

## PSYO 440: COURSE OUTLINE & SYLLABUS (2022W T1)

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**Office Hours:** After class or by appointment

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**Pre-requisites:** You must have 4<sup>th</sup> year standing. In addition, you must have completed at least 6 credits of 300-level Psychology, including at least 3 credits in Category 4 (Abnormal/Personality).

**Please note, ability to register in this course will be determined following an individual interview with the course instructor, Carolyn Szostak. Ability to register is not based purely upon academic history. Given the applied nature of this course, the course is not suitable for everyone.**

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**Course Overview:** This course is an introduction to the process of counseling and interviewing. It will provide you with an opportunity to examine and explore theoretical concepts, and gain an understanding of and ability to use skills that are fundamental to counseling and other helping professions.

Initial sessions will consider general issues related to counseling, including the role of the helper, guiding ethical principles. Subsequent sessions will be organized around Egan and Reese's helping model (see assigned readings). This model emphasizes both the management of problems and the development of new opportunities. Basic client-centered skills will be introduced and practiced. These include but are not limited to the creation of a safe and trusting environment, development of therapeutic alliance, empathic listening and reflecting. The use of varied forms of questions, different ways of responding, and the use of silence will be discussed critically and practiced.

### **Required Textbooks and Readings:**

Egan, G., & Reese, R.J. (2019). *The skilled helper – A problem management and opportunity-development approach to helping*. (11<sup>th</sup> edition). Cengage Learning Inc.

Additional articles may be assigned during the semester. References will be posted on the PSYO 440 Canvas website or presented in class.

Class sessions are designed to extend *and* enrich the material presented in the assigned readings. Given the interactive and applied nature of this course, it is **imperative** that you complete the assigned readings before the scheduled class.

Please be aware that you are responsible for understanding the assigned reading material. If you have any questions about the material, you need to seek out the answers -- by raising your questions in class, seeing me outside of class, doing independent reading, posting your questions on the Discussion forum (see PSYO 440 Canvas website), etc.

**Class Format:** PSYO 440 is, in part, a seminar-type course. In general, the first part of each class will be discussion-based and will focus upon the concepts, skills, and issues addressed in the assigned readings. To facilitate some of the discussions, I will post on Canvas a brief overview of the assigned chapter, highlighting key concepts, and perhaps, posing “questions to ponder”.

The latter part of most sessions (i.e., 3<sup>rd</sup> week of classes to last class, inclusive) will be more experiential in its orientation. For the purpose of most of these activities, you will be assigned to a fixed group of three students.<sup>1</sup> Details of each activity will be provided in class. For each activity, you will take on each of three roles: helper, client, and observer. The class will end with a group discussion of the small group exercises.

It is also important to note that some of the skill development exercises may need to be completed (or practiced) outside of class sessions. In such cases, these experiences will be the focus of subsequent class discussions.

At this time, the plan is for the class to be conducted in-person. Please complete the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool (<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>) before coming to each class. Also, when you come to class, please ensure that social distancing recommendations (e.g., 2 meters separation) are followed. At this time, there is no requirement to wear a face mask. However, if you prefer to wear a mask, you certainly may.

In the event that COVID-restrictions are re-introduced, it may be necessary to shift the class to online. As needed, our class will be conducted using UBC-licensed Zoom. Please ensure that you are in a quiet place that provides you sufficient privacy. It is recommended that you access the class sessions using a laptop/desktop computer (not a smartphone). In addition, put the view on “gallery” for the class discussions so that you can see everyone. This will help everyone gain a better sense of who is in the class and facilitate development of rapport. For the triad activities, when you are in the helper or client role, please switch view to “speaker” view. This will make it easier for you to focus on the person you are talking with and help the TA and I to join the meeting room and cause less disruption.

**Learning Objectives:** After completing this course, you will be able to:

- describe what makes a counseling-type of interview effective ;
- describe the key values that underlie helping relationships;
- describe effective communication and interviewing skills;
- conduct an initial counseling-type of interview (emphasis on Stage I of the helping model);
- critically evaluate a counseling-type of interview;
- communicate more effectively verbally (in formal and less formal settings); and
- communicate your understanding of a client using effective writing skills.

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<sup>1</sup> Ideally, each group will consist of three students. However, depending upon the final class size, some groups may only have 2 students.

**Evaluation Criteria:** Mastery of course material and your ability to apply your knowledge will be evaluated as follows:

- Participation (Discussion of readings and assignments) 10%
- Participation (Skill development) 10%
- Reflective essay/journal 30%
- Transcript assignment 5%
- Interview I (including transcript) 17%
- Interview II (including transcript) 23%
- Peer Review Report (Interview I) 5%

All grades will be assigned in accordance with the system described in Section V (Academic Regulations - Grading Practices) of the 2022-2023 UBCO Calendar (see <http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,41,90,1014>).

Information about the Various Evaluative Components:

Participation (Discussion of readings and assignments): This mark will reflect two components:

1. Involvement in class discussions (8 points): In determining this mark, I will consider the extent to which your participation demonstrates that you have read the textbook, and that you helped to initiate and contribute to discussions in a *substantive* manner. That is, it's not enough to agree with something and indicate that you've found or experienced the same thing.
2. Attendance (2 points): Inconsistent attendance (including arriving late and/or departing early) will have a negative impact on this component of your grade. If you are ill, you must email me before the class.

Participation (skill development): Your performance in the skill development exercises will reflect the TA's and my observations of these activities, discussions that the TA or I have with you and/or your group, and your responsiveness to the feedback and suggestions that we offer you. On occasion, you will be asked to submit a brief commentary about these activities that will also help to inform this component of your grade. Your participation in the class discussion of the skill development exercises (i.e., class debriefing at end of triad exercise) will also inform this participation mark.

Reflective essay/journal: This assignment is described in a separate handout. Briefly, completing this assignment entails reflecting critically upon your thoughts, reactions, and personal experiences as they relate to various aspects of the course material (e.g., key concepts, specific skills, etc.). That is, each of five thematic/topical entries (and their associated follow-up sub-entries) will provide a venue for you to consider critically the connections between the "academic" (e.g., theoretical concepts and models, research evidence.), the "practical" (e.g., use of skills in an interview), and the "personal" (e.g., your beliefs, experiences, reactions, struggles and challenges). This assignment will help you to track the gains you make during the semester -- both in terms of understanding key concepts and the development of various communication skills.

*Transcript Assignment:* This assignment will involve you reviewing a transcript based upon a brief interview that explored something that the 'client' wanted to change in order to enhance their wellbeing. You will start by reviewing and discussing the transcript with your triad partners in class (October 5<sup>th</sup>). Together, try to identify the types of responses that were offered by the helper. Given the client's response to any given response of the helper, was the helper's response effective? What is the basis for your thoughts? Try to re-phrase some of the responses so that they are clearer and, perhaps, more effective. Given the client's responses, what are other approaches that you might have taken in the interview if you had been the helper?

Each student will continue the review process on their own and submit an annotated copy of the transcript. That is, using Track changes in Word (primarily comments), you will annotate the transcript – identifying types of responses made by the 'helper' and providing responses that you think would be clearer or more effective. Additional information will be given in class.

*Interview Assignments (2):* Details about these assignments are provided in a separate handout and will be discussed in class. Briefly, however, over the course of the semester, you will conduct two counseling-type interviews wherein you will focus upon trying to gain an understanding of what the "client" wants to change and, perhaps, assist the person to explore possible strategies for change. The specific length of the interview will vary. You will need to video-record each interview and submit a copy of each interview to me. You will also need to write a paper (5-8 pages (double-spaced with 1" margins; excluding references) for each interview wherein you critically evaluate the interview. Briefly, this includes identifying the skills that you used, consideration of the extent to which these skills were used appropriately and effectively, what you wished that you had done differently, and what you can do to improve your interviewing skills.

*Peer-review Report of Interview 1:* You will work collaboratively with your 440 triad partners to provide feedback to each other in regards to the first interview. The primary purpose of this exercise is for you to help each other further develop your interviewing skills. You will need to arrange a time to meet with your partners to watch, together, and discuss each of your interviews. I recommend that each of you watch the interviews on your own in advance of the meeting. After viewing and discussing the interviews – considering the strengths of the interviews and what could be done to improve the interviews – each of you will write a brief report about the process and what you gained from the peer review, considering feedback that you received about your interview but also what you learned from watching the other's interviews. For additional information about this assignment, please see the "Interview Assignment" handout.

### **Class Etiquette:**

While it is not mandatory that you attend all classes, it is strongly encouraged!!! Irregular attendance will be associated with poorer performance on most of the evaluative components.

The class is designed to be interactive. As indicated previously, many of the sessions will involve working in triads that will be established early in the semester. Accordingly, if you know that you are unable to attend a class, your group may be affected. If you know that you are going to miss a class, please inform your class partner(s) and me ([carolyn.szostak@ubc.ca](mailto:carolyn.szostak@ubc.ca)) as soon as possible.

Be aware that when you attend class, you are expected to be an active participant. That is, your attention should be focused upon the class discussions. There is not much room for hiding in this class! **Please turn off your cell phone before coming to class.** Do **not** text message (receive or send) while you are in class. As well, if you use a laptop computer (or related electronic device), please ensure that you use it exclusively for class purposes.

It is my hope that students will feel free to ask questions and offer comments concerning the material that I present in class. Please be aware that I may, at times, have to limit discussion. If you have unanswered questions or would like to pursue a specific line of discussion, please see me after class, send me an email, etc.

Finally, everyone will be asked to share their course-related experiences and perceptions (e.g., class assignments, practice interviews, etc.) with the class. This will include everyone's successes and struggles. To promote a supportive and safe environment, it is important that all personal disclosures are treated with respect and considered as private communications. You will be asked to sign a Class Conduct & Confidentiality Agreement.

**Syllabus and Assigned Readings From the Textbook:**

Note: this syllabus is tentative and subject to modification. Additional readings may be assigned.

**Unit I: Laying the Groundwork (Chapters 1 - 3)**

- September 7: Course Overview; Chapter 1 (The power of basics)
- September 14: Chapter 2 (Review the problem-management and opportunity-development process)
- Chapter 3 (Committing to the helping relationship; values)  
*We will spend the first hour (approximately) discussing Chapter 2. The rest of the class will focus upon Chapter 3.*

**Unit II: The Therapeutic Dialogue – Communication and relationship-building skills (Chapters 4 – 7)**

- September 21: Chapter 4 (Therapeutic presence: Tuning in and listening carefully)  
*- Triad activities begin*
- September 28: Chapter 5 (Empathic responding: working towards mutual understanding)
- October 5: Chapters 4 & 5 (Empathic listening and responding)  
*- Transcript Assignment to be distributed (focus of Triad activity)*  
*- Initial journal submission is due no later than 6 pm.*
- October 12: Chapter 6 (Master the art of probing and summarizing)  
*- Interview I consent forms to be distributed*  
*- Transcript Assignment due no later than 6 pm.*
- October 19: Chapter 7 (Helping clients challenge themselves: from new perspectives to new behavior)
- October 26: Review: Chapters 4 – 7 (Stepping back and seeing how the pieces fit together)  
*- new triad assignments; 6-week helping exercise begins*  
*- Interview I due by 6:00 pm at the latest*

**Unit III: The Stages and Tasks of the Problem-management and Opportunity Development Model (Chapters 8-11)**

- November 2: Chapter 8 (The action arrow)  
- *Peer Review of Interview I due no later than 6 pm*
- November 9: *Fall Study Break and Remembrance Day (November 7 – 11)*
- November 16: Chapter 9 (Three tasks of Stage I)  
- *Interview II Consent forms distributed*
- November 23: Chapter 10 (State II: Helping client develop and set problem-managing goals)
- November 30: Chapter 11 (Stage III: Helping clients design the way forward)  
- *Interview II due by 6:00 pm at the latest*
- December 7: Final triad sessions (note: first half of class)  
A final class discussion: Wrapping up PSYO 440

*Note: Reflective Journals are due no later than 6:00 pm Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> (this is because you must write a final summary entry following our last class on December 7<sup>th</sup>)*

**Pertinent UBCO Policies and Services:**

**Academic Integrity:** The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the *UBCO Academic Calendar* at <http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0>.

**UBC Okanagan Disability Resource Centre:** The Disability Resource Centre ensures educational equity for students with disabilities, injuries or illness. If you are disabled, have an

injury or illness and require academic accommodations to meet the course objectives, please contact Earllene Roberts, the Diversity Advisor for the Disability Resource Centre located in Commons Corner in the University Centre building (UNC 227).

**UNC 215** 250-807-8053

Email: [drc.questions@ubc.ca](mailto:drc.questions@ubc.ca)

Web: <https://students.ok.ubc.ca/academic-success/disability-resources/>

**UBC Okanagan Ombuds Office:** The Ombuds Office offers independent, impartial, and confidential support to students in navigating UBC policies, processes, and resources, as well as guidance in resolving concerns related to fairness.

**UNC 227B** 250.807.9818

email: [ombuds.office.ok@ubc.ca](mailto:ombuds.office.ok@ubc.ca)

Web: <https://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca/>

**UBC Okanagan Equity and Inclusion Office:** UBC Okanagan is a place where every student, staff and faculty member should be able to study and work in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. UBC prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of the following grounds: age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or unrelated criminal conviction. If you require assistance related to an issue of equity, discrimination or harassment, please contact the Equity and Inclusion Office.

**UNC 227C** 250.807.9291

email: [equity.ubco@ubc.ca](mailto:equity.ubco@ubc.ca)

Web: [www.ubc.ca/okanagan/equity](http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/equity)

## **SAFEWALK**

Don't want to walk alone at night? Not too sure how to get somewhere on campus? Call Safewalk at **250-807-8076**. For more information, see:

<http://www.ubc.ca/okanagan/students/campuslife/safewalk.html>

**Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO):** A safe and confidential place for UBC students, staff and faculty who have experienced sexual violence regardless of when or where it took place. Just want to talk? We are here to listen and help you explore your options. We can help you find a safe place to stay, explain your reporting options (UBC or police), accompany you to the hospital, or support you with academic accommodations. You have the right to choose what happens next. We support your decision, whatever you decide.

Visit <https://svpro.ok.ubc.ca> or call us at 250.807.9640

**Independent Investigations Office (IIO):** If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault or some other form of sexual misconduct by a UBC community member and you want the Independent Investigations Office (IIO) at UBC to investigate, please contact the IIO. Investigations are conducted in a trauma informed, confidential and respectful manner in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

You can report your experience directly to the IIO via email: [director.of.investigations@ubc.ca](mailto:director.of.investigations@ubc.ca) or by calling 604.827.2060 or online by visiting <https://investigationsoffice.ubc.ca>