HCE 640  Professional Issues for Mental Health Counselors

Mental health clinics, hospitals, substance abuse facilities, and social service agencies are among the various organizations involved in helping people through mental health counseling. This course examines the mental health needs of people in rural and urban communities and the views of mental health counseling held by those organizations who serve these people. Students will examine problems organizations encounter in helping people and the consequences of services that interfere with helping. Attention is given to inter-professional and inter-organizational approaches to improving the quality of mental health counseling. Mental health counselor roles, functions, professional associations, credentialing and ethical standards will also be examined. A special emphasis of the course is to examine mental health counseling from a historical, ethical, legal, philosophical and developmental perspective.

Prerequisite: None
Credit Hours: 3
Course Type: Variable
Ideal Class Size: 25

Relationship to CEHD Core Values

Democracy: counseling profession honors the concepts of client rights and promotes personal decision-making.
Civility & Caring: The entire counseling profession is centered on caring and civility.
Equity & Diversity: Legal & ethical practices are examined; multicultural competence assessed.
Social Justice: Client advocacy is addressed as an ethical expectation of the profession.
Scholarship: Research papers are completed according to APA guidelines.
Professional Learning & Continuous Improvement: This course is a core requirement of the Mental Health Counseling concentration. Professional development is identified as an ethical obligation.
Ethical Practice: Students sign a Code of Ethics Attestation statement upon entry into the Counselor Education program, and all students are responsible for abiding by the professional Code of Ethics in all course work and activities that represent program outcomes and standards.

Course Goal

To provide students with an introduction to mental health counseling that encompasses historical and current applications, in addition to the social and professional issues creating change in the profession.

Course Outcomes

Students will be able to:
1. describe the various views of human beings and human development which mental health counseling agencies explicitly and implicitly hold.
2. assess the effectiveness of organizations and systems in counseling individual clients and obtaining their stated goals.
3. identify mental health intervention, outreach, consultation, and prevention approaches and strategies which are directed at improving the effectiveness and humane quality of community mental health counseling organizations and systems.
4. explain the historical, philosophical, cultural, political and theoretical development of the mental health counseling.
5. describe the roles, functions and professional identity of mental health counselors, and the relationship between counseling and other mental health professions.
6. explain the structural, fiscal, management and legal dimensions of the organizations and settings in which mental health counselors practice.
7. apply information about professional organizations, training standards, licensing practices, reimbursement, expert witness testimony, and ethical codes pertaining to the practice of mental health counseling.
8. identify strategies for mental health client advocacy in public policy and government relations.
9. explain the cross-cultural and spiritual implications of mental health counseling.
10. describe mental health consultation, including historical development, stages development, major models, and roles.

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