

Peer Counseling

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Peer Counseling

Helping people achieve their goals is one of the most rewarding of human experiences. Peer counselors help individuals reach their goals by offering them support, encouragement, and resource information. This course explains the role of a peer counselor, teaches the observation, listening, and emphatic communication skills that counselors need, and provides basic training in conflict resolution, and group leadership. Not only will this course prepare you for working as a peer counselor, but the skills taught will enhance your ability to communicate effectively in your personal and work relationships.

COURSE METHODOLOGY

- This is an inquiry-based course. Students will generate knowledge through online readings, asynchronous discussions with students and their instructor, interactions with online tutorials, and online and hands-on simulations.
- The instructor will act as a guide, a facilitator, an events planner, and a resource advisor. He/she will always be available through course message.
- The student must actively construct and acquire knowledge by being intrinsically motivated to succeed. To succeed, students must participate and complete all readings and activities. This course requires the student's active participation.
- Both formal and informal assessment methods will be used in the course. Informal assessment will include an evaluation of the quality and timeliness of participation in class activities. Formal assessment may include multiple-choice quizzes, tests, discussion board participation, and written assignments. A final exam will be given at the end of the course.

COURSE PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

This course for which you are registered is a college preparatory, academically rigorous course that covers an entire semester's worth of material. As such, it is important that you adhere to the following guidelines as you manage your time and commit to successfully completing all required coursework:

1. The requirements for this course are equivalent to completion of minimum of 90+ hours of class instruction at a traditional on-site high school
2. Assignments must be submitted for each unit as they are completed so that the teacher may review and assess your performance. Do not hold your work, you must submit each unit's homework as it is completed, demonstrating weekly assignment completions
3. You must log in regularly to your course to demonstrate continued participation, and completion of all course requirements, including assignments, assessments and discussion forums
4. You must complete your individual work and any incident of suspected cheating, plagiarism or collaboration on assignments violates the academic integrity expectations outlined at the time of your enrollment and can result in failure of the course or further action as deemed appropriate

Citizenship

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner that reflects sound ethics, honor, and good citizenship. It is the student's responsibility to maintain academic honesty and integrity and to manifest their commitment to the goals of NUVHS through their conduct and behavior. Students are expected to abide by all NUVHS policies and regulations. Any form of academic dishonesty, or inappropriate conduct by students or applicants may result in penalties ranging from warning to dismissal, as deemed appropriate by NUVHS.

Communication

Throughout this course students will need to be in close contact with their instructor and fellow students. Students are expected to communicate via course message and electronic discussion boards. Therefore, students should plan on checking their course messages at least three times a week and participate in the discussion boards during the weeks they are live.

Instructors strongly encourage and welcome open communication. Clear, consistent, and proactive communication will ensure a successful experience in this course. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor immediately if and when a personal situation occurs that affects his/her performance in this class. Being proactive with communication will result in a quick solution to any problems that may occur.

COURSE OUTLINE

Unit 1: Peer Counseling Basics

Peer counselors are compassionate guides. They apply knowledge, use specific tools, and follow certain rules to help people get past obstacles and reach their goals. One of the tools counselors use is treating others with deep respect. The rules counselors follow include setting therapeutic boundaries and keeping confidentiality with those they help. A counselor’s knowledge base must include the five universal human needs of physical well-being: security, belonging, appreciation, and personal development.

Learning Objectives

- Provide information or resources.
- Make referrals to other types of services.
- Assist with problem solving.
- Help people explore their options.
- Assist with conflict resolution.
- Provide constructive feedback.

Activities

Unit 1 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 1 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 2: Communicating Needs & Feelings

Peer counselors understand that emotions are a universal language. Emotions provide us with useful information, and they help us make decisions and connect with others. The emotions people feel reflect how well their basic needs are—or are not—being met. When counselors are familiar with the seven basic emotions and how they relate to our universal human needs, it helps them assess what a person needs to do to feel better. Because expressing emotions effectively helps individuals fulfill their own needs, it is a skill that counselors must role model and teach.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the benefits of having emotions.
- Explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is important.
- Describe seven basic emotions, what triggers them, and how to recognize them.
- Recognize signs that reveal which basic needs are not being met.
- Describe what it means to take responsibility for your own emotions and feelings.
- Demonstrate how to communicate feelings and needs effectively.

Activities

Unit 2 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 2 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 3: Needs, Feelings, & Human Behavior

Peer counselors are aware of what people have in common and what causes them to behave differently. They know human behavior is shaped by how well our basic needs are met, the temperament we are born with, the habits of early caregivers, our environment, and our understanding of emotions. Some of the behaviors people develop and habitually use are protective behaviors, designed to keep them emotionally and physically safe. Counselors recognize these protective behaviors and call them defense mechanisms. Some are very ineffective and prevent people from getting what they want or need.

Learning Objectives

- Discuss the many ways our earliest caregivers influence our mental and emotional development.
- Discuss the role of temperament and early environmental influences on our mental and emotional development.
- Explain the connection between our earliest influences and the development of our individual habits of thought and behavior.
- Explain how the behavior habits acquired in childhood affect our adolescent and adult choices.
- Explain why humans have developed and use defensive behaviors.
- Begin recognizing defensive behaviors in yourself and others.

Activities

Unit 3 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 3 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 4: Listening, Questioning, Paraphrasing, & Reflecting

Peer counselors use a unique set of tools to help others reach their goals. Counselors practice active listening by giving their complete attention to what someone is saying, and they respond without judgment. Facilitative questioning is used to help peers talk about feelings, explore their issues, and find solutions. Counselors employ the tools of paraphrasing and reflecting to clarify what peers have shared, convey sincere interest, and help individuals identify their needs and emotions.

Learning Objectives

- Explain what it means to listen attentively, or actively, and the benefits of having this skill.
- Describe or demonstrate how counselors show their attentiveness to peers.
- Explain the purpose of facilitative questioning.
- Understand and demonstrate the use of closed- and open-ended questions.
- Define or demonstrate the counseling skill of paraphrasing.
- Define or demonstrate the counseling skill of reflecting.

Activities

Unit 4 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 4 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 4 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 4: Listening, Questioning, Paraphrasing, & Reflecting (Continued)

Midterm Exam Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first four units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Midterm Exam Activities

Midterm Discussion	Discussion	5 points
Midterm Exam	Exam	50 points

Unit 5: Feedback, Body Language, Summarizing, & Assessing

Peer counselors use a unique set of tools to help others reach their goals. Counselors express their attentiveness and interest through their body language. They give feedback by sharing their observations, which enables peers to see themselves through the counselor’s eyes. Counselors summarize to highlight the main points that a peer has shared. Assessments are information-gathering tools that provide an overall picture of a peer’s situation. To be effective, all these tools are used with an attitude of nonjudgment.

Learning Objectives

- Define feedback and explain why it is used.
- Demonstrate using feedback.
- Explain how to use a peer’s body language as a therapy tool.
- Define summarizing and demonstrate its use.
- Define assessing and explain what it is used for.
- Explain what a non-judgmental attitude is and demonstrate how to practice it.

Activities

Unit 5 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 5 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 6: Conflict Resolution

Peer counselors are often called upon to negotiate a resolution to a conflict. This requires patience because each person involved feels uniquely threatened and has his or her own perception of the problem. Some individuals are competitive in conflict negotiations while others are accommodating, compromising, or avoiding. The ideal negotiation is a collaborative one, where all involved listen to each other and work for a win-win solution. Counselors need to create a negotiation environment of safety and equality, keep the discussion on topic, and know how to facilitate brainstorming. Naturally, counselors must also be prepared to manage difficulties, such as reaching a resolution impasse.

Learning Objectives

- Explain how conflict is more than a disagreement, and discuss the factors that make conflict resolution difficult.
- Define and discuss the conflict styles of competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromise.
- Define collaboration and explain what makes it an ideal style of negotiation and what makes it difficult to use.
- Understand and explain how your personal biases and past conflict experiences affect you as you negotiate with others.
- Follow ground rules and guidelines, and utilize counseling skills to practice the art of conflict resolution.
- Exercise options for managing an impasse (stalemate) in the resolution process.

Activities

Unit 6 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 6 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 7: Leadership & Teamwork

Peer counselors often work within teams and may be called on to serve as team leaders. Flexible leaders know their natural leadership style and adjust it to suit the situation or problem at hand. People in the counseling field frequently enjoy collaborative leadership that focuses on maintaining good working relationships. Effective leaders know their team requires a purpose and plan, operating instructions, and a system of accountability and reward. They understand that team members thrive when appreciated, when communication is consistent, and that members develop social bonds. Leaders guide their teams through the four stages of team development: forming, storming, norming, and performing. This is accomplished by meeting the members' changing needs at each development stage.

Learning Objectives

- Identify basic styles of leadership and discuss each style's strengths.
- Describe your own natural leadership style, with its strengths and weaknesses.
- Discuss the basics of collaborative leadership.
- Explain the benefits of working in teams and what the primary building blocks of successful teams are.
- Explain how a team leader encourages and facilitates effective teamwork.
- Explain the four stages teams go through as they mature.

Activities

Unit 7 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 7 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 8: Group Leadership

Peer counselors are often called upon to lead peer groups. The groups may be educational, supportive, or social. Counseling groups have many benefits, such as providing hope, information, social growth, and a sense of belonging. Leaders keep the group running according to its purpose and plan and maintain a safe, respectful group environment. They facilitate sharing and discussion and employ counseling tools to assist withdrawn, disruptive, or distressed individuals. Members are guided through the three stages of group development: orientation, groundwork, and cohesion.

Learning Objectives

- Educate others regarding the benefits of participating in counseling groups.
- Describe three types of peer counseling groups and the primary focus of each type.
- Provide a general job description of a group facilitator.
- Name three group stages of development and discuss the expected behaviors of group members during each of the stages.
- Define group cohesion, and name two or more ways to facilitate group cohesion during each stage of group development.
- Identify six problems that may arise during group sessions and suggest one or two ways of addressing each one.

Activities

Unit 8 Text Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Online Lab Questions	Homework	10 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 1	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Discussion Assignment 2	Discussion	5 points
Unit 8 Quiz	Quiz	15 points

Unit 8: Group Leadership (Continued)

Final Exam Objectives

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units five to eight in this course – the last four units.
(Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Final Exam Activities

Class Reflection Discussion	Discussion	10 points
Final Exam	Exam	50 points

HOW YOU WILL BE GRADED

For critical thinking questions, there are no right or wrong answers. For example, a question on your thoughts on why you think people are shy is a pretty open-ended type of question. Grades will be based on the depth of personal insight you present. **Do not simply agree or disagree** with an insight question. We are looking for critical thinking and possibly a related personal experience with the question.

It is important to provide detailed answers for insight/opinion questions.

For review questions, you should produce a more academic answer. For example, "What two categories are norms divided into?" This type of direct question requires a specific answer. Please use full sentences and proper grammar.

When submitting paragraphs, use these guidelines.

1. The first, second or last sentence contains the main idea and key words from the question or assigned topic.
2. Paragraph contains one to three explanatory sentences.
3. Paragraph contains two to four sentences about specific details related to question.
4. Details are colorful, interesting and appropriate.
5. Paragraph ends with a good closing sentence that refers to the main idea without repeating it.
6. Free of spelling and grammatical errors.

GRADE SCALE

The following grading scale will be used to determine your final letter grade.

Letter Grade	Percentage Earned
A	95%+
A-	90% - 94.9%
B+	87% - 89.9%
B	84% - 86.9%
B-	80% - 83.9%
C+	77% - 79.9%
C	74% - 76.9%
C-	70% - 73.9%
D+	67% - 69.9%
D	64% - 66.9%
D -	60% - 63.9%
F	59% and lower

SUPPORT

At NUVHS you will have access to multiple support teams. Who you contact will depend on the questions you have. Always start by contacting your teacher through the Message Center in the course. Your teacher should be able to answer your question, but if they can't, then they will direct you to another support team. If you have questions about any of the course content, your grades, or course policies, you should contact your instructor.

For questions about your enrollment, transcripts, or general school-wide policies, you can contact **NUVHS Student Services** at info@nuvhs.org or by phone at 866.366.8847. For example, if you would like to withdraw from your course, you should contact Student Services. Please note that a refund for your course can only be obtained if you drop within the first seven days of enrolling in the course.

For help with login/password issues, or other technical issues specific to the Blackboard website, you can contact the team at [National University Blackboard Learn](#). They can also be reached by phone at (888) 892-9095.

EXPECTED SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING RESULTS (ESLRs)

Engaged Learners

- Demonstrate self-directed learning skills such as time management, and personal responsibility through the completion of course requirements
- Develop an understanding of their own preferred learning styles to enhance their overall academic potential
- Incorporate effective and relevant internet and multimedia resources in their learning process to broaden their knowledge base

Critical Thinkers

- Effectively analyze and articulate sound opinions on a variety of complex concepts
- Illustrate a variety of problem-solving strategies that strengthen college preparation and workforce readiness
- Formulate a framework for applying a variety of technology and internet-based research to enhance information literacy and collaborative thinking

Effective Communicators

- Demonstrate awareness and sensitivity to tone and voice in multiple forms of communication
- Express concepts and ideas in a variety of forms
- Enhance communication skills through the use of media rich or other technology resources

Global Citizens

- Appreciate the value of diversity
- Understand the range of local and international issues facing today's global community
- Demonstrate awareness of the importance of cultural sensitivity and social responsibility in the 21st century