Course Syllabus for APCE 657-700: Legal and Ethical Aspects of Counseling and Psychology
Fall 2017

INSTRUCTOR: Jeffrey Rings, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist, Associate Professor of APCE

GRAD ASSISTANT: Jenn Geiman, B.A.

CREDIT HOURS: Three (3) semester hours

DATES and TIMES:  
- Fridays (11/17 and 12/1)  
  4pm to 10pm
- Saturdays (11/18 and 12/2)  
  8am to 5pm
- Sundays (11/19 and 12/3)  
  8am to 4pm

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment only

CONTACT INFORMATION:
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  Email: Jeffrey.rings@unco.edu
  Phone: 970.351.1639 (Office)
  Fax: 970.351.2625

PREREQUISITES: None

INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS: Jeffrey Rings earned his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Denver. His research interests and areas of specialization include clinical supervision, crisis intervention, grief and loss, suicide risk assessment and prevention, and Veterans’ issues.

IMPORTANT NOTE 1: The version of this syllabus is for master’s degree-seeking students only (e.g., Clinical Mental Health Counseling, School Counseling). If you are a
student in a doctoral program (e.g., Counseling Psychology), please consult the instructor and ensure that you obtain a current copy of the doctoral-level version of the syllabus.

**IMPORTANT NOTE 2:** Although every attempt will be made to follow this syllabus, the instructor reserves the right to make changes as the course proceeds. In such instances, you will be provided with as much advance notice and/or accommodations as is possible.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The course covers the interrelationship of ethical standards and legal regulation in professional counseling, education, and psychology. Ethical standards, litigation, and legal regulation are examined in regard to professional practice.

**COURSE CONTENT:** This course is designed to address ethical and legal considerations for professional counseling, education, and psychology. It covers ethical standards for clinical counseling, school counseling, couple and family counseling, and psychology. It also addresses litigation and legal regulation in regard to professional practice. The course will introduce students to ethical standards of professional organizations and credentialing bodies (i.e., American Counseling Association, American School Counseling Association, Association of Marriage and Family Therapy).

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:** This class is taught in a lecture/discussion/activity format. Students will be involved in learning in a variety of ways (lectures, videos, small group discussions, in-class activities and projects, whole class discussions). The reading and assignment schedule is contained in this syllabus. Students are informed of these deadlines in advance and are expected to adhere to them.

**AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION COMPETENCY BENCHMARKS IN PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY RELATED TO THE COURSE:**

<p>| 3. Ethical Legal Standards and Policy: Application of ethical concepts and awareness of legal issues regarding professional activities with individuals, groups, and organizations. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| <strong>READINESS FOR PRACTICUM</strong> | <strong>READINESS FOR INTERNSHIP</strong> | <strong>READINESS FOR ENTRY TO PRACTICE</strong> |
| 3A. Knowledge of ethical, legal and professional standards and guidelines | Demonstrates intermediate level knowledge and understanding of the APA Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct and other relevant ethical/professional codes, standards and guidelines, laws, statutes, rules, and regulations. Examples: | Demonstrates advanced knowledge and application of the APA Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct and other relevant ethical, legal and professional standards and guidelines. Examples: |
| Demonstrates basic knowledge of the principles of the APA Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct [ethical practice and basic skills in ethical decision making]; demonstrates beginning level knowledge of legal and regulatory issues in the practice of psychology that apply to practice while | | Addresses complex ethical and legal issues. |
| | | Articulates potential conflicts in complex ethical and legal issues. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>placed at practicum setting</th>
<th>Actively consults with supervisor to act upon ethical and legal aspects of practice</th>
<th>Seeks to prevent problems and unprofessional conduct</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examples:</td>
<td>Addresses ethical and legal aspects within the case conceptualization</td>
<td>Demonstrates advanced knowledge of typical legal issues, including child and elder abuse reporting, HIPAA, confidentiality, and informed consent</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates beginning knowledge of typical legal issues, including child and elder abuse reporting, confidentiality, and informed consent</td>
<td>Discusses ethical implications of professional work</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Identifies key documents/policies that guide the practice of psychology (e.g., APA Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct)</td>
<td>Recognizes and discusses limits of own ethical and legal knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>3B. Awareness and Application of Ethical Decision Making</td>
<td>Demonstrates intermediate knowledge of typical legal issues, including child and elder abuse reporting, confidentiality, and informed consent</td>
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<td>Demonstrates awareness of the importance of applying an ethical decision model to practice</td>
<td>Independently utilizes an ethical decision-making model in professional work</td>
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<td>Examples:</td>
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<td>• Recognizes the importance of basic ethical concepts applicable in initial practice (e.g. child abuse reporting, Informed consent, confidentiality, multiple relationships, and competence)</td>
<td>• Demonstrates awareness of an ethical decision making model applied to case vignettes</td>
<td>• Applies applicable ethical principles and standards in professional writings and presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates awareness of an ethical decision making model applied to case vignettes</td>
<td>Demonstrates knowledge and application of an ethical decision-making model; applies relevant elements of ethical decision making to a dilemma</td>
<td>• Applies applicable ethics concepts in research design and subject treatment</td>
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<td>3C. Ethical Conduct</td>
<td>Integrates own moral principles/ethical values in professional conduct</td>
<td>Independently integrates ethical and legal standards with all competencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Displays ethical attitudes and values</td>
<td>Examples:</td>
<td>Examples:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples:</td>
<td>• Able to articulate knowledge of own moral principles and ethical values with supervisors and peers about ethical issues</td>
<td>• Demonstrates adherence to ethical and legal standards in professional activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evidences desire to help others</td>
<td>• Is able to spontaneously discusses intersection of personal and professional ethical &amp; moral issues</td>
<td>• Takes responsibility for continuing professional development</td>
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<td>• Shows honesty and integrity; values ethical behavior</td>
<td>4A. Reflective Practice</td>
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<td>• Demonstrates personal courage consistent with ethical values of psychologists</td>
<td>4. Reflective Practice/Self-Assessment/Self-Care: Practice conducted with personal and professional self-awareness and reflection; with awareness of competencies; with appropriate self-care.</td>
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<td>• Displays appropriate boundary management</td>
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<td>4A. Reflective Practice</td>
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Displays basic mindfulness and self-awareness; engages in reflection regarding professional practice
Examples:
- Demonstrates openness to:
  - considering own personal concerns and issues
  - recognizing impact of self on others
  - articulating attitudes, values, and beliefs toward diverse others
  - self-identifying multiple individual and cultural identities
  - systematically reviewing own professional performance with supervisors/teachers

Displays broadened self-awareness; utilizes self-monitoring; engages in reflection regarding professional practice; uses resources to enhance reflectivity
Examples:
- Is able to articulate attitudes, values, and beliefs toward diverse others
- Recognizes impact of self on others
- Self-identifies multiple individual and cultural identities
- Is able to describe how others experience him/her and identifies roles one might play within a group
- Responsively utilizes supervision to enhance reflectivity
- Reviews own professional performance via video or audiotape with supervisors
- Displays ability to adjust professional performance as situation requires

Demonstrates reflectivity both during and after professional activity; acts upon reflection; uses self as a therapeutic tool
Examples:
- Monitors and evaluates attitudes, values and beliefs towards diverse others
- Systematically and effectively monitors and adjusts professional performance in action as situation requires
- Recognizes and addresses own problems, minimizing interference with competent professional functioning


CACREP COURSE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES):
Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Understand ethical standards of professional organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling (CACREP II.G.1.j).
2. Understand ethical and legal considerations specifically related to the practice of clinical mental health counseling (CACREP CMHC.A.2). [Will be assessed through Written Assignments]
3. An awareness of professional issues that affect clinical mental health counselors (e.g., core provider status, expert witness status, access to and practice privileges within managed care system) (CACREP CMHC.A.7). [Will be assessed through Written Assignments]
4. Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in clinical mental health counseling (CACREP CMHC.B.1). [Will be assessed through Written Assignments]
5. Understand the ethical and legal considerations specifically related to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.A.2).
6. Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in marriage, couple and family counseling (CACREP MCFC.B.1).
7. Understand confidentially responsibilities, the legal responsibilities and liabilities of clinical practice and research, family law, record keeping, reimbursement, and the business aspects of practice (CACREP MCFC.D.5).
8. Understand ethical and legal considerations specifically related to the practice of school counseling (CACREP SC.A.2). [Will be assessed through Written Assignments]
9. Demonstrate the ability to apply and adhere to ethical and legal standards in school counseling (CACREP SC.B.1). [Will be assessed through Written Assignments]
10. Know counseling supervision models, practices, and processes (CACREP II.G.1.e).
11. Understand professional credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues (CACREP II.G.1.g).

TEXTS AND ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS:


2) Your respective professional organization’s code of ethics, as applicable:
   - **All PC Students** must acquire the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014). Available online at: [http://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf](http://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf)
   - **School Counseling majors ALSO** must acquire the American School Counselor Association’s *Ethical Standards for School Counselors*, available at the ASCA web site: [https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf](https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf)
   - **Marriage, Couples, and Family Counseling/Therapy majors ALSO** must acquire copies of **BOTH** (a) the ethical code for the AAMFT (available online at [http://www.aamft.org/iMIS15/AAMFT/Content/Legal_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics.aspx](http://www.aamft.org/iMIS15/AAMFT/Content/Legal_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics.aspx)) and (b) the IAMFC Ethical Codes (available online at [http://www.iamfconline.org/public/department3.cfm](http://www.iamfconline.org/public/department3.cfm))
   - If students are enrolled in an additional specialty, they should consult with the instructor.

3) *Journal Articles*: Several journal articles also will serve as required readings in addition to these texts. These specific articles are noted below in the Course Schedule and References List on the last page. You are responsible for securing these readings from the UNC Library system.

3) The appropriate CO DORA Documents. These documents (e.g., Colorado Mental Health Statutes, the respective appropriate Board of Examiner Rules and Policies documents) all are available for download in Canvas.

Also Highly Recommended


COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS: All written assignments should be submitted using standard APA format (sixth edition). Unless indicated otherwise, please submit all assignments electronically via Canvas through the appropriate portal (e.g., Assignments tab). All assignments are due before class on the respective dates posted in this syllabus. Any assignment turned in later than the posted time will receive a 10% reduction in the total points possible for that assignment for each day that it is late. Exceptions will be made only in cases of documented family or personal emergencies. Out of courtesy, please do not submit assignments during class time; instead, wait until designated breaks or after class.

1) **Class Attendance/Participation (15 points):** Please plan to attend all course meetings in their entirety and meaningfully engage in all course discussions and activities. Your attendance and degree of participation will be tracked by the instructors. Meaningful engagement means that your comments are additive to the discussion at hand and do not detract from the conversation or are not focused solely on personal issues. This class is highly collaborative in nature, thus a failure to remain meaningfully engaged potentially impacts the learning of the whole group.

You are expected to notify the instructor, via email, of any need to be late to class. If you suspect that attendance of any portion of this class may be difficult for you, then you are STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to take it at another time. Lack of participation or tardiness will result in a loss of points and may result in a course grade reduction of at least one letter grade. Any unexcused absence may result in failing the course. “Incompletes” are to be completed in the next academic term.

Please read the assigned readings prior to class and be prepared to discuss during class. Lecture and small group discussion times will highlight the materials assigned for that day. Students are responsible for all of the material in the assigned readings, as not everything in the readings can be discussed during class time.

2) **Personal Values Assessment (25 points; Due 11/21/17 @ 11:59pm): [“NOTE: This assignment also is being completed as part of your PC program’s Student Biannual Review Process. Please consult the program for further details regarding its submission.”]**

Prompt: Please reflect on/consider your own set of personal values, beliefs, and unique characteristics as discussed in class; then, respond to the following two prompts in approximately 6 to 7 pages:
- Please describe three personal values, beliefs, or characteristics that you believe could negatively impact your work as a counselor. Please explain your points in some detail, including some examples that provide context.
- Please describe three personal values, beliefs, or characteristics that you believe could positively impact your work as a counselor. Again, please explain your points in some detail, including some examples that provide context.
Further Instructions: You're welcome to address particular values that you hold, beliefs, characteristics of yours, and so on that make up who you are as a person all BEFORE you entered the profession. In other words, these all are to be personally-based rather than professionally-based. For each of these that you choose to write about (three potentially hindering your work in the profession, three potentially helpful), you need to (a) concretely explain what you mean by it, (b) explain how you think it originated, (c) how you think that it might impact your work with clients, and for the three potential hindrances, (d) how you'll try to counteract said potential impact. Please address each one of the six separately, in about a page apiece (this paper should be about six to seven pages). If you want to address one particular issue as both positive and negative, you may do that no more than once, and you then need to write about it twice.

3) Ethical Dilemma Assignment (40 points; Final Draft): You will be given one case study involving an ethical dilemma for you to resolve; one that is relevant to your unique area of concentration/field of study. Further instructions will be provided when your case study is distributed.

- Rough Draft Due: 11/26/17 (11:59pm)
- Final Draft Due: 12/7/17 (11:59pm)

4) Personal Disclosure Statement Document (20 points; Due 12/1/17 at 4pm): Following graduation yet pre-licensure, imagine that you will be working in a private practice setting. Please develop and customize a personal disclosure statement document that you could use at that time; include everything that is required as well as some personal touches. Please make sure to include some information about your theoretical orientation, your approach to counseling and for setting goals, and techniques regularly used. You MUST bring a paper copy of your statement with you to class on Friday, 12/1.

Important note: This is a simulated informed consent document only. Once you are out of school, at minimum you would need to modify this document to fit your work environment and to ensure that it remains compliant with current Colorado law.

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<th>BREAKDOWN OF TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation: 15 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Values Assessment: 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethical Dilemma (Final Draft): 40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Disclosure Statement: 20</td>
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<td>Total Points Possible: 100 points</td>
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TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE:
**PLEASE NOTE: Although every attempt will be made to follow this schedule, Dr. Rings reserves the right to make changes as the semester proceeds. In such instances, you will be provided with as much advance notice and/or accommodations as is possible.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments Due</th>
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| 11/17 | • Course Orientation/Introductions  
• Introduction to Ethics  
• Ethical Codes  
• Ethical Code Group Presentation Prep | • Corey: Chp 1  
• All ethical codes as applicable |
| 11/18 | • Therapist Personhood/Values  
• Ethical Code Group Presentations  
• Professional Competence I | • Corey: Chps 2, 3, 8  
• Kocet & Herlihy, 2014  
• Zerubavel & Wright, 2012 |
| 11/19 | • DORA & CO Mental Health Law  
• Ethical Decision Making Models  
• Informed Consent  
• Multicultural Competencies | • Corey: Chps 4, 5  
• Crowder & Lowe, 2000  
• McIntosh, 1989  
• DORA Documents  
• Values Assignment due 11/21  
• Ethical Dilemma (RD) due 11/26 |
| 12/1 | • Confidentiality Issues  
• Managing Boundaries & MRRs  
• Personal Disclosure Statements*  
  (*Must bring a paper copy to class!)  
• ED Assignment Group Discussion*  
  (*Must bring a copy to class!) | • Corey: Chps 6, 7  
• Joint Task Force…, 2013  
• Personal Disclosures due today |
| 12/2 | • Ethical Issues in School Counseling  
• Going to Court | • Corey: Chps 9, 10  
• Broderhorn, 2006 (SC only)  
• Dailor & Jacob, 2011 (SC only)  
• Kiel & Knoblauch, 2010  
• Murphy, 2011 |
| 12/3 | • Ethical Issues in CFT  
• Professional Competence II | • Corey: Chp 9, 10, 11  
• Vasquez et al., 2008  
• Course Evaluations (EC)  
• Ethical Dilemma (Final) Due 12/7  
• All EC Due 12/8 |
ACADEMIC CONDUCT: Cheating on examinations, submitting work of other students as your own, or plagiarism in any form will result in penalties ranging from an “F” or “U” on an assignment to expulsion from the University.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT: Students are expected to adhere to the appropriate code of ethics for their particular program. Any behavior which is deemed unethical will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

ACCOMMODATIONS STATEMENT: Students who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disability Support Services, voice/TTY (970) 351-2289, or fax (970) 351-4166, or visit www.unco.edu/dss as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT: The College of Education and Behavioral Sciences (CEBS) supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff within CEBS will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples’ perspectives, behaviors, and world views may be different from their own.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: All cell phones and pagers are to be turned off or set to vibrate mode during class time. No emailing, Facebooking, text messaging, etc. during class time. If a student has a particular need (e.g., is on-call for work or has children at home) they are expected to notify the instructor prior to the beginning of class so that accommodations can be made.

AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING POLICY: With the exception of your own written work and other-published works, all other course-related materials are considered the intellectual property of the instructor and/or the UNC Department of Applied Psychology and Counselor Education. Audio/video recording of any and all occurrences during class time (e.g., lectures, discussions, presentations, activities, small group projects, etc.) is expressly prohibited by the instructor. Exceptions may be granted based on documented disability (see Accommodations Statement above) or on a case-by-case basis only. Violations of this policy may be considered as violations of academic and/or professional conduct as described above.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT/TITLE IX STATEMENT: The University of Northern Colorado prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. UNC is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence). If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to UNC’s Title IX Coordinator. “Disclosure” may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text message, or through in/out of class assignments. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct,
please contact the UNC Counseling Center (970-351-2496) or the Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (970-351-4040). If you would like to learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, please visit www.unco.edu/sexualmisconduct.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED READINGS:


PLEASE READ and PRINT THIS SYLLabus and BRing TO CLASS EVERY DAY

***SAVE A COPY OF ALL SYLLABUS FOR YOUR RECORDS AND FOR POSSIBLE FUTURE SUBMISSION TO LICENSURE BOARDS***