

Common Course Outline
HUSC 233
Ethics in Human Services Counseling
3 Credits

Community College of Baltimore County

Description

HUSC 233 – Ethics in Human Services Counseling explores the many ethical issues inherent in the Human Services Counseling field. Student identify ethical issues, apply relevant ethical codes, and implement a decision-making model to resolve the situation. Key areas of inquiry include: boundaries and dual relationship, confidentiality, counselor and client rights and responsibilities, professional relationships, and credentialing/regulating agencies. This course also provides a specific focus on ethical issues relevant to the addiction treatment field, including the impact of federal confidentiality regulations, working with mandated client populations, and counselors who are also in recovery.

3 Credits

Prerequisites: HUSC 139 or consent of program coordinator

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. discuss the ethical and legal responsibilities of helping professions;
2. identify the professional regulating bodies, laws, and codes of ethics that govern the behavioral health counseling fields;
3. apply a model of ethical decision making to address common ethical issues;
4. interpret the role of attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and personal and professional values that underlie ethical decision making;
5. explore diversity and equity issues that are relevant within ethical decision making;
6. describe clients' rights to confidentiality, and situations in which confidentiality cannot be assured, including minors and vulnerable adults;
7. analyze specific informed consent, confidentiality, and duty to warn considerations in working with special populations, such as addicted clients, individuals with communicable diseases, suicidal and homicidal clients, and mandated clients;
8. identify and describe the unique ethical issues in working with minor clients, including ages of consent in mental health and substance abuse treatment, consent vs. assent for minors, and the involvement of significant others in the treatment process;
9. predict ways to effectively manage and avoid boundary issues and dual relationships in behavioral health counseling;
10. explain ethical issues related to professional competence and scope of practice;
11. explore the role of supervision and self-care in the development of professional practice;
12. demonstrate competence in documenting legal and ethical issues; and,

13. apply special ethical considerations related to the addictions treatment field, to include: self-disclosure of recovering counselors, ethics of being a “two-hatter”, the role of self-help fellowships in dual relationships, the impaired counselor, and working within court-managed treatment programs.

Major Topics

- I. Introduction to professional ethics and values
- II. Diversity and equity issues in counselor ethics
- III. Counselor self-care
- IV. Ethical decision-making models and strategies
- V. Client rights and informed consent
- VI. Confidentiality laws and regulations
 - A. Limits of confidentiality
 - B. Ways to protect confidentiality
 - C. Duty to Warn
 - D. Confidentiality laws specific to minors, addictions treatment, and vulnerable adults
- VII. Boundaries and dual relationships
- VIII. Competence, scope of practice and liability issues
- IX. Ethical issues unique to addictions treatment
 - X. Working with groups, families, or in the community
 - XI. The role of clinical supervision in maintaining ethical behavior
- XII. Documentation, reporting requirements, and record-keeping
- XIII. Maryland laws and Code of Ethics, and the National Association of Addiction Professionals Code of Ethics

Course Requirements

Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

Grading/exams

- At least two examinations
- At least two written case study analyses, minimum 3 pages in length
- A paper reflecting on a service learning project, at least 3 pages in length
- At least two written assignments demonstrating objective writing skills, minimum 2page length

Written Assignments: Students are required to use appropriate academic resources.

Other Course Information

This course is a program requirement for the Human Services Counseling degree program. This course fulfills the State of Maryland Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists required topic area for Ethics.