

PSCH 387
Crisis Counseling Techniques II (30662)

Fall 2020

Instructors: Robert Ballantyne, Psy.D.
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Class Location: **Synchronous Meetings Online via Zoom**

Office Hours: By appointment only. Contact the instructor.

Class Times: Weekly Consultation Meeting on Thursdays from 6-7pm via Zoom (Zoom Invitation will be sent out via Blackboard)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help students apply basic crisis intervention/counseling, paraprofessional counseling, and provision of referral skills while volunteering for the United Support Network 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 for the support network at this time. Students receive consultative supervision around their work throughout the semester.

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 in Fall and Spring semesters.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To teach students to become responsible, competent paraprofessional counselors;
- To facilitate students' ability to provide appropriate referrals/resources 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 paraprofessional volunteer, particularly in the context of diversity of peoples and experiences in our world;
- To familiarize students with the procedures for the United Support Network;
- To educate students about the guidelines for specific kinds of counseling scenarios;
- To help students understand the etiology and symptoms of the presenting concerns common among those seeking mental health services;
- To further develop and utilize critical thinking skills so that students may use them in the assessment of recipients' 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 United Support Network.

VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION

Volunteering for the United Support Network

Volunteer shifts will occur within the United Support Network at UIC. The instructor will continue to assess student's progress and skill levels throughout the class and will continue to make further decisions regarding volunteer's suitability to working as a paraprofessional.

Weekly Support Group Shifts

Sometime early in the semester, each student will be required to **co-lead one support group** (one hour per week) with another student who has previously taken PSCH 386. Students will be responsible for communicating with their group members, orienting them to the support group, conducting individualized crisis assessments with students as warranted, communicating with the counseling center in crisis situations, and providing referrals/resources to students as needed. Students will be required to attend ALL weekly support groups and may jeopardize their credit for PSCH 387 if they fail to attend their shifts. Students who need to miss a group for any reason MUST contact Dr. Ballantyne and their co-leader ASAP.

Weekly Consultation Meetings

Once students begin running groups, they will attend a **weekly consultation meeting** with supervisors and other group leaders to consult around dynamics and issues occurring within their groups. Students will also receive additional training during this meeting as warranted to increase their skill sets. Failure to attend this meeting consistently will result in not receiving credit for PSCH 387. These meetings will last for one hour a week. Their attendance will be recorded on their "log sheet." **Students who miss more than 2 meetings in a semester may forfeit their credit in the course.**

Outreach Responsibilities

- 1) Students will be responsible for planning and hosting **one kick-back Friday event** throughout the course of the semester. These events help to destigmatize mental health, build community at UIC, and increase mental health awareness. Students will sign-up for their kickback event at the beginning of the semester. They will be required to submit their idea for their event to Iza Difiglio, USN Outreach Coordinator, **at least 3 weeks in advance of the event date** so that there is enough time to advertise the event, purchase materials, and reserve rooms if needed on campus.
- 2) Students will also be responsible to attend **at least 2 kick-back Friday events** other than the one they host. Students are free to choose whichever kickback Friday events work best for them.

Weekly Journal Reflections:

Students in PSCH 387 are required to write weekly 1-2 page double-spaced journal entries (in one continuous Microsoft Word document) after each session of their support group. Further instructions regarding content of journal entries will be provided to students prior to start of support groups.

Final Reflection Paper:

Students in PSCH 387 will be completing a **2 to 3-page (double spaced) reflection paper** of their learning experiences via the United Support Network. This reflection paper should address at least 2 areas from the course objectives (see the page 1 of the syllabus) as well as their overall experience, skill development, and growth throughout the semester.

Professionalism:

Students enrolled in PSCH 387 are expected to present strong professionalism. This includes commitment to their shifts and other expectations as a paraprofessional volunteer. If/when a student is not able to come in to their assigned shift, the student is expected to communicate with their colleagues 24 hours in advance. **In a similar manner, if/when a student encounters difficulty completing PSCH 387 requirements (e.g., planning kickbacks or attending meetings/groups), the student is expected to take an active role in**

proactively initiating conversation with the course instructor. The student must keep track of their progress 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 perform at a satisfactory level, based on assessments of supervisors. Supervisors include course instructor (Dr. Ballantyne) and course teaching assistant (Monica Puente).

Students must submit the following materials to receive a Satisfactory status:

- **Log sheet (record of attendance of group shifts, consultation meetings, and kickback events)**
- **Reflection Paper**
- **Journal Entries**

Students who do not meet these criteria will receive an “Unsatisfactory” grade. **Students are strongly encouraged to attend all kickback Friday meetings and other organization events.**

Students are required to submit copies of their completed materials to the course instructor by the last day of finals week. Please submit these items to me by *Friday, December 11 (at noon)*.

CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES

DATE	LOCATION	TASK
Mon 08/24/20		Semester Begins
Th 09/03/20 6-7pm	Zoom	Meeting with Dr. Ballantyne to discuss PSCH 387 expectations
Th 09/10/20		<i>Sept Kickback Event Planners to submit ideas to Iza via email by noon</i>
Th 09/10/20 6-7pm	Zoom	Weekly Group Consultation Meetings Begin
Week of 09/14/20	Zoom	First Week of Support Groups!
Fri 09/25/20 5-7pm	TBD	September Kickback Friday Event
Thu 10/01/20		<i>Oct Kickback Event Planners to submit ideas to Iza via email by noon</i>
Fri 10/23/20 5-7pm	TBD	October Kickback Friday Event
Thu 10/29/20		<i>Nov Kickback Event Planners to submit ideas to Iza via email by noon</i>
Fri 10/30/20		Semester Mid-point. Time to gauge your progress! Please let Dr. Ballantyne know if you are having difficulty completing any aspect of the course
Thu 11/12/20		<i>Dec Kickback Event Planners to submit ideas to Iza via email by noon</i>
Fri 11/20/20 5-7pm	TBD	November Kickback Friday Event
Fri 12/04/20 5-7pm	TBD	December Kickback Friday Event
Week of 11/30/20		Last Week of Groups for the Semester
Th 12/10/20 6-7pm	Zoom	Final Group Consultation Meeting
Fri 12/11/20 12pm		Deadline to Submit Log Sheet, Reflection Paper, and Journals to Dr. Ballantyne via email or hand deliver to the Counseling Center