Course Description
This course provides a comprehensive overview of ethical and legal standards for the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy and pastoral counseling. The course will encourage a collaborative focus on the study of ethics as a life-long process that is anchored in principles that guide responsible practice as a therapist. Students will explore ethical and legal principles and develop strategies for sound ethical practice and problem solving. Critical theological engagement with ethical theory and practices will be a central feature of the class.

Objectives and Expected Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By the end of the semester, students will:</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) &amp; MFT Competencies (MFTC:)</th>
<th>Assessment Signature Assignments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate knowledge of AAMFT and AAPC codes of ethics and state laws that govern MFT practice</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions… MFTC: 5.1.2-Know…professional ethics and standards that apply to…MFT 6.3.1-Read current MFT…literature</td>
<td>Final Examination Read Texts (summary papers)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be able to articulate a working knowledge of how ethical codes are translated into legal and ethically informed professional practices</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions… MFTC:5.1.2-Know…professional ethics and standards that apply to…MFT 5.1.4-Understand the process of ethical decision making</td>
<td>Class Presentation/Leadership</td>
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<td>Be able to identify and define specialized ethical terminology such as privacy, confidentiality, privilege, duty to warn, etc.</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions… MFTC: 5.1.3-Know policies and procedures of the practice setting 5.2.1-Recognize the situations in which ethics, law, professional liability…apply</td>
<td>Final Examination Class Presentation/Leadership Ethical Issues Research (Rubric)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to identify common legal and ethical problems</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions… MFTC: 5.2.1-Recognize the situations in which ethics, law, professional liability…apply 5.2.2-Recognize ethical dilemmas in practice setting</td>
<td>Class Presentation/Leadership Ethical Issues Research (Rubric) Final Integration Paper (Rubric) Final Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be able to articulate a strategy to manage common ethical decisions</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions… MFTC:5.3.5-Take appropriate action when ethical and legal dilemmas emerge 5.4.1- Evaluate activities related to ethics, legal issues and practice standards</td>
<td>Ethical Issues Research (Rubric) Final Integration Paper (Rubric) Class Presentation/Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be familiar with informed consent, disclosure forms, HIPPA laws and implications for therapy practice</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions… MFTC: 5.1.3-Know policies and procedures of the practice setting 5.4.1- Evaluate activities related to ethics, legal issues and practice standards</td>
<td>Read Text (summary papers) Class Discussion Final Examination LSCTC document review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be able to describe how personal values, cultural, gendered, racial, class, and religious</td>
<td>SLO 3: able to think ethically and make appropriate clinical decisions…</td>
<td>Final Integration Paper (Rubric)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences influence ethical thinking and decision making</td>
<td>SLO 6: …able to describe and implement a theologically coherent, ethically responsible…integrative framework</td>
<td>Final Integration Paper Class Presentation/Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate the ability to think theologically about ethical principles and ethical decision making</td>
<td>SLO 6: …able to describe and implement a theologically coherent, ethically responsible…integrative framework</td>
<td>MFTC:</td>
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**Texts**


1. **Class Presentation/Leadership (5%)**

   Each student (or dyad of students) will lead at least one class discussion of the readings for the day. Students leading the discussion should prepare a brief outline of the discussion and be prepared to lead conversation about key concepts, terms, practices, dilemmas or concerns. This usually requires some additional reading or thought to assure that presenter understand concepts fully and consider ways to engage colleagues in effective conversation about issues of the day. **Grade will be based on observed preparation of material and preparation to engage colleagues in discussion.**

2. **Summary Papers (15%)**

   A 200 word critical summary of reading is due at the beginning of each class period. Reading summaries should:
   - reflect the student’s general comprehension of the reading,
   - highlight those areas of the reading the student judges as critically important
   - raise questions or areas for further discussion in the seminar

   Summary paper grades will be based on these criteria.

3. **Ethical Issue Research Paper (30% -- see rubric on CAMS)**
Select an ethical issue, concern, principle, or dilemma related to clinical practice that you believe deserved careful attention. Conduct a literature review of MFT, pastoral counseling and theological sources. Write a 10-15 page research paper that includes the following:

- A clear statement of the ethical issue, question or problem you are examining;
- A summary and critical evaluation of the literature you reviewed (for example—pros and cons, identification of ethical frameworks, observed competition between ethical frameworks, etc.);
- Clear attention to contextual considerations related to the issue (for example, gender, race, class, religious differences, geography, family constellation, etc.)
- A discussion of theological dimensions, ramifications or implications related to the issue as a human and clinical concern;
- A discussion of the clinical implications for you and your practice;
- A concluding paragraph that summarizes your findings and tells your reader why this study was important.

4. Critical review of LSCTC informed consent and HIPPA disclosures (5%)

Carefully review the LSCTC policies and procedures related to informed consent, disclosure of professional practices and HIPPA requirements. Write a brief summary of your findings. Be prepared to in class to offer constructive criticism of areas where procedures are effective and where procedures can be improved and offer suggestions for changes you would make when designing your own disclosure forms.

5. Final Integration Paper (20%--see rubric)

Write a 5-10 page paper describing your philosophical/theological approach to ethics in clinical practice. Your paper should demonstrate:

- how you think theologically about ethical principles and ethical decision making;
- how you account for personal values, diversity (such as gender, class, race, sexual orientation, etc.), and social context in your ethical framework and decision making;
- your perceptions of the strengths, weaknesses, and role of ethical codes in your own practice; and
- any thoughts or conclusions you have about your own ethical practice as a clinician.

6. Final Examination (25%)

The final examination will be completed in the library computer lab during the week of finals. The final will cover ethical principles, specialized ethical terminology, knowledge of ethical codes, HIPPA rules, ethical decision making in clinical practice,

Other Resources


Schedule

Sept. 16  Introduction

Required reading: Wilcoxon et al, chapters 1 & 2; Doherty, *Soul Searching*.

- Overview and discussion of chapters 1 & 2

Oct. 7  Ethical Issues in MFT

Required reading: Wilcoxon et al, chapters 3-5

- Student led discussion chapters 3-5
- Discussion of LSCTC documents and forms (Assignment 4)

Oct. 21  Ethical Issues in MFT

Required reading: Wilcoxon et al, chapters 6-9; [http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/)

- Student led discussion chapters 6-9
- Becky Timerding: HIPPA

Nov. 4  Legal Issues in MFT

Required reading: Wilcoxon et al, chapter 10-12

- Student led discussion chapter 10-12

Nov. 18  Ethical Issues and Decision-Making

Student Presentations: Ethical Issues Research Papers

Dec. 2  Professional Issues in MFT

Required reading: Wilcoxon et al, chapters 13-15

- Student led discussion chapters 13-15
Grading: Grade Scale and Philosophy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>93.6</td>
<td>96.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>90.6</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>87.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>81.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>79.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 70.6</td>
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</table>

Individuals admitted to graduate study are expected to perform consistently and well in academic work. This is translated into grades in the following way:

- Basic mastery of the body of knowledge at a level expected in graduate study will earn scores in the B to B+ range.
- Grades of A- are granted for work which demonstrates basic mastery of the body of knowledge, and independent thought about the subject matter.
- Grades of A are granted for work which demonstrates mastery of the required body of knowledge, independent thought about the subject matter, creative/integrative use of the material, exceptional writing which integrates the material into a student’s own system of thought, and/or exceptionally well done or articulate research.

Seminary Policies

Use of Inclusive Language
In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. For more information see: [http://lpts.libguides.com/content.php?pid=469569&sid=4083885](http://lpts.libguides.com/content.php?pid=469569&sid=4083885) Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible’s images for God.

Academic Honesty
All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another’s language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.
Special Accommodations
Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy
Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:


Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Attendance Policy
According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.