidence of having sought to in some way gone deeper in your thinking. The professor will read the discussion forums, but will not generally participate except to occasionally nudge a group toward staying on track, or ask a question. He may also write a general final post to the group as a whole at times.

Ethics Paper – 30%

Due 8:00 am Friday August 28, 2009

Students will write a six to ten page paper regarding an issue of interest to them in professional ethics. The paper should show a graduate level review of the literature regarding the issue and appropriate application of Christian ethical thought. Possible topics might include: What is mental health? Ethical behavior for Christian Counseling working in a secular agency. When Christians disagree, ways to address ethical conflicts in the church. Consequences of boundary violations among pastoral counselors or pastors. Or a discussion of a particular ethical conflict from a professional and Christian ethical position.

This assignment is expected in the format of the American Psychological Association publication Manual, 5th edition.

The APA publication manual can be found on reserve at the Hiebert Library. Another option is to purchase an APA template for MS Word entitled APA Style Helper 3.0. Many summaries of APA format are available on the internet. One example is published by Vanguard University and can be found at:

http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.aspx?doc_id=796 Students who are pursuing degrees other than MA in MFCC may use the Chicago Manual of Style (sometimes referred to as Turabian) or the Modern Language Association (MLA) style as stated in the MBBS Style guide.

Final Examination – 54%

Due 8:00 am Wednesday August 19, 2008

Students will be provided several vignettes showing ethical and legal dilemmas in counseling. For each vignette the students will list the (a) Legal Issues, (b) Professional Ethical Issues, and (c) Personal Ethical Issues, identify any conflicts between the issues listed, and write a chart note describing what should be done in this case.

GRADING SCALE:

A =	90-100%	Excellent
B =	80-89%	Expected
C =	70-79%	Below Expectation
F =	< 69%	Unacceptable

Course Outline:

Date	Topic	Assignments
August 10	Ethical Dilemmas: An Oversimplified Construct	Knapp & VandeCreek Ch 1* Sanders Ch 1* Bersoff pp 1- 13, 67-108* Haug
	Foundations of Ethical Behavior	Knapp & VandeCreek Ch 2* Sanders Ch 8* Bersoff Ch 3* Dueck
August 11	Charting and Record Keeping	Moline et al. Ch 3
	Application of Ethical Theories to Professional Standards of Conduct	Knapp & VandeCreek Ch 3* Sanders Ch 19 & Appendix A* Bersoff pp 109-115
August 12	Ethics of Integrating Religion in Counseling	Miller* Richards et. al Sanders Chs 2* & 4 McFall*
August 13	Ethical Decision Making	Knapp & VandeCreek Ch 4* Sanders Ch 18 Forester-Miller et al.

***Indicates Required Reading for Outlines**

Bibliography:

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- Cohen, E. d. & Cohen, G. S. (1999). *The virtuous therapist: Ethical practice of counseling and psychotherapy*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Corey, G. Corey, M.S. (2003). *Ethics in action C-D ROM, Version 1.2 (stand-alone version), 2nd Ed.* Pacific Grove, CA: Wadsworth.
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- McFall, R. M. (1990) Manifesto for a science of clinical psychology. <http://horan.asu.edu/ced522readings/mcfall/manifesto/manifest.htm> accessed April 22, 2009
- Mitchel, R. (2007). *Documentation in counseling records: An overview of ethical, legal, and clinical issues*, 3rd Ed. Alexandria, VA: ACA.
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Worthington, E. L. Jr. (Ed.) (1993). *Psychology and religious values*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.

Helpful Websites include:

<http://www.aamft.org> – American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

<http://www.bbs.ca.gov> – Board of Behavioral Sciences

<http://www.camft.org> – California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists

<http://caps.net> – Christian Association for Psychological Studies

An extremely detailed, although dated, bibliography regarding “Ethics and Issues in Counseling” by Dr. Wayne Lanning, Oklahoma State University is available at <http://home.okstate.edu/homepages.nsf/toc/ethicbiblist.html>.

Seminary Academic Policies: Academic Policies. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodation for disabilities, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar.

Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.