



## APCE 603: Understanding Children, Adolescents, and Their Systems Fall 2024: October 11 – 13; October 25 - 27

### First Weekend

Oct. 11 4pm-10pm  
Oct. 12 8am-5pm  
Oct. 13 8am-4pm

### Second Weekend

Oct. 25 4pm-10pm  
Oct. 26 8am-5pm  
Oct. 27 8am-4pm

### **Instructor:**

Jennifer Santopietro, PhD, LPC, SSP/SC  
Pronouns: she, her, hers  
**Email:** [jennifer.santopietro@unco.edu](mailto:jennifer.santopietro@unco.edu)  
**Office Hours:** By appointment via Zoom

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** 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 possible.

**Prerequisite:** Successful completion of APCE 607: Theories of Counseling.

### **Course Description:**

This course is intended to provide a comprehensive study of therapeutic approaches and techniques for children and adolescents and is designed to develop students' knowledge and skills in the theory and practice of working with pediatric populations. The course will focus on the therapeutic involvement of significant others with children in a variety of settings and emphasize the counseling process and collaboration with the community, family and school systems. Contemporary issues and interventions addressed include: typical developmental problems, creative interventions, crisis management, exceptional children, parenting skills, multicultural considerations, and ethical concerns.

### **Required Texts:**

Smith-Adcock, S. L. (2023). *Counseling Children and Adolescents* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc. (US).  
You can purchase or rent the text here: <https://bookshelf.vitalsource.com/books/9781544386027>  
\*\*\*other sites may have this text as well!

### **Journal Articles & Additional Resources (Available on Canvas—other articles may be added throughout the course)**

- 1) Casey, B. J., Jones, R. M., & Somerville, L. H. (2011). Braking and accelerating of the adolescent brain. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(1), 21-33.
- 2) Dumontheil, I. (2016). Adolescent brain development. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*. 10, 39 – 44.
- 3) Hall, T. M., Kaduson, H. G., & Schaefer, C. E. (2002). Fifteen effective play therapy techniques. *Professional psychology: Research and practice*, 33(6), 515.
- 4) Lowenstein, L. (2022). *Favorite therapeutic activities for children, adolescents, and their families: Practitioners share their most effective interventions*. Champion Press
- 5) Luciana, M. (2010). Adolescent brain development: Current themes and future directions: Introduction to the special issue.



- 6) Males M. (2009). Does the adolescent brain make risk-taking inevitable?: A skeptical appraisal. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. 24, 3–20.
- 7) Rowan, C.B. (2023): Independent adolescent consent to mental health care: An ethical perspective, *Ethics & Behavior*, DOI: 10.1080/10508422.2023.223714
- 8) Stone, C. (2011) Serious and foreseeable harm or clear, imminent danger. ASCA Blog Post
- 9) Suleiman, A. B., Galván, A., Harden, K. P., & Dahl, R. E. (2017). Becoming a sexual being: The ‘elephant in the room’ of adolescent brain development. *Developmental cognitive neuroscience*, 25, 209-220.

## **Additional Resources to Support Your Practice**

Treatment planning books for various ages (with sample goals/objectives) [PracticePlanners | PracticePlanners \(wiley.com\)](#)

Landreth, G. *Play therapy: The art of the relationship*. (2023). Fourth ed. Routledge.  
Siegel, D. *The whole-brain child*. (2012). Bantam Books Trade Paperbacks.

## **Knowledge, Skills, and Outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course students will:

1. Know theories of individual and family development and transitions across the lifespan (CACREP II.G.3.a).
2. Understand the effects of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on persons of children (CACREP II.G.3.c).
3. Understand a general framework for exceptional abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions (CACREP II.G.3.e).
4. Understand human behavior, including an understanding of developmental crises, disability, psychopathology, and situational and environmental factors that affect both normal and abnormal behavior (CACREP II.G.3.f).
5. Understand theories for facilitating optimal development and wellness over the lifespan (CACREP II.G.3.h).
6. Know the principles and models of assessment, case conceptualization, theories of human development, and concepts of normalcy and psychopathology leading to diagnoses and appropriate counseling treatment plans (CACREP CMHC.G.1).
7. Understand the cultural, ethical, economic, legal, and political issues surrounding diversity, equity, and excellence in terms of student learning (CACREP SC.E.1).
8. Understand the influence of multiple factors (e.g. abuse, violence, eating disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, childhood depression) that may affect the personal, social, and academic functioning of students (CACREP SC.G.1).
9. Know the signs and symptoms of substance abuse in children and adolescents, as well as the signs and symptoms of living in a home where substance abuse occurs (CACREP SC.G.2).
10. Know strategies and methods for working with parents, guardians, families, and communities to empower them to act on behalf of their children (CACREP SC.M.5).  
Assessed in final assignment.

## **Course Objectives:**

- (1) Students will understand various theoretical approaches and techniques for counseling children, adolescents, and their caregivers.
- (2) Students will understand prominent disorders experienced by children and adolescents (i.e. ADHD, conduct disorders, attachment disorders).



- (3) Students will develop a framework from which they can assess, conceptualize, and plan counseling interventions for children, adolescents, and their families.
- (4) Students will understand how and why to integrate the child's significant others into counseling in diverse settings.
- (5) Students will be able to apply empirically informed treatments for children, adolescents, and their families.
- (6) Students will demonstrate an understanding of child and adolescent development and how developmental concerns impact the counseling process counseling.
- (7) Students will demonstrate an understanding of the impact of trauma on children and adolescents.
- (8) Students will understand the role of racial, ethnic, and cultural heritage, nationality, socioeconomic status, family structure, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious and spiritual beliefs, occupation, physical and mental status, and equity issues in counseling youth.
- (9) Students will demonstrate an understanding of ethical and legal issues that pertain to counseling children and adolescents.

## **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 and discussion, video, cases, group processing of cases and role plays). This course is intended to be comprehensive and therefore will be intense and fast-paced. Students are informed of deadlines in advance and are expected to adhere to them.

**Attendance:** Attendance for this course is mandatory and necessary. Experiences that are conducted within the course are highly interactive and they cannot be replicated. In class activities are a part of the course requirements. It is the responsibility of the student to get notes from other classmates in the event of an absence. Missing more than two days of class for any reason will automatically result in a reduction of one letter grade for each subsequent absence (e.g. the highest grade a student can earn in the class if they miss 3 classes is a B).

**Readings:** 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.

**Course Requirements/Assignments:** Unless indicated otherwise, all written assignments should be submitted using standard APA format (7<sup>th</sup> edition), and please submit all assignments

## **Assignments:**

### **1. Attendance and Participation (75 Points):**

Graduate students are expected to be responsible for consistent class attendance. Because theory may only become useful to the extent that it is put into practice, students are expected to participate fully in class discussions and in class activities. All students will be involved in classroom learning, role-plays and experiential exercises and should be prepared to participate in discussions and activities. Please note that attendance is mandatory, and participation involves meaningful engagement with our discussions in class. Please email me if there are ways to support this process that would be helpful for you. Finding a way to make this class an enriching learning opportunity is our responsibility together. I ask that you come to class prepared by



having read and reflected on the reading assignments. Your participation grade will be evaluated in the following way:

**Excellent (80-100%)** – Proactive participation: leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration as well as a demonstrated ability to listen to and build upon the ideas of others.

**Satisfactory (70-79%)** – Reactive participation: supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion rather than study, thought, and contemplation.

**Minimally Acceptable (50-69%)** – Passive participation: present, awake, alert, attentive, but not actively involved.

**Unsatisfactory (49% or less)** – Uninvolved: absent, present but not attentive.

**Self-assessment:** Students will provide a self-assessment (template in Canvas) of the quality of their attendance and participation at the end of the course. The self-assessment will be taken into consideration for the final grade; however, the instructor will assign the final grade for attendance and participation. The self-assessment is due the final day of class.

## **2. Child and Adolescent Case Project: Students will work in small groups to complete the following: (75 Points)**

This project is designed to aid you in developing your counseling skills and your personal theory for counseling children/adolescents. Students will experience and work towards cultivating their personal beliefs about child/adolescent development, counseling theory of change, and techniques that apply to working with children/adolescents throughout the course.

Each group will create a fictitious (but realistic) child client scenario and case. Groups will use this scenario and presenting case as a basis to create the following information about the client. Students will have access to an electronic records system for this assignment (this will be explained in class). Please download the documents from the electronic records system to turn them into Canvas. The presentation will also be turned into Canvas.

- Intake Assessment:
  - Create an intake assessment based upon your client scenario utilizing the assessment form in the electronic record system we will be utilizing in the course. This will include the biopsychosocial information, cultural considerations, and diagnosis.
- Treatment Plan:
  - Utilize the treatment plan on the electronic records system.
  - Pick 1-3 theoretical perspective(s) in which to conceptualize the client and apply these theoretical approaches in the treatment plan for the client.
- Session Notes
  - Provide a progress note for the client session and the family session (Two notes total). More information will be provided in class. Use the note format in the electronic records system.
- Recorded Sessions:
  - Each group will present two 10-minute sessions—one with the client and one with the family. At least one intervention should be evident in the session along with evidence of a theoretical orientation.
- Overall Conceptualization and Presentation:



- Groups will be decided by the second day of the first weekend.
- Presentations will include showing the recorded client and family session.
- The groups should present the intake assessment, treatment plan, session notes, and projected “next steps”, and the two recorded sessions.

- Cool Stuff Assignment (25 Points)** Each student will find two recent research articles—one article on a topic of interest for clients ages 0 – 11; the other on a topic of interest for clients ages 12 – 18. Additionally, each student will present 4 interventions—two for ages 0 – 11; two for ages 12 – 18. The cool stuff will be shared with the class via a class share during the second weekend. The articles and write up of the interventions will be submitted to Canvas.
- Multiple Choice Final Exam (25 Points)** The final exam will take place via canvas on the last day of class and will cover information from the lectures and textbook readings.

**EVALUATION/GRADING SCALE:**

<b>A</b>	93% to 100%	<b>B-</b>	80% to 82%	<b>D+</b>	67% to 69%
<b>A-</b>	90% to 92%	<b>C+</b>	77% to 79%	<b>D</b>	63% to 66%
<b>B+</b>	87% to 89%	<b>C</b>	73% to 76%	<b>D-</b>	60% to 62%
<b>B</b>	83% to 86%	<b>C-</b>	70% to 72%	<b>F</b>	Below 60%

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Reading And Course Schedule:**

*This table includes the date, topics, schedule, assigned readings, and due dates for assignments. Times are approximate based upon class size and engagement. The instructor may amend this syllabus as needed and will communicate via Canvas, email, or verbally during class if and when changes occur.*

<b>Course Day</b>	<b>Brief Schedule</b>	<b>Readings/Assignments Due</b>
<b>Weekend One Friday, October 11</b>	4-6 pm: Introductions, settling in, building relationship, syllabus	Come prepared to share a “looking back I see a child who...” And “looking back I see a teenager who...” About yourself as you look back. ***Please only share what you are comfortable with and stick to themes (I see a child who was confident, I see a teenager who wanted to be cool)



	6 – 7 Dinner 7 – 9 Lecture and group discussion	<b>Chapters 1, 3, and 4 in the Smith-Adcock Text.</b> Come prepared with a few points that stood out to you from each chapter so you can engage meaningfully in our discussion and Q&A
	9 – finish: Resources and self-care nuances working with children	
<b>Weekend One</b> <b>Saturday, October 12</b>	<b>Early Morning:</b> Lecture and Discussion Legal/Ethical issues in working with children/Adolescents and working with Families	<b>Chapters 2 and 8 in Smith-Adcock Text</b> Come prepared with a few points that stood out to you from each chapter so you can engage meaningfully in our discussion and Q&A
	<b>Mid-Morning:</b> Lecture and small group learning on theoretical approaches with children and adolescents: Psychodynamic and Humanistic Theories <b>Afternoon:</b> Group work time and relevant research	<b>Chapters 5 and 6 in Smith-Adcock Text</b> Come prepared with a few points that stood out to you from each chapter so you can engage meaningfully in our discussion and Q&A



<p><b>Weekend One</b> <b>Sunday, October 13</b></p>	<p><b>Early Morning:</b> Q &amp; A</p> <p><b>Rest of Day:</b> TEENS; working with/supporting parents in the context of counseling children &amp; adolescents; Expressive Arts experiential</p>	<p>**Guest Speaker on Engaging and Supporting Parents</p> <p><b>Look Over Chapters 13 &amp; 14 in Smith-Adcock Text</b></p> <p>Research articles 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 9 will be utilized in class.</p>
<p><b>Weekend Two</b> <b>Friday, October 25th</b></p>	<p>4pm-4:30pm: settling, checking in</p> <p>5 – 6: Lecture on Play Therapy</p> <p>6 – 7: Dinner</p> <p>7 – 8:30 Group work time</p> <p>8:30 – 10 Working with very young children and Play Therapy experiential—you try it out!</p>	<p><b>Chapters 10, 11 and 12 in Smith-Adcock Text</b></p> <p>Come prepared with a few points that stood out to you from each chapter so you can engage meaningfully in our discussion and Q&amp;A</p>
<p><b>Weekend Two</b> <b>Saturday, October 26th</b></p>	<p><b>Early Morning:</b> Our own relationship with play</p>	<p>Come ready to share about your own play as a child—what you remember, what stands out to you as you look back. ***Only share what is comfortable i.e., toys, people playing with you, inside/outside, etc.</p>



	<p><b>Rest of Saturday:</b> Play Therapy modeled experiential and resource share with guest clinicians; group work time; Constructivist and CBT theories with children and adolescents</p>	<p><b>**Guest Speakers</b></p> <p><b>Chapters 7 and 9 in Smith-Adcock Text</b> Come prepared with a few points that stood out to you from each chapter so you can engage meaningfully in our discussion and Q&amp;A</p>
<p><b>Weekend Two</b> <b>Sunday, October 27th</b></p>	<p>Emerging Adults, Cool Stuff assignment share; Group Project presentations, final exam</p>	<p><b>Chapter 15 in Smith-Adcock Text</b> Come prepared with a few points that stood out to you from each chapter so you can engage meaningfully in our discussion and Q&amp;A</p>

### **COVID-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a complex, challenging, and fluid situation, which continues to evolve. UNC will follow applicable legal requirements and federal, state, and county public health recommendations and mandates in all decisions related to university operations. Current information and related UNC policies can be found at <https://www.unco.edu/coronavirus/>.





## **Disability Resources**

It is the policy and practice of the University of Northern Colorado to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that present barriers to students' inclusion or to accurate assessments of students' achievements (e.g. time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, use of videos without captions), students should communicate about these aspects with their instructor(s) and contact Disability Resource Center (DRC) to request accommodations.

Office: (970) 351-2289, Michener Library L-80.

Students can learn more here: [www.unco.edu/disability-resource-center](http://www.unco.edu/disability-resource-center)

## **Title IX**

The University of Northern Colorado is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Students who have experienced (or who know someone who has experienced) any of these incidents should know that they are not alone. UNC has staff members trained to support students to navigate campus life, to access health and counseling services, to provide academic and housing accommodations, to help with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware all UNC instructors and most staff members are required to report their awareness of sexual violence to the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC). This means that if students tell an instructor about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, the instructor must share that information with the Title IX Coordinator, Larry Loften. Larry or a trained staff member in OIEC will contact the reporting students to let them know about accommodations and support services at UNC as well as their options to pursue a process to hold accountable the person who caused the harm to them. Students who have experienced these situations are not required to speak with OIEC staff regarding the incident. Students' participation in OIEC processes are entirely voluntary.

If students do not want the Title IX Coordinator notified, instead of disclosing this information to the instructor, students can speak confidentially with the following people on campus and in the community. They can connect you with support services and help explore options now, or in the future.

### **Confidential Resources:**

**UNC's Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (ASAP):**

24 Hr. Hotline 970-351-4040 or <http://www.unco.edu/asap>

**University of Northern Colorado Counseling Center:** 970-351-2496 or

<http://www.unco.edu/counseling>

**UNC Psychological Services Clinic:** 970-351-1645 or

[http://www.unco.edu/cebs/psych\\_clinic](http://www.unco.edu/cebs/psych_clinic)



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Students who are survivors, who are concerned about someone who is a survivor, or who would like to learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, can visit [www.unco.edu/sexual-misconduct](http://www.unco.edu/sexual-misconduct) Students may also contact OIEC at 970-351-4899 or email [titleix@unco.edu](mailto:titleix@unco.edu)

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to grading consequences with regard to this course and/or university disciplinary procedures through the Dean of Students Office. More information about the academic misconduct process can be found in UNC's Student Code of Conduct (BEAR Code).

### **Equity and Inclusion**

The University of Northern Colorado (UNC) embraces the diversity of students, faculty, and staff. UNC honors the inherent dignity of each individual, and welcomes their unique perspectives, behaviors, and world views. People of all races, religions, national origins, sexual orientations, ethnicities, genders and gender identities, cognitive, physical, and behavioral abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, immigrant statuses, military or veteran statuses, sizes and/or shapes are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. Course content and campus discussions will heighten your awareness of others' individual and intersecting identities. For information or resources, contact the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, at 970-351-1944. If students want to report an incident related to identity-based discrimination/harassment, please visit [www.unco.edu/institutional-equity-compliance](http://www.unco.edu/institutional-equity-compliance).

### **Food Insecurity and Basic Needs**

Knowing that food insecurity is experienced at higher rates among college students, UNC offers assistance to students facing food insecurity through an on-campus food pantry. The Bear Pantry is located in University Center 2166A and is open for regular hours throughout the semester. Please visit [www.unco.edu/bear-pantry](http://www.unco.edu/bear-pantry) for more information. Students who face challenges (i.e., emotional distress, grief and loss, academic concerns, basic needs insecurity, navigating university processes) and believe this may affect their academic performance may contact Student Outreach and Support (SOS), which is part of the Dean of Students Office. SOS will help connect students with appropriate referrals based upon their needs. The Dean of Students Office can be reached at [dos@unco.edu](mailto:dos@unco.edu) or via phone at 970-351-2001.



### **Professional Conduct/Ethics**

All students are required to know and adhere to their respective professional association (e.g., ACA, APA) code of ethics. Ethical violations may result in failure of the course and possibly dismissal from the program.

### **Recording Devices**

Using recording devices or recording software/apps of any type will not be permitted (e.g., audio, video). Students needing to audio or video record classroom lectures must receive prior approval from this instructor or an accommodation letter from Disability Resource Center Services must be provided by the student prior to recording information. Violations may result in failure of the course and possibly dismissal from the program.

### **Land Acknowledgment**

The University of Northern Colorado occupies the lands in the territories of the Ute, Cheyenne, Lakota and Arapaho peoples. The University acknowledges the 48 tribes that are historically tied to the state of Colorado. Thus, the land on which UNC is situated is tied to the history and culture of our native and indigenous peoples. UNC appreciates this connection and has great respect for this land. Additionally, the University community pays its respect to Elders past, present, and future, and to those who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. As part of the learning and reflection process please visit <https://native-land.ca/> or call the Office of Equity & Inclusion at 970-351-1944.

### **Name in Use/Pronoun in Use/Name Change**

Some students may have changed their names to better reflect their gender identity or for other reasons. The process to request that the University change the name that appears on Canvas and on the course roster is available here: <https://www.unco.edu/registrar/name-change.aspx>

### **Writing Center**

The Writing Center offers three kinds of sessions to meet your writing needs: In-Person, Email, and Zoom Sessions. Trained Writing Center Consultants can assist you with writing assignments from any course or subject. Even if you think your writing is pretty good, it's always nice to have another reader look over your work.

To guarantee a session time, make an appointment using our online scheduling system by visiting our website (below). We also have walk-in session times available during our scheduled open hours, Monday – Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm in the Writing Center, Ross Hall 1230 as well as walk-in sessions in the library (first floor) Monday – Thursday evenings, 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm.

If your instructor requires you to visit the Writing Center, make sure to alert your Consultant, and/or check the box on the appointment form, and we will send an email confirmation of your session to your instructor. For more information, email the Writing Center at [writingcenter@unco.edu](mailto:writingcenter@unco.edu) or visit the website: [www.unco.edu/writing-center](http://www.unco.edu/writing-center)



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**Social Media**

There should be no information related to this course posted or shared on any social media platform or the internet in any way. Violations may result in failure of the course and possibly dismissal from the program.

**Electronic Devices**

Using electronic devices (e.g., computers, iPads, phones) during class/clinic time for any reason not related to the course (e.g., social media or online use, messaging, texting) will not be permitted without prior approval. Violations may result in a reduction in final grade or failure of the course.

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