



**COUN6303 Ethical and Legal Issues in Professional Counseling**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Division of Counseling**  
**Fall 2021 – Thursday 8:00-10:50**

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**Mission Statement**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

**Mission Statement of the Counseling Program**

The mission of the NOBTS Counseling Program is to provide training and supervised experience in evidence-based counseling methods to help people deal with life issues in a biblically sound way and prepare students for licensure in counseling and counseling-related professions. We seek to produce graduates who have the values, knowledge, skills, and personal disposition to promote the mental health and holistic wellness of clients across diverse populations.

**Course Description**

This course is designed to address ethical, legal and practical issues relevant to the practice of professional counseling. The first half of the course will address the following professional counseling topics: Developing personal Ethics; Licensure and certification (LPC, NBCC, AACC); legal matters and potential liabilities; practice management; and the emotional, spiritual, and practical concerns of the practicing Christian counselor. The second half of the course is designed to teach a process of ethical decision making to help increase a student's awareness of ethical practice. Students will examine the code of ethics statements of the Louisiana Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners, the American Association of Christian Counselors and the American Psychology Association. Role-plays and video segments will be utilized to gain an experiential understanding regarding ethical responses to topics such as boundaries issues, moral issues, dual relationships, confidentiality, financial matters, termination processes, and duty to report and warn.

**Program Objectives:**

- #1. Equip students to synthesize theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field of counseling.
- #2. Train students to have the necessary academic and clinical skills to obtain professional licensure.
- #3. Equip students to develop a deeper understanding of cultural diversity to enhance counseling skills.
- #4. Train students to Integrate historical Christian beliefs, faith, and spirituality with the best practices of mental health science, in an ethical manner.

## Signature Assignments

Key Performance Indicator	Learning Experience	Assessments
<b>5.C.2.k.</b> <b>Professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling</b>	<b>Instruction</b> <b>Group exercises, lectures</b>	<b>Signature Assignment</b> <b>Test knowledge of professional organizations, requirements to join, and benefits</b> <b>Pretest – Beginning of the semester Post-test – Midterm Exam</b>

## Course Objectives

Course Objectives	Learning Experiences	Assessments
Students will explore professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members and current issues.	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion Group Work  <i>Reading</i> Examine the websites of professional counseling organizations	Midterm Exam Group presentations on professional organizations
Students will gain knowledge and understanding of professional counseling credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards.	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion	Midterm Exam
Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.	<i>Instruction</i> Class lecture and discussion Role-Play groups Guest Speakers  <i>Reading</i> I&E – Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7,8,11 CCE – Chapters 1,3,4,6,8	Role Play Presentations Ethical Codes Quiz Ethical Dilemma Paper Book Review Midterm Exam Ethics in Action DVD & Workbook Final Exam

**Textbooks:** The following texts are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified.

*Legal Guidelines for Family Therapists with Selected Ethical Opinions.*  
(reading report) ISBN: 9781931846110

Corey, G., M. Corey, and Callahan, P. (2014). *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.  
ISBN:9781305389458

Corey, G., M. Corey, and Haynes, R. *Ethics in Action* DVD and Workbook bundle  
Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole. ISBN: 9781285850337.

Sanders, R. K., (2013). *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Therapists, Pastors, & Counselors*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.  
ISBN: 978-0830839940

**Optional Texts**

Gladding, C., Huber, C., Rembley, T., & Wilcoxon, S. (2007). *Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in the Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy*  
5<sup>th</sup> ed. Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 9780133377446  
(Bonus book)

Zuckerman, Edward L. (2016). *The Paper Office for the digital age, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition.* New York: Guilford Press. ISBN: 9781462528004

**Course Teaching Methodology:** reading and writing assignments, dialogues, lectures, class presentations, guest speakers, and written examinations.

**Course Requirements/Assignments**

Assignment/Requirements & Description	Percent age	Due Date
<p><b>Book Review:</b> Students will read and review <i>Legal Guidelines for Family Therapists with Selected Ethical Opinions</i>. Each student will read and provide book review discussing ethical, legal, and professional issues as related to marriage and family therapy. The review should be no less than two full pages, double spaced, and typed in APA format. It should include a summary of key ideas, identification of guidelines of which the student was previously unaware, and a thoughtful discussion on how the student will apply the knowledge. This review is not to be written in bullet-point form, but it does not need to have a chapter by chapter summary. The rubric for this assignment can be found at the end of the syllabus.</p> <p>Extra credit will be given if the student uses the NOBTS Writing Center’s “The Write Stuff” to proof their paper before submitting it. Read below under course policies for more information.</p>	<p><b>10%</b></p>	<p><b>9/16</b></p>

**Personal essays on selected ethical issues:**

This assignment is an embedded assignment that will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. The rubric for grading this assignment is attached to this syllabus. Please complete the assignment in accordance with the syllabus and the attached rubric. Each student will select one of the ethical dilemmas provided in class and work through this dilemma. The essay will consist of four sections:

1. Work through the 8 Steps Model
2. Ethical Codes (minimum of 3 related codes)
3. Summary of at least 3 peer reviewed journal articles and 2-4 additional scholarly sources.
4. Final decision on how to handle the ethical dilemma.

The paper should reflect the results of personal study, research, and thoughts related to given ethical and professional issues. The essay is to be 5-7 pages in length, double spaced, and typed in APA format. Students should avoid writing in first person.

To write an outstanding paper, you will need to show evidence that you have read the relevant material in the textbook and that you have done supplementary reading on each issue in question (use peer reviewed journal articles, chapters from books listed at the end of the chapters in your textbook, professional liability insurance company publications).

This is a THOUGHT PAPER and not merely a summary of information paper. Take a SPECIFIC position, show why you take such a position, and then develop your own viewpoints by giving reasons for the statements you make. The paper should be designed to specifically interact with the 8 Steps in Ethical Decision Making listed in your textbook.

Extra credit will be given if the student uses the NOBTS Writing Center's "The Write Stuff" to proof their paper before submitting it. Read below under course policies for more information.

20%

11/18

<p><b>Role Plays</b>  This course will involve interactive discussions revolving around student created and led role plays. Students should come to class having completed all the reading assigned for the week and be prepared to interact with the role play groups. By the beginning of each class period for the remainder of the semester, students should come to class having already read each succeeding chapter.</p> <p>Students will be responsible for presenting a role-play related to an ethical dilemma from that chapter's material. One of the students from this group will serve as an expert (consultant) during the in-class role play. A specific ethical dilemma should be presented and the student serving as the ethics consultant should <b>present specific information on each of the eight steps in making ethical decisions, address related codes of ethics, and engage the class in a discussion.</b></p> <p>Students will be notified in advance of their assigned date to serve as either the ethics consultant or role-play participant. On the assigned date, you will be responsible for sharing with the class your central question, designing a role play vignette and presenting your findings regarding the steps in making an ethical decision. If you fail to attend class or on a day you are assigned to present, you will be given a grade of "0" for that assignment.</p>	<p><b>10%</b></p>	<p><b>Topics, groups, and dates will be assigned in class.</b></p>
<p><b>LPC Code of Ethics Quiz:</b>  The Louisiana Professional Counselors Board publishes a Code of Ethics under which all LPCs in the state are required to operate. Students will take an open book test over the codes during Week 3 of the semester. In order to prepare for this quiz, students should print the Ethical Codes listed on the LPC website (<a href="http://www.lpcboard.org">www.lpcboard.org</a>), review these codes, and be familiar enough with the codes to complete a timed quiz on blackboard.</p>	<p><b>5%</b></p>	<p><b>9/2</b></p>
<p><b>Ethics in Action DVD and Workbook:</b>  Watch the vignettes demonstrating ethical situations and complete the workbook in its entirety. Workbooks will be collected the last day of class.</p>	<p><b>15%</b></p>	<p><b>11/11</b></p>
<p><b>The Mid-Term Exam</b>  This exam will be over selected portions of the text, Legal Guidelines for Family Therapists with Selected Ethical Opinions and class lectures. Students are responsible for taking notes in class as all lecture content will not be available on Blackboard.</p>	<p><b>20%</b></p>	<p><b>9/30</b></p>
<p><b>The Final Exam</b>  This exam will consist of questions related to material from Corey's text, lectures, guest speakers, and class discussions.</p>	<p><b>20%</b></p>	<p><b>12/2</b></p>

**Students are required to pass this course with a grade of B or higher in order to begin practicum and internship.**

### **Grading Scale**

The following grading scale is used at NOBTS (see the Graduate Catalog, available online at <http://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/GraduateCatalog.pdf>):

- A: 93-100
- B: 85-92
- C: 77-84
- D: 70-76
- F: Below 70

### **Evaluation of Grade**

Book Review –	5%
Personal Essay on Selected Ethical Issue	20%
Role Plays	15%
LPC Code of Ethics Quiz	5%
Ethics in Action DVD & Workbook	15%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

### **Technical Assistance**

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System [NOBTS.Blackboard.com](http://NOBTS.Blackboard.com).
3. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto:ITCSupport@nobts.edu) - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

### **Academic Honesty Policy**

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

### **Plagiarism on Written Assignments**

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

## **Disabilities and Accommodations**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary does not discriminate against applicants/ students on the basis of personal disabilities. The Seminary, in voluntary compliance with the American Disabilities Act, will provide reasonable institutional accommodations, modifications, and adjustments to enable and empower students with disabilities to participate in Seminary programs and activities to the fullest extent possible. However, NOBTS cannot support accommodations that place undue hardship on the Seminary or its resources or which alter the essential requirements of curriculum and academic progress. While the seminary does not provide direct assistance to students in the form of equipment or personnel, accommodations may be made by individual professors at their discretion. These accommodations usually take the form of early access to lecture materials in electronic format and additional time to complete tests and assignments. The most efficient way to pursue such accommodations is to provide the Director of Testing and Counseling (Dr. Jeff Nave, [jnave@nobts.edu](mailto:jnave@nobts.edu), 504-282-4455 ext. 8004) with documentation of the condition for which you seek accommodation, an explanation of helpful accommodations received in the past, and a description of the specific accommodations you desire. The Director of Testing and Counseling will document your request and communicate on your behalf with the professors who teach the course(s) for which you are registered. The seminary reserves the right to consider each request for “special” accommodations on a case by case basis pursuant to the criteria enumerated above.

## **Diversity**

The Counseling Program at NOBTS affirms the Christian doctrinal position that God created man in His own image, and that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love. We believe the counseling profession affords our students and graduates the opportunity to be “salt and light” (Matthew 5:13-16) whatever their places of service, and that a robust appreciation for and sensitivity to human diversity is key to that end. Further, a learning environment diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. Students and faculty benefit from diversity. The quality of learning, research, scholarship, and creative activities are enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding, and appreciation of the full range of human experience. We are committed to nurturing and training a diverse student body in an atmosphere of mutual respect and appreciation of differences. As a result, the counseling program is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society, reflected in our local community, and aligned with the core values of the NOBTS community.

## **Classroom Parameters**

Please arrive on time.

Turn off cell phones. Utilize laptops and other technology for class purposes only.

Respect the professor and other members of the class.

Maintain confidentiality when someone shares personal information.

Participate in class and group discussions.

## Classroom Participation/Active Dialogue

Student participation is expected. Class interaction is an important and valuable aspect of the learning environment where we can experience the truth of the Great Commandment by truly knowing one another.

## Emergencies

In cases of emergency, such as hurricanes, disease outbreaks, or other disasters, go to the seminary website ([www.nobts.edu](http://www.nobts.edu)) for information. The seminary administration will post information, such as the nature of the emergency, instructions for response, and evacuation and return dates. Please check Blackboard for information specific to this course. Because Blackboard is available, the course will continue even if the main campus is closed. Please consider registering for the seminary's priority text messaging service through SelfServe. This service is used only in emergencies, and will allow the seminary to deliver urgent information to you as needed.

## Netiquette

Netiquette refers to appropriate online behavior in Blackboard or other online discussions. Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

## Help for Writing Papers at "The Write Stuff"

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

## Course Schedule

**I & E** = *Issues & Ethics in the Helping Professions*; **CCE** = *Christian Counseling Ethics*

Week #	Date	Reading & Assignment Schedule	Learning Experience
1	Aug. 19	Thoroughly Read the Course Syllabus	Lecture & Discussion: Introduction / Syllabus Licensure, Certification, & Registries
2	Aug. 26	8 Step Decision Making Model (I & E – Ch.1) EIA – DVD & Workbook – Part 1 & Self -Assessment	Lecture & Discussion Professional Liability Avoiding Lawsuits
3	Sept. 2	The Counselor as a Person & Professional (I&E – Ch. 2) (CCE-Ch.1)  <b>LPC Code of Ethics Quiz (on Blackboard) Closes at 8:00 am</b>	Role Plays & Discussion Transference / Counter-transference  Lecture & Discussion Professional Counseling Organizations Technology's Impact to Counseling

			Legal Issues Regarding Termination
4	Sept. 9	Managing Spiritual & Religious Values (I&E – Ch. 3) EIA –DVD & Workbook – Part 2	Role Plays & Discussion Managing Spiritual & Religious Values  Lecture & Discussion Fee Scheduling Litigation – fears and phobias
5	Sept. 16	Sexual Attraction to the Client – (I&E – Ch. 7) (CCE-Ch. 6) EIA – DVD & Workbook – Part 3  <b>Book Review: Due by 8:00 am</b>	Role Plays & Discussion Sexual Attraction to the Client Managing Multiple Relationships Boundary Issues Bartering
6	Sept. 23	Boundaries in Counseling	Video Documentary & Discussion “My Doctor My Lover”
7	Sept. 30	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>	
8	Oct. 7	<b>Fall Break – No Class</b>	
9	Oct. 14	Values: Pertaining to Sexuality (I & E – Ch.3) (CCE-Ch.9) Differences in Cultural Backgrounds & Life Experiences (I & E – Ch. 4)	Role Plays & Discussion Values Pertaining to Sexuality Differences in Cultural Backgrounds & Life Experiences
10	Oct. 21	Therapist Impairment & Self Care Ethical Issues in Clinical Supervision (I&E – Ch. 9)	Role Plays & Discussion Therapist Impairment Lecture & Discussion Self- Care Ethical Issues in Clinical Supervision
11	Oct. 28	Non-erotic Physical Contact – (I&E – Ch. 7) Crisis Intervention (Psychological First Aid) (I&E – Ch. 8) (CCE – Ch. 4)	Role Plays & Discussion Non-erotic Physical Contact Crisis Intervention
12	Nov. 4	Confidentiality in Marital & Family Therapy (I&E – Ch. 11) Values in Marriage & Family Therapy (I & E – Ch. 11) (CCE – Ch.8)	Role Plays & Discussion Confidentiality in Marital & Family Therapy Values in Marriage & Family Therapy

13	Nov. 11	Confidentiality: Duty to Protect Children / Reporting (I&E - Ch. 6) (CCE-Ch. 3) Confidentiality: Duty to Warn / HIV (I&E - Ch. 6) <b>Due: <i>Ethics in Action</i> Workbook</b>	Role Plays & Discussion Duty to Protect Children / Reporting  Lecture & Discussion Suicide Assessment
14	Nov. 18	<b>Due: Personal Essay on Ethical Issue</b>	Lecture & Discussion Documentation Telemental Health Counseling
15	Nov. 25	<b>Thanksgiving Break – No Class</b>	
16		Final Exam – December 2	

### Ethics Book Review - Grading Rubric

<b>Format/Style:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ At least 2 pages</li> <li>○ APA (including APA style reference)</li> <li>○ Double-spaced</li> <li>○ Grammar &amp; Proof-reading</li> </ul>	/20
<b>Following Directions:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Summary of key ideas</li> <li>○ Identification of guidelines that that seem counterintuitive, surprising, or key to ethical practice.</li> </ul>	/40
<b>Content:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Demonstrated reading comprehension</li> <li>○ Critical reflection on the ideas and content in the reading: thoughtfully responded to reading, explored various applications and potential barriers, considered practical application and potential outcomes of application</li> <li>○ Applied content to counseling practice: consideration of how codes would be applied and what that might practically entail</li> </ul>	/40
<b>Final Grade:</b>	/100
<b>Comments:</b>	

## Ethics Issues Paper - Grading Rubric

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Format/Style:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ APA</li> <li>○ Double-spaced</li> <li>○ Grammar &amp; Proof-reading</li> <li>○ Avoided first-person</li> </ul>	/15
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Following Directions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 5-7 pages</li> <li>○ Included appropriate number of scholarly sources</li> <li>○ Used one of the scenarios provided on blackboard</li> </ul>	/5
<b>Four Sections</b>	
Clearly worked through all steps in the 8 Step Decision Making Model from Textbook	/20
Minimum of 3 related ethical codes identified and thoughtfully applied	/20
Summary of 3 peer reviewed journal articles & at least 2-4 additional scholarly sources	/20
Clear final decision presented on how to handle the ethical dilemma	/20
<b>Final Grade:</b>	/100
<b>Comments:</b>	

### Selected Bibliography

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. (2001). *User's Guide to the AAMFT Code of Ethics*. AAMFT.

Coombs, R. (2005). *Family Therapy Review: Preparing for Comprehensive and Licensing Examinations*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (RC488.5.F349)

Corey, J., Corey, M., Callahan, P. (2007). *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. Brooks Cole.

Rosenthal, H. (1993). *Encyclopedia of Counseling: Master Review and Tutorial. Accelerated Development*. (BF637.C6R674)

Sanders, R. (1997). *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Therapists, Pastors & Counselors*. IVP Academic. (BV4012.2.C516)

Sanders, R. (Ed.). (2016). Ethics and Value in Psychotherapy [Special issue]. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 35(4).

Wilcoxon, S., Remley, T., Gladding, S., Huber, C. (2007). *Ethical, Legal, and Professional Issues in the Practice of Marriage and Family Therapy*. Pearson. (RC488.5.H8)