

PSCH 387
Crisis Counseling Techniques II

Spring 2017
Call Number: 31068

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Class Location: Counseling Center, Suite 2010, Student Services Building

Shift Supervisors: See Hotline Shift Schedule

Office Hours: By appointment only. Contact the instructor.

Class Times: N/A

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help students apply basic crisis intervention, crisis counseling, and provision of referral skills while volunteering on the InTouch Crisis Hotline at the University of Illinois at Chicago. This course can only be taken after a student has successfully completed PSCH 386 (Crisis Counseling Techniques I). Most, if not all, students will already be volunteering on the hotline at this time. Students are supervised while taking calls on the hotline. They will learn specific common presenting problems for callers and ethical and procedural guidelines for handling such calls.

This course requires the consent of the instructor as this is a field work course. It can only be taken once for credit and will be offered year round.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To teach students to become responsible, competent paraprofessional counselors;
- To facilitate students' ability to provide appropriate referrals in an empathic manner;
- To ensure that students are well versed in the ethics around the provision of such services;
- To increase the self-awareness of students necessary for being a competent hotline volunteer, particularly in the context of diversity of peoples and experiences in our world;
- To familiarize students with the procedures for InTouch Crisis Hotline;
- To educate students about the guidelines for specific kinds of calls;
- To help students understand the etiology and symptoms of the presenting concerns common among callers;
- To further develop and utilize critical thinking skills so that students may use them in the assessment of callers' needs;
- To provide a safe atmosphere in which students may practice counseling skills and receive feedback;
- To teach paraprofessionals to be mentors to other volunteers/students;
- To build and strengthen a sense of professionalism;
- To encourage participation in outreach activities that promote the InTouch Crisis Hotline.

HOTLINE PARTICIPATION

Volunteering on the Hotline

The instructor will continue to assess student's progress and skill levels through the class with input from shift supervisors, and will continue to make further decisions regarding volunteer's suitability to working as crisis intervention paraprofessionals.

Listserv

Students are required to be on the email listserv for InTouch as many important announcements are made via the listserv.

Weekly Shifts

Students will be required to volunteer a minimum of 45 hours (e.g. 4.5 hours/week for 6 weeks, 9 hours for 2 weeks). Shifts are from **6:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.** Students are still expected to continue to volunteer after this 8-week period if a student has not yet completed the eight-month volunteer commitment required for InTouch volunteers (see below).

Calculating your hours:

Students who are enrolled in PSCH 387 are expected to log their hours on a separate log sheet (which will be provided by course instructor). Students will be calculating the hours by 15 minutes intervals (e.g, 15 minutes = .25 hours, 30 minutes = .5 hours, & 45 minutes = .75hour). As it is indicated above, shift starts after 6pm. Although you are expected to come to the hotline by 5:45pm to familiarize current CR, this period does **not** count for calculating hours. Furthermore, you are responsible of logging and calculating hours prior to requesting a signature from your shift supervisor. Prior to the end of finals week, you are expected to submit the completed log sheet to the course instructor.

Review of Eight-Month Volunteer Commitment

Students who take PSCH 386 in the fall semester are expected to volunteer on the hotline until at least mid-August of the following year, whereas those who take 386 in the spring semester are expected to volunteer until the beginning of February of the following year. One reason for this commitment is that this time on the hotline gives students a rich and unique training experience. Since the training of new hotline volunteers requires the assistance of current liners, we ask that hotline volunteers stay on the line into the semester following their required service, in order to take calls and mentor until the new trainees are ready to work independently. Many of our volunteers stay on the line beyond the end of the commitment period and are encouraged to do so if this is possible for them.

Monthly Staff Meetings

Students will attend **at least 2 monthly meetings** during the current semester. Although students are expected to attend at least two meetings, they are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible. Their attendance will be recorded on their "log sheet."

Mentorship

Trainees ("little-sibs") will be assigned to current liners who will serve as mentors, or "big sibs". Big sibs will act as liaisons to Shift Supervisors and Instructors and will be responsible for determining the readiness of trainees to take supervised calls. Once the trainee has demonstrated adequate competence in taking calls, the "big sib", in conjunction with the instructor, will inform the trainee that they are ready to take calls on their own. The length of this entire process will vary according to the trainee, but it is expected that the average will be in the range of two months.

Big Sib/Little Sib Evaluation Sheets:

These sheets are a written evaluation to follow your progress as a liner. If you are a little-sib, you are expected to complete ***at least two little sib sheets per month*** by a big-sib and/or a shift supervisor. If you are a big-sib, you are expected to complete ***at least one big sib sheet per month*** by another big-sib and/or a shift supervisor. Please make a request to a big-sib or a shift supervisor.

Reflection paper:

Students in PSCH 387 will be completing a 2 to 3-page (double spaced) reflection paper of their learning experiences via InTouch Crisis Hotline. This reflection paper should address at least 2 areas from the course objectives (see the page 1 of the syllabus).

Professionalism:

Students enrolled in PSCH 387 are expected to present strong professionalism. This includes commitment to their shift and other expectations as an InTouch Crisis Hotline paraprofessional volunteer. If/when a student is not able to come in to his/her assigned shift, the student is expected to communicate with his/her colleagues 24 hours in advance and also to make up for a missed shift. **In a similar manner, if/when a student encounters difficulty (e.g., accruing hours or attending the designated shift), the student is expected to take an active role in proactively initiating conversation with the course instructor.** The student must keep track of their hours and not wait to have this conversation until the end of the semester. Thus, students are strongly encouraged to communicate their mid semester progress to the course instructor.

GRADING

This course uses a “Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory” grade mode. In order to receive a “Satisfactory,” students must volunteer a minimum of 45 hours and perform at a satisfactory level, based on assessments of supervisors and Hotline Coordinators.

Students must submit following materials to receive a Satisfactory status:

- **Log sheet (attendance of your shift and monthly meetings) signed by a shift supervisor**
- **Copies of your evaluation sheets (at least 6 little sib sheets for a little sib, at least 3 big sib sheets for big-sib, at least 4 total sheets if you transition from little to big sib DURING the semester)**
- **Reflection Paper**

Students who do not meet these criteria will receive an “Unsatisfactory” grade. **Students are strongly encouraged to attend monthly staff meetings and other hotline-related events.**

Students are required to log their hours under the direction of their nightly shift supervisor or designated big sib using the PSCH 387 log sheet. **Students are required to submit copies of their “completed” log sheet, evaluations, and reflection paper to the course instructor by the last day of finals week. Please submit your log sheet, evaluation sheets, and reflection paper to me by Friday, May 5th (at noon).**