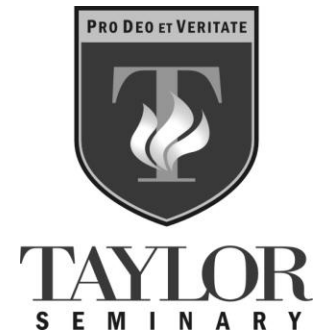




TAYLOR SEMINARY  
**PC 536 Basic Counselling Skills**  
Fall Term 2011  
Course Syllabus

## Course Details

- Instructor: Jeanne Williams, M.A.  
Registered Psychologist  
Email: williamsjeanne@yahoo.com  
*(if you email me, please put the **course name** in the subject line, so I won't think it is spam and delete it unopened)*
- Class Schedule: Three weekends:  
Sept 16 and 17; Oct 14 and 15; Nov 18 and 19.  
FRIDAYS 6:30 – 9:30;  
SATURDAYS 8:30 – 4:30  
*We will have a one hour lunch break on Saturdays.  
Please bring your own lunch.*
- Credits: 3



## Course Description

An introduction to basic counselling skills, using a combined lecture and lab format in which the student will acquire basic listening, attending, and intervention skills. Common clinical wisdom will be emphasized throughout.

## Learning Objectives

At the successful completion of this course the student will demonstrate

- 1) knowledge about basic counselling/helping skills
- 2) ability to use counselling/helping skills at a beginner level
- 3) knowledge of major theoretical approaches to counselling
- 4) knowledge of some of the important ethical issues involved in counselling

## Required Text

Hill, C. E. (2009). *Helping skills: Facilitating exploration, insight, and action* (3rd ed.).  
Washington DC: American Psychological Association

## Assignments and Due Dates

### 1) Attendance:

Due to the experiential nature of this class, it is important that you not miss any class time. If an absence is unavoidable, please contact me as early as possible to discuss whether it will be possible to complete the class.

### 2) Reading:

Class lectures, discussions, and practice sessions will be based on the assumption that you have done the assigned reading prior to each weekend of class. Please come prepared with a few questions and/or comments related to the assigned reading. All reading is from the required text, *Helping Skills: Facilitating exploration, insight, and action*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition by C. E. Hill.

- |                     |                         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Chapters 1 – 6   | due <u>September 16</u> |
| b. Chapters 7 – 13  | due <u>October 14</u>   |
| c. Chapters 14 – 18 | due <u>November 18</u>  |

### 3) Paper

In this 5- to 10-page, double-spaced, typed paper, you will write a brief autobiography to indicate **who you are (including culture), what kind of person you are, why you want to learn counselling skills, and what strengths, weaknesses, and biases you bring to a counselling situation.** Please do not disclose anything about abuse or intent to harm self or other, given that I am required by ethics and law to report such things to the appropriate authorities. With these limits to confidentiality, you only need reveal as much about yourself as you feel comfortable doing. I am the only person who will see this paper so I hope that you will use it as an opportunity to explore yourself deeply and honestly. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers for this paper; my main concern is your level of self-reflection.

The paper is due at the beginning of the class period on Friday, October 14. If the paper is late, you will be penalized one entire letter grade (e.g., A to B) per day. A paper turned in after the beginning of the class period (6:30 pm) on the due date will be considered one day late. Papers are to be turned in as a hard copy (i.e., do not email the paper to me).

### 4) Exams

Exams will be given online, and will cover the assigned reading.

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| Exam 1 – chapters 1 – 6. | Due <u>September 25</u> |
| Exam 2 – chapters 7 – 13 | Due <u>October 23</u>   |

Final Exam – covers all chapters. Due before the end of semester - date will be announced in class.

### 5) Skill Reports

In addition to practicing helping skills frequently within the class time, you will be required to set up two practice sessions with a classmate outside of class time. These sessions will be focused on the specific skills learned in previous class periods, and are to be audio-recorded. It will be the student’s responsibility to acquire the means for recording. More information about this requirement will be given during the first weekend of class. You will write a report evaluating your skill in each of these sessions. The due dates for reports are as follows:

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Skill Report 1 | Due <u>November 18</u>                               |
| Skill Report 2 | Due by <u>end of semester</u> (date to be announced) |

**Due Dates in Chronological Order**

|                 |                                 |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| September 16    | Reading – chapters 1 – 6        |
| September 25    | Exam 1 (covers chapters 1 – 6)  |
| October 14      | Reading – chapters 7 – 13       |
| October 14      | Paper                           |
| October 23      | Exam 2 (covers chapters 7 – 13) |
| November 18     | Reading – chapters 14 – 18      |
| November 18     | Skill Report 1                  |
| End of semester | Skill Report 2                  |
| End of semester | Final Exam (cumulative)         |

**Evaluation of Papers and Assignments - Class assignments are weighted as follows:**

|                      |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| Exam 1 .....         | 15% |
| Exam 2.....          | 15% |
| Final Exam.....      | 20% |
| Paper .....          | 10% |
| Skill report 1 ..... | 20% |
| Skill report 2.....  | 20% |

Grading in this class will be non-competitive – that is, grades will not be marked on a curve. Unless otherwise noted, students will receive either letter grades or percentage grades on work completed throughout the term.

**Important information about the practice element of this course:**

This class includes several opportunities for you to practice the helping skills that are being taught. In order to have realistic helping situations for students to practice helping skills, all students will be expected to participate as “clients” throughout the course. In the client role, you have two options:

1. You may choose to disclose relatively safe personal information. You are not expected to share very intimate details or problems, but rather to talk about minor issues or problems in your life (you can find a list of possible topics in the textbook, on page 22). Note that even if you are comfortable disclosing very intimate topics, your helper may not be comfortable.

or,

2. You may assume the role of a client (i.e., adopt a persona). In this way, you are not disclosing your own personal information, but rather you are acting as if you are another person. You should think carefully about your character, consider the issues this person would have, and think about how this person would react in a helping situation. You do not need to reveal whether you are disclosing real information or whether you have made up a character—and indeed classmates should assume that the person may be making up a character.

Whichever options you choose, please do not disclose abuse or an intent to harm yourself or another person as that goes beyond the limits of confidentiality and would thus mean that we would need to report this to the appropriate authorities; in addition, it can be very difficult for the group to respond to such disclosures and thus disrupt the learning experience.

You will not be evaluated based on which option you choose or how well you play the role of a client (or helper). You can start out role playing another person but switch if and when you feel more comfortable.

Remember that the purpose of these practice sessions is to provide helpers with real problems to work with; it is not to provide therapy for students. Practice sessions in this class should not be used as a substitute for “real therapy”. Students experiencing personal distress should take the necessary steps to find a professional counsellor for themselves.

It will be important that students act like professionals at all times, especially when we are practicing helping. This means that you should treat everyone with respect, pay attention, and keep everything you hear confidential. Confidentiality with regard to client material heard in class is an absolute requirement. Audiotapes made in the process of class should be guarded carefully and erased at the conclusion of this course. Disregard of this confidentiality policy could result in failure of this course.