Syllabus

I. General Information


All students are required to have copies of the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, which is available at www.counseling.org/ethics.

Useful Websites for Obtaining Ethics Codes or Statutes (caveat: not all statutes may be complete or up-to-date on the law research sites):

- American Counseling Association: www.counseling.org
- American Mental Health Counselors Association: www.amhca.org
- American Ass’n for Marriage & Family Therapy: www.aamft.org
- National Board of Certified Counselors: www.nbcc.org
- National Ass’n of Social Workers: www.socialworkers.org
- www.law.cornell.edu/states/listing.html
- www.findlaw.com
- http://mlis.state.md.us/cgi-win/web_statutes.exe

Alaska Board of Professional Counselors
https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/ProfessionalLicensing/ProfessionalCounselors.aspx

Attorney directory (for finding local counsel in Alaska or elsewhere): www.martindale.com

Video/Audio Conferencing: It is highly recommended all distance-based students utilize video conferencing. To register for video-delivered instruction, use CRN 51934. Video conferencing has a system called Pexip that is a very easy video option. There is no set-up time and nothing to download, so any student can connect to class in this format any time you cannot be there in person. Students log in to the website on their browser and get connected to class. If you get
dropped from class for any reason, you can easily get back on the browser and re-login. When you are ready to join the conference (our class session), go to: 
https://vcs-web.h323.alaska.edu/webapp
Contact Dr. Christine Cook (crcook@alaska.edu) for the conference ID and PIN.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact video conferencing: from Fairbanks call 450-8390, outside Fairbanks call 1-800-910-9601 or email video@alaska.edu.

If distance students are unable to use video conference, they should register for CRN 59133, the audio conference section of this course. Contact Dr. Christine Cook (crcook@alaska.edu) for the conference call in number and PIN.

II. Course Description, Objectives and Content Areas
The one-credit Ethical, Legal and Professional Issues course is an exploration of the myriad ethical, legal and professional issues facing counselors, social workers, marriage and family therapists, psychologists, as well as students and educators in the various mental health fields. It is expected that the student will become familiar with the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics and relevant laws and regulations, especially those set forth on website of the appropriate Alaska licensure board. Additionally, the student should become familiar with certain federal laws and regulations governing the privacy of protected health information (notably, HIPAA).

The course will address issues of legal/ethical problem solving and decision-making, and advanced risk management of difficult cases. Specifically, it will address licensure and membership in professional organizations; confidentiality and privilege (including HIPAA privacy); documentation and consultation; dual relationships and boundary issues; multicultural awareness. One sub-section of the course, open to the public on Friday, Aug. 5 from 2 to 5 p.m., will also provide information about the new HITECH rules (revised in 2013), which have changed some aspects of HIPAA, and new provisions in the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics related to technology.

III. Course Goal
By the end of the course, class members will have completed an independent project pertinent to informed consent and professional disclosure, and will have participated in group discussion and problem solving to hone their knowledge and competencies listed above.

IV. Teaching Methods
This course will be a “hybrid” live/online course. Students will be expected to read the required text (The Counselor & the Law, see above). Students should read Chapters 1 through 8 before completing the online posting and discussion of the assignment regarding informed consent and professional disclosure. The remaining chapters should be completed before the live class sessions. There will be two “live” sessions at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks (UAF) from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, August 5, 2016 and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 6, 2016. Group discussion, presentation of case studies and lecture will be utilized during the live classes. There will also be one project, with mandatory online discussion
based on review of other students’ projects. The focus will be on interaction, so students should come to both live classes and participate in the online activity ready to state their views and exchange ideas. All students should be prepared to access messages on UAF’s online program, “Blackboard.” There will be no exams but timely completion of the assignment, plus participation online and in class, will be required to pass the course.

V. Course Requirements and Evaluation

   A. Class Attendance and Participation – 50%
      Since there are only two “live” sessions, class attendance is mandatory.

   B. Major Assignment, Online Discussion/Feedback and Reading– 50%
      Students are expected to complete a major assignment, which will be due on Friday, July 22, 2016 at 5 p.m. Additionally, feedback (constructive critique and positive comments) on other students’ assignments will be due on or before Friday, July 29, 2016 at 5 p.m.

      The assignment is to develop an informed consent document (2-6 pages, double-spaced, 12 pt. font) that might apply to a future counseling practice. You may use other informed consent documents as models but do not simply copy and paste what others have done. You may create the document assuming a private-practice setting, agency, or other appropriate institutional practice setting. You are also encouraged to include the “professional disclosure” statement required by the Alaska Board of Professional Counselors if relevant to your “future” practice. Please use a Microsoft Word format and upload the assignment on Blackboard no later than Friday, July 22 at 5 p.m. so that the other students will have ample time to review and comment on your assignment. Additionally, please e-mail the document to me in Word format at nancy@amwheeler.com no later than Friday, July 22 at 5 p.m. You are on the “honor system” with this assignment; please do not look at other students’ submissions before completing and uploading your own document.

      All students will then have one week (until Friday, July 29 at 5 p.m.) to briefly comment on submissions from classmates, using Blackboard. You don’t need to comment on everyone’s assignment; pick two or three to critique. Constructive, but positive, criticism is expected.

   C. Grading
      Grades will be done on a Pass/Fail basis.

VI. Department Policies - Additional Information

   Academic Standards and Dismissal
Students must abide by academic integrity standards as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct found in the UAF Catalog: Academic and Regulations Chapter. The principles of the student code are designed to encourage communication, foster academic integrity and defend freedoms of inquiry, discussion, and expression across the university community. The UAF Code of Conduct can be found online at http://www.uaf.edu/catalog/current/academics/regs3.html#Student_Conduct

Grade Appeal
The student has the right to appeal a final course grade. Grade appeal information is located in UAF’s Catalogue at: http://www.uaf.edu/reg/forms/grade_appeal_policy.pdf

Class Absences/Tardies
The department policy is that students are required to attend class and the instructor will reduce grades for absences. Contact instructor ASAP if an illness or other emergency occurs.

Support Services:
Writing support services are available on the UAF Campus in the Writing Center, located in 801 Gruening Building, or can be reached at 907-474-5314. The web site address is http://www.alaska.edu/english/writing-center/

Disability Services:
The Office of Disability Services (ODS) implements the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and ensures that UAF students have equal access to the campus and course materials. Disability Services, a part of UAFs Center for Health and Counseling, provides academic accommodations to enrolled students who are identified as being eligible for services. The faculty of the Counseling Program makes every effort to work in conjunction with ODS to provide the necessary accommodations for all identified students enrolled in our courses. If you believe you are eligible, please contact Disability Services on the UAF campus at 208 Whitaker, 907-474-5655, uaf-disabilityservices@alaska.edu, or visit http://www.uaf.edu/disability/ on the web or contact a student affairs staff person at your nearest local campus.

Incompletes
Incompletes will only be given for extreme emergencies. Grades are due to 3 days after the end of class. Therefore, your final products must be turned in on time. An incomplete grade (I) will be assigned only if two conditions have been met. First, the student must have completed the majority of course work, and second, documented evidence must be submitted to substantiate the fact that course completion was prevented because of personal problems, such as a medical or family emergency. Failing to complete the course, whether due to negligence or indifference, will result in a grade of "F" unless there has been an official course withdrawal. If an "I" is assigned, completion of all course work is the responsibility of the student. All course work must be completed within one year following the semester that the "I" was given.
VII. Schedule (live classes)
(See Section V above for more information re/ online activities and project)

Friday, Aug. 5
- Personal Introductions and administrative matters
- Lecture on major legal/ethical/professional issues, including ethical/legal decision-making model
- Follow-up on informed consent/professional disclosure assignment
- Malpractice and professional liability insurance
- Licensure, board complaints, professional associations
- Confidentiality, privilege and privacy, including HIPAA and HITECH breach notification and issues related to technology

Saturday, Aug. 6
- Dual relationships and boundary issues
- Multicultural awareness
- Reporting duties and issues involving potential suicide and homicide
- Documentation and consultation
- Other pertinent legal/ethical/professional issues
- Wrap-up