

Course: CO614 - **The Helping Relationship: Counseling Methods & Techniques**  
Credit: 3 credit hours  
Semester: Fall 2026, Session 1  
Time: August 17th – October 9th, Tuesdays. 6-9pm  
Room: ZOOM – Link to be provided  
Instructor: Doug Geiger, DMIN, LPC, NCC ([douglas.geiger@calvary.edu](mailto:douglas.geiger@calvary.edu)) or  
[doug.geiger@livingproof.co](mailto:doug.geiger@livingproof.co)

## I. DESCRIPTION

A study of the major techniques and strategies that can be appropriately and effectively used in counseling individuals, including ways of determining the defining problems (diagnosis) and helping with the problem (treatment). Special attention is given to conceptualizing commonly used counseling methods and techniques through a biblical and theological framework. (Prerequisite: CO601, CO603, and CO610)

## II. OBJECTIVES

- A. Students will learn biblical and theological strategies for assessing what counselees may be struggling with, as well as facilitating desired change in their lives. (PLO 1, 2, 3, 5)
- B. Students will learn counseling techniques originating from the different counseling theories and inspect those various techniques through a biblical worldview. (PLO 1, 2, 3, 5)
- C. Students will learn how to formulate basic treatment plans that contain an initial conceptualized structure from which to navigate the course of treatment, as well as selected methods to accomplish that treatment. (PLO 1, 2, 3, 5)
- D. Students will familiarize themselves with and be trained on how to select and utilize techniques and strategies for facilitating goals in the counseling treatment plan. (PLO 1, 2, 3, 5)
- E. Students will be exposed to essential interviewing and counseling skills so that they are able to develop therapeutic relationships with clients. (PLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- F. Students will explore how to gather information, receive further guidance and training, and take other steps toward becoming a competent counselor. (PLO 1, 2, 3, 5)

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following skills:

1. Relationship Building Skills:
  - a. Empathic listening and responses
  - b. Unconditional positive regard
  - c. Non-judgmental interviewing skills
  - d. Genuineness and congruency
  - e. Verbal and non-verbal attending skills
  - f. Emotion and thought reflection
  - g. Paraphrasing, summarizing, encouragement
  - h. Therapeutic silence
2. Working Stage Skills
  - a. Immediacy
  - b. Focus on core client issues
  - c. Advanced level empathy
  - d. Probing, questioning, clarifying, and self-disclosure
  - e. Confrontation
  - f. Pattern recognition and reflection (thoughts, feelings, and behaviors)
3. To assist in developing a working knowledge of the relationship between counseling theories and counseling skills.
4. Creating an understanding of the counselor's characteristics and behaviors that influence the helping process.
5. Use of skills designed to account for the social, ethnic, gender, and cultural background of their clients.
6. Being able to have personal awareness in the counseling session regarding one's own personal issues that may impact the counseling process.
7. Understanding transference and counter-transference.
8. Use of the APA Code of Ethics.
9. Crisis intervention

### III. REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS

Hill, Clara E.. *Helping Skills: Facilitating Exploration, Insight, and Action*. American Psychological Association. 2019. 485 pages. ISBN: 978-1-4338-3137-9 (Retail \$79.99)

Thomas, John C. & Lisa Sosin. *Therapeutic Expedition: Equipping the Christian Counselor for the Journey*. B&H Academic. 2011. 636 pages. ISBN: 1433672367 (\$34.67)

#### **Also recommended:**

Hawkins, Ron & Tim Clinton. *The New Christian Counselor: A Fresh Biblical and Transformational Approach*. Harvest House Publishers. 2015. 368 pages. ISBN:

0736943544 (\$21.75)

#### IV. REQUIREMENTS

##### A. Class Attendance and Participation (100 points) (Obj. A, B, C, D, E, F)

As this class is needed for licensure, all students are expected to attend class lectures in real-time as scheduled as well as to engage in discussion of presented topics. Personal involvement during class time is an essential element of active learning, and students will be graded accordingly. Students will be expected to participate in practicing helping skills each class session. Students are required to participate in all three roles of counselor, client, and provider of peer feedback.

##### B. Review ACA Code of Ethics and Quiz (50 points) (Obj. F)

Student will read through and discuss the ACA Code of Ethics in class and finish the quiz.

##### C. Feedback Log (25 points) (Obj. D, E, F)

Each student will be required to bring a notebook or other note-taking device as a feedback log for each class. For each practice in class, the observer will take notes in the student's log. Three categories will be observed and evaluated: Skills, Personalization (countertransference, relating to client), and conceptualization.

##### D. Written Assignments (Obj. A, B, C, D, E, F)

###### 1) Reflective class journaling:

Students will be required to write one half to one full-page (single-spaced) reflection on their practice time in class. The journaling is designed to help each student process their experiences and each practice session. Students may write about how the experience is affecting them personally and how the client is affecting them personally as a counselor-in-training. **(100 points)**

###### 2) Write a 5-page response paper on *Therapeutic Expedition*. Students will: 1) explain the thesis of the book; 2) identify their personal top "take-aways" from the book and explain why; 3) identify areas of disagreement and explain why; and 4) explain how the book will impact change in their personal ministry in the future. **(100 points)**

###### 3) Draw a family genogram that includes three generations (2 generations back if you have children). Identify multi-generational themes and their impact on you and other family members (4-6 pages). Further instructions will be provided in class. **(50 Points)**

E. Select and watch four (4) counseling videos available online (links will be provided in class), and then write a brief **one-page** report on each video. Reports must address the following.

4)

- From what theory was the counselor working?
- What techniques did he/she use?
- What were the techniques supposed to accomplish?
- What was significant to you?
- Was there anything you objected to?
- Were there any problems with the technique or style from a Biblical perspective?
- Could you see yourself using the same techniques? Why or why not?

**(20 points each)**

5) Complete a 7-8 page paper addressing the following:

- How will you use Helping Skills in your ministry, personal life, and relationships? AND How will Helping Skills improve your personal communication and relationships?
- What techniques have you learned in Helping Skills class that have changed the way you look at ways of communicating with others?
- In what ways was Jesus considered the “Wonderful Counselor”? In other words, how did Jesus provide “counseling” and “helping” to others?
- How will you follow Jesus’ example of counseling others in your ministry and life? **(100 points each) (Obj. A, B, C, D, F)**

Writing Style:

All class papers **must** follow the APA style according to the revised 7<sup>th</sup> edition. For questions please consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, (7th ed., 2nd printing) or <http://owl.purdue.edu>.

Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is defined as copying any content without identifying the source. This also includes taking another person's or AI entity's ideas or constructs and presenting them as your own. Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. Most assignments at Calvary require the student to produce original work. Therefore, unless specifically permitted by the instructor, the use of AI-generated content is prohibited (even if cited) as it does not represent original work created by the student and is an unreliable aggregate of ideas from other sources. AI, however, may be utilized in cases where the instructor has

explicitly permitted its use to accomplish specific tasks. It is only in these cases that AI-generated (or modified) content may be submitted by the student. If there are any questions as to the permissibility of AI use for an assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification. Required class research papers must be original and not used for credit for any other class, (high school, college, or graduate/seminary), or resubmitted when retaking a course, without the professor's permission.

**V. METHODS**

A. Structured class lectures and discussions.

B. Grading:

A. Class Attendance and Participation	100 points
B. ACA Code of Ethics Review and Quiz	50 points
C. Reflective Class Journaling	100 points
D. 7-8 Page Paper Understanding of HS	100 points
E. Response Paper	100 points
F. Family Genogram	50 points
G. Book Response	100 points

Total = 600 points

C. Late Assignments

Papers turned in one (1) week late will result in a reduction of one (1) letter grade.  
Papers turned in two (2) weeks late will result in a reduction of two (2) letter grades.  
No later papers will be accepted.

**VI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Bible is a required textbook in every course at Calvary University. To facilitate academic level study, students are required to use for assignments and research an English translation or version of the Bible based on formal equivalence (*meaning that the translation is generally word-for-word from the original languages*), including any of the following: New American Standard (NASB), English Standard Version (ESV), New King James (NKJV), or King James (KJV). Other translations and versions based on dynamic equivalence (*paraphrases and thought-for-thought translations like NLT and NIV*) may be used as supplemental sources. Please ask the professor if you have questions about a particular translation or version.

The Clark Academic Center ([learning@calvary.edu](mailto:learning@calvary.edu)) is dedicated to providing free academic assistance for all students. Student tutors aid with all facets of the writing

process, tutor in various subject areas, prepare students for exams and facilitate tests. Please take advantage of this service.

Students with disabilities have the responsibility of informing the DSS Coordinator ([dss@calvary.edu](mailto:dss@calvary.edu)) of any disabling condition that may require support.