

**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY AND COUNSELING  
FALL SEMESTER, 2007  
PSYC8800  
LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN PSYCHOLOGY  
3 HOURS**

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S)

Knapp, S. J., & VandeCreek, L. D. (2006). *Practical Ethics for Psychologists: A Positive Approach*. Washington, D.C.: APA Books.

REQUIRED READINGS

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 47, 1597-1611.

American Psychological Association (n.d.a). *APA guidelines for providers of psychological services to ethnic, linguistic, and culturally diverse populations*. Retrieved January 8, 2007 from <http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/guide.html>

American Psychological Association (n.d.b). *Guidelines for ethicalconduct in the care and use of animals*. Retrieved January 8, 2007 from<http://www.apa.org/science/animal2.html>

Braun, S. A., & Cox, J. A. (2005). Manager mental health care: Intentional misdiagnosis of mental disorders. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 83, 425-433.

Campbell, C. D., & Gordon, M. C. (2003). Acknowledging the inevitable: Understanding multiple relationships in rural practice. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 34, 430-434.

Committee on Legal Issues, American Psychological Association. (2006). Strategies for private practitioners coping with subpoenas or compelled testimony for client records or test data. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 37, 215-222.

Dombeck, M. T., & Olsan, T. H. (2002). Ethics and managed care. *Journal of Interprofessional Care*, 16, 221-233.

Eberlein, L. (1987). Introducing ethics to beginning psychologists: A problem-solving approach. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 18,353-359.

Fisher, C. B., & Fried, A. L. (2003). Internet-mediated psychological services and the American Psychological Association ethics code. *Psychotherapy, Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 40, 103-111.

Knapp, S. (2001). Ethical issues in personality assessment in forensic psychology. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 77, 242-254.

Knauss, L. K. (2001). Ethical issues in psychological assessment in school settings. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 77, 231-241.

Lazarus, A. A. (1994). How certain boundaries and ethics diminish therapeutic effectiveness. *Ethics & Behavior*, 4, 255-261.

Miller, V. A., Drotar, D., & Kodish, E. (2004). Children's competence for assent and consent: A review of empirical findings. *Ethics & Behavior*, 14, 255-295.

Pipes, R. B., Holstein, J. E., & Aguirre, M. G. (2005). Examining the personal-professional distinction: Ethics codes and the difficulty of drawing a boundary. *American Psychologist*, 60, 325-334.

Pomerantz, A. M., & Handelsman, M. H. (2004). Informed consent revisited: An updated written question format. *Professional psychology: Research and Practice*, 35, 201-205.

Rogers, R. (1987) Ethical dilemmas in forensic evaluations. *Behavioral Sciences & The Law*, 5, 149-160.

Rupert, P. A., Kozlowski, N. F., Hoffman, L. A., Daniels, D. D., & Piette, J. M. (1999). Practical and ethical issues in teaching psychological testing. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 30, 209-214.

Stuart, R. B. (2004). Twelve practical suggestions for achieving multicultural competence. *Professional psychology: Research and Practice*, 35, 3-9.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Review of legal and ethical dilemmas and decisions faced in psychological practice, including research, assessment, teaching, therapeutic intervention, consultation, and court testimony. Emphasis will be placed on a review of professional guidelines and the process of ethical decision-making. Limited to advanced students in psychology. Prerequisite: Admission to Graduate Program in Department.

#### M.S. CLINICAL-COUNSELING OBJECTIVES

Students will demonstrate:

1. competence in appropriate assessment practices and issues. (COE-2)
2. knowledge of DSM diagnostic criteria, skill at applying diagnostic techniques appropriately, and awareness of issues relevant to specific diagnostic categories. (COE- 2,3,4)
3. the ability to prevent psychological problems through alteration of pathological environments and early intervention. (COE-1,2)
4. appropriate use of interventions at the individual and systems levels. (COE-1,2)
5. the integration of information from several sources (e.g., testing, interviews, etc.) in the writing of assessment reports and intervention notes and plans. (COE-2)
6. active and skillful consultation with other professionals and consumers. (COE-1,2)
7. knowledge and awareness of current issues in the field of psychology and mental health (e.g., neuropsychological assessment, substance abuse treatment, managed care practice, health psychology, and other relevant issues). (COE-1,3,4)
8. awareness of the needs of a culturally diverse clientele. (COE-3,4)
9. ethical decision-making and resolution of moral dilemmas. (COE-1,2,3)

#### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will be able to articulate the ethical guidelines for professional practice, including the following areas (Principle #1):
  - a. Research

- b. Assessment
  - c. Diagnosis and Treatment
  - d. Professional Conduct
  - e. Confidentiality
  - f. Working with diverse populations
  - g. Court testimony and consultation
2. Students will be able to demonstrate the appropriate decision-making process when faced with sample ethical dilemmas (Principle #9).

COURSE EVALUATION (related to objectives and activities)

Exams: There will be three exams, each worth 20% of your grade. These exams will consist of essay and short-answer questions to reflect material discussed in class and appearing in the assigned reading. Missing an exam for any reason deemed avoidable by the instructor will result in failure of the course.

Paper: You are required to write a 12-15 page paper for this course on a topic in ethics, to be selected by the student with consultation from the instructor. Said topic should be selected by the third week of the course. This paper will be worth 15% of your course grade and should reflect a balance of information gleaned from research and personal views on the topic. Late papers will be penalized a letter grade for each class late.

Leadership: Each student will be responsible for leading the class discussion on one topic. A list of topics is on the final page of the syllabus. Students will select their topics by the second class period. You should be prepared to raise the basic ethical issues, and then guide the discussion, to last 30-45 minutes. Grading will be based on preparation, organization, and the extent to which you can get your fellow students to participate actively in an in-depth discussion on the selected topic. The leadership requirement will constitute 10% of your grade.

Debate: Case examples will be used in class, and pairs of students (if there are an odd number of students, one debate will involve three possible positions) will be required to debate opposing sides of the ethical debate. A list of debate topics is on the final page of the syllabus. For these debates, students will not be told which side or position they are to support prior to class. You should prepare all possible arguments, and then a random process (i.e., a coin flip) will be used to assign the "side" each student will take. The debate format will involve a five minute opening statement by each side. Questions may then be asked of the participants by the audience, including other students and myself. Both sides will have the chance to respond to questions. Grading will be based on preparation, appropriate use and knowledge of the APA Ethical Principles, and presentation of arguments. The debate will constitute 10% of your grade.

Participation: Active, productive input is expected from all students. This course is more dependent on classroom discussion than any other course I teach; without active discussion, little will be accomplished. A total of 5% of your grade will be based on the quantity and quality of your participation.

Grading Criteria:

Exam 1:	20%
Exam 2:	20%
Exam 3:	20%
Paper:	15%
Leadership:	10%

Debate: 10%  
Participation: 5%

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

VSU policy requires class attendance. You will be expected to attend all class sessions unless outstanding and demonstrable circumstances arise. Unexcused absences and/or repeated late attendance will result in a penalty of one percentage point deducted from course average per hour of class missed without an excuse deemed acceptable by the instructor. In accordance with VSU policy, missing greater than 20% of in-class time will result in an automatic failure of the course.

### CELL PHONE/TECHNOLOGY POLICY

You may use a laptop to type notes, but use of laptops for activities unrelated to class activities will result in being asked to leave. Using cell phones to take pictures, text message, or to make phone calls during class is prohibited. Cell phones should be switched off and left in bookbags, purses, or pockets. Having a cell phone on your desk will subject it to being confiscated for the duration of the class. MP3 players or other stereo equipment with earpieces or cell phones should also be switched off and put away during class time.

### PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING POLICY:

The full text of this policy is available in the College of Education Dean's Office, EC room 227. The following penalties will be enforced, as stated in the Policy:

**First Offense:** The student will earn the letter grade of "F" for the course.

**Second Offense:** The student will earn the letter grade of "F" for the course, and further appropriate action involving referral of the matter (with documentation) to the appropriate university officials within the administrative structure will be taken.

If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, I recommend you review the following web site:

[http://www.valdosta.edu/~cbarnbau/personal/teaching\\_MISC/plagiarism.htm](http://www.valdosta.edu/~cbarnbau/personal/teaching_MISC/plagiarism.htm)

### INSTRUCTOR

David Wasieleski, Ph.D.  
#306 Regional Center for Continuing Education  
Office Hours:  
MWF 9:30-11:00 a.m.  
TR 1-5:00pm  
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dwasiel@valdosta.edu  
<http://chiron.valdosta.edu/dtwasiel>  
(Available at other times by appointment)

### SPECIAL NEEDS STATEMENT

Valdosta State University, in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, will make arrangements for students who require special assistance due to a disability. If you require some assistance, do not hesitate to make me aware of it. Students requesting classroom accommodations or modifications because of a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in room 1115 Nevins Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (voice) and 219-1348 (tty).

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### COURSE SCHEDULE

8/15/07	Chapter 1: Remedial and Positive Ethics
	Chapter 2: Foundations of Ethical Behavior Outside reading: APA (2002)
8/22/07	Chapter 3: Applying Ethical Theories
	Outside reading: Pipes, Holstein, and Aguirre (2005) Chapter 4: Ethical decision-making
8/29/07	Outside reading: Eberlein (1987) Chapter 5: Competence
9/5/07	Outside reading: APA (n.d.a)
	Outside reading: Stuart (2004)
9/12/07	<b>Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5)</b> Chapter 6: Multiple Relationships and Professional Boundaries
9/19/07	Outside reading: Lazarus (1994)
	Outside reading: Campbell and Gordon (2003) Chapter 7: Informed Consent
9/26/07	Outside reading: Pomerantz and Handelsman (2004)
	Outside reading: Miller, Drotar, and Kodish (2004) Chapter 8: Confidentiality
10/3/07	Outside reading: Committee on Legal Issues, APA (2006)
	Outside reading: Fisher and Fried (2003)

10/10/07	Chapter 9: Life-Endangering Patients Chapter 12: Assessment
10/17/07	Outside reading: Knauss (2001)
10/24/07	Outside reading: Rupert et al (1999) <b>Exam #2 (Chapters 6, 7, 8, 9, &amp; 12)</b> Chapter 10: Business Issues
10/31/07	Outside reading: Braun and Cox (2005)
	Outside reading: Dombeck and Olsan (2002) Chapter 11: Forensic Psychology
11/7/07	Outside reading: Rogers (1987)
	Outside reading: Knapp and VandeCreek (2001) Chapter 14: Teaching Chapter 15: Supervision
11/14/07	<b>Paper Due</b> Chapter 16: Research and Scholarship
11/28/07	Outside reading: APA (n.d.b)
Friday, 12/7/07, 7:15-10pm*	<b>Final exam: Chapters 10, 11, 14, 15, &amp; 16</b>

\*Final exam time and date subject to change.

#### Leadership Topics

Application of the ethics code to one's personal life (chapter 3)  
 Adherence to the Code: protecting the client or covering one's rear? (chapter 4)  
 Learning ethics in the classroom vs. in the field (chapter 4)  
 Competence with cultural and linguistic minorities (chapter 5)  
 Therapeutic boundaries: helpful or harmful? (chapter 6)  
 Multiple role relationships in rural settings (chapter 6)  
 Children's ability to consent to treatment (chapter 7)  
 Coping with a subpoena (chapter 8)  
 Confidentiality and Internet Therapy (chapter 8)  
 Ethical issues in teaching psychological testing (chapter 12)  
 Intentional misdiagnosis (chapter 10)  
 Managed care (chapter 10)  
 Forensic psychology: Who is the client? (chapter 11)  
 Students' and professors' views of ethics in academia (chapter 14)  
 Animal research (chapter 16)

#### Debate Topics

\*The "2 year rule" for post-termination sexual relationships (chapter 6)

Children's ability to consent to treatment (chapter 7)

Duty to warn and HIV (chapter 9)

Mandated reporting of child abuse (chapter 9)

Intentional misdiagnosis (chapter 10)

Forensic testimony (chapter 11)

\*Academic standards: plagiarism (chapter 14)

\*may be used as a 3-person debate