Course Prescription

Wellbeing and holistic health include the process of meaning-making in the client’s mental, physical, volitional, relational, vocational, and spiritual sense of self. This intensive course will focus on defining spiritual wellbeing, in its broadest sense, and the counsellor’s role in working with spiritual issues. Some people understand religion and spirituality to be interchangeable terms; this course will take the position that being religious is only one way of being spiritual. Spirituality will be defined in line with Irvin D. Yalom’s seminal book, *Existential Psychotherapy* (1980), focusing on ways that people live out their spirituality within larger communities of nurture. Ways in which a counsellor can support the client in spiritual growth and integration will be explored.

Goals of the Course

The general objective of the course is to provide opportunities for students to explore, engage with and critique understandings of spirituality and spiritual wellbeing, and to understand the ways in which spiritual themes occur in counselling processes, and appropriate ways of responding.

Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, it is intended that students will be able to:
1. Identify and critique the therapeutic value of spirituality within their own history of spiritual growth and wellbeing;
2. Recognize spiritual themes as they appear in both traditional and non-traditional settings;
3. Analyze and evaluate contemporary works in spirituality that are popular in Aotearoa/New Zealand;
4. Formulate appropriate responses to others’ narratives of spiritual experience;
5. Discuss in depth a particular issue at the interface between wellbeing and spirituality, within the sub-speciality of either pastoral or secular counselling;
6. Identify literature in spirituality and counselling/ psychotherapy/ or pastoral theology that originates in Aotearoa New Zealand and Oceania. The contextualization of resource materials is important.

Content Outline

Topics will include:
- Meaning-making as the primary driver of the range of definitions of spirituality.
- The distinction between religion and spirituality.
- Review of various types of spirituality common in a variety of New Zealand cultures.
- The role of personal narrative in the acceptance and rejection of spirituality identities.
- The dialogical relationship between cultural values and spiritual values.
- The contextual nature of definitions of good and evil.
- Psychological pathologies that affect personal definitions of spirituality, including egocentrism, narcissism, and depression.
- Embodying spirituality through sexuality and sexual behaviour.
- Religious and spiritual addiction and abuse.
- Spiritually supportive therapies and ways of working with client values and narratives.
EDUC 769 Special Topic: Counselling and Spirituality

Learning and Teaching

EDUC 769 is delivered in four days of teaching sessions spaced in the following way: one Saturday (June 12), followed by a 2 two-day Friday-Saturday block (June 18 & 19), and one further Saturday (July 3) two weeks later. These will involve both didactic and interactive modes of teaching. Students will be expected to attend all sessions and to come well prepared, having read the required readings.

Teaching Staff

Coordinator and lecturer: Dr Philip Culbertson p.culbertson@auckland.ac.nz. Dr Culbertson’s other contact details will be made available to students at the start of the course.

For academic advice prior to the start of the course, Dr Culbertson can be contacted by email.

Counsellor Education Programme Leader

Sem 1: Fiona Pienaar, 09 373 7599 ext 85153; f.pienaar@auckland.ac.nz
Sem 2: Dr Margaret Agee, 09 373 7599 ext 87852; m.agee@auckland.ac.nz

Campus Teaching Dates in 2010

This second semester course is taught from 9 am – 4.30 pm on the Tamaki campus on: 12, 18, 19 June and 3 July. The class will meet in Building 723, Room 231.

Learning Resources

There is no prescribed text but core readings will be provided via the Library link on CECIL.

Assessment

100% coursework requirements:
50% - Reflective Essay 3000 words
50% - Substantive Essay 3000 words

Programme and Course Advice

This is a postgraduate course that is suitable for counsellors, social workers, psychotherapists, pastoral counsellors and other helping professionals who have a counselling role in the community.

The course may be taken as part of a wide range of postgraduate programmes, particularly the Postgraduate Diploma in Education – Counselling specialisation, the Master of Education – Counselling specialisation, or postgraduate qualifications in the Health Sciences or Theology.

Suitably qualified students may also enrol in this as a stand-alone Certificate of Proficiency (CoP) course.

For enrolment advice and information please contact Prasuna Kumar, p.kumar@auckland.ac.nz or phone 623 8899 ext 48307.