

# Professional Counseling Psychology



## Regulations for Case Conceptualization Preparation Manual

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## **Timeline**

The graduate project will be completed during the second year of study, over the course of two consecutive semesters as a part of the research methods, program evaluation, and advanced clinical internship courses. The final literature review will be due at the mid-point of the Spring semester. The case presentation will be scheduled during the final Summer semester. Final project must be handed in two weeks after the presentation date. Proposals are due in the fall semester.

## **Committee Selection and Paperwork**

Students will be required to have three members on their committee; two faculty and the student's site clinical supervisor. It is expected that the student will work with the faculty chair and reviewer to develop the literature review and case conceptualization. The chair will guide the student and monitor his or her progress. The Reviewer, Site Clinical Supervisor, and the Chair will all participate in the oral presentation of the case presentation and participate in the final evaluation of the completed project.

## **Selection of Client & Clinical File**

The Clinical Site Supervisor and the Committee Chair must approve the client selected for the Case Conceptualization. The client identified for the paper must have completed treatment by the time the project is complete so that all phases of the therapeutic process can be presented. The student must maintain a fictitious "Clinical File" that contains an Intake Assessment, Treatment Plan, Pre and Post Assessments, SOAP Notes for each session, and a Termination Summary.

To ensure confidentiality, no identifying information about the client or the site may be used in the client file, paper, or presentation.

### Oral Presentation of the Case (50 minutes)

Students will prepare a formal presentation of the case. This will be scheduled in advance with the chair and site supervisor. The oral presentation of the case will give the student the opportunity to present and discuss the case in an open forum and receive feedback from the committee members and peers. A rough draft of the presentation will be handed in to the Chair, Reviewer, and Clinical Supervisor two weeks prior to the presentation for questions and feedback.

Students will have **NO MORE than 30 minutes to present their Case**. The final 20 minutes will be used for questions, feedback and evaluation.

### Evaluation of the Final Project

The final project will be evaluated on an “acceptable or unacceptable” grading system, one traditionally used with an empirical thesis, and based on successful completion of all three components of the project; paper, presentation, and file. Students are expected to receive a timely review of their submitted work, i.e., within two weeks of submission, and students must submit their final submission to their committee no later than two weeks prior to the end of their graduating semester. If the student does not adhere to these guidelines, they run the risk of either having their presentation rescheduled for a later date (which counts as one of their two presentation chances), or delaying their graduation date.”

Students will have two chances to present an acceptable project. Failure to produce an acceptable project within two chances will result in the student being terminated from the program.

## Structure of the Graduate Project

The prototypical graduate project will have three sections:

- (a) a review of the literature,
- (b) an oral presentation of the clinical case; and,
- (c) a clinical file

The core text of the literature review should range from 15-20 pages. The document will be prepared in accordance with the most current version of the *APA Style Manual*. In addition students will attach relevant appendices to the core text. The formal presentation of the case will be limited to 30 minutes with an additional 20 minutes for Q&A from committee members and the audience. Students must adhere to this time frame.

Students will submit two bound copies of the final project containing all three components of the project listed above.

## Content of the Paper

The purpose of the paper is for the student to demonstrate competency in their ability to use research to inform their clinical decisions. The paper is a review of the available literature. The paper should appropriately and comprehensively summarize the information available on the etiology, prevalence, comorbidities, impairment in functioning and other relevant information commonly associated with the disorder and/or clinical problem(s) experienced by their selected client. In addition, the student is expected to provide a review of the evidence-based or evidence-informed assessment and treatment approaches for this client, as well as present a rationale for their selected theoretical conceptualization, assessment and treatment choices.

A brief outline is presented on the next page, as the components of this outline will serve as the grading rubric. The student is expected to comply with American Psychological Association (APA) style by consulting the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the APA.

## Paper Outline

- I. Title Page
  - a. Formatted according to sample provided
- II. Table of Contents
  - a. This will be expanded as project lengthens to include Parts 2 and 3
- III. Approval Page
  - a. Formatted according to sample provided
- IV. Acknowledgment and Dedication Page
  - a. Formatted according to sample provided
- V. Abstract
  - a. Summary of paper not to exceed 250 words
- VI. Paper
  - a. Introduction
    - i. Brief introduction of selected case and specific disorder/problem(s)
    - ii. Section on Problem Background and Significance
    - iii. Section on Prevalence and Problem Description/Diagnostic Criteria
      1. Provide Rationale if not using DSM-V criteria
    - iv. Section on Etiology and Risk Factors
      1. Note, if appropriate, this may include conceptual framework (though, this may be included elsewhere in paper in more appropriate)
  - b. Evidence-based Assessment (EBA)
    - i. This should include an introductory paragraph(s) on the EBA approaches, broadly, that would consider when making assessment choices
    - ii. This should also include explicit statement of the *specific* assessment tools that will be used with this case

1. Consistent information should be provided on the description of the assessment tool, as well as the psychometric properties of the tool
  2. It should be clear to the reader if each tool is for intake/diagnostic purposes, progress monitoring, outcome data, etc (i.e., purpose of assessment tool)
- c. Evidence-based Treatment (EBT)
- i. This should include an introductory paragraph(s) on the EBT approaches, broadly, that one would consider when making treatment choices
    1. A description of the treatment approach(-es) should be included to orient the reader on what will be done during the course of treatment
    2. Presentation of the scientific study(-ies) that demonstrate treatment promise, efficacy or effectiveness should be presented for each treatment approach that is reviewed.
    3. If appropriate, treatment-client fit may be highlighted within this section.
- d. Client fit and Justification of Choice
- i. A brief summary of EBA and EBT approaches should be provided along with specific commentary on the appropriateness of the assessment and treatment choices (i.e., client fit) for the client. It should be clear to the reader which assessment and treatment modalities will be used with the client and why.
- e. Conclusion
- i. Summary of paper

VII. References

VIII. APA style

- a. APA style (most current edition) must be adhered to throughout each section of the paper
- b. Parenthetical citations and reference list must be APA style, as well as headings, pagination, margins, font, etc.,

## Content of Case Presentation

The purpose of the presentation is for the student to demonstrate competency in their ability to apply their use research to an actual client they are treating at their clinical internship site. The presentation should comprehensively summarize the treatment of the client and include evidence from literature review applied to case. The student must demonstrate treatment outcome and be able to defend clinical decisions made at each point in the treatment (e.g., diagnosis, intervention selection, treatment plan, etc.). In addition, the student is expected to provide evidence of competency to develop a comprehensive treatment plan and apply treatment in an ethical and clinically competent manner.

A brief outline is presented on the next page, as the components of this outline will serve as the grading rubric for evaluating the presentation.

## Presentation Outline

### I. Introduction

- a. Present an overview of literature review
  - i. A general description and overview of most recent information and findings related to the disorder being presented
  - ii. Evidence-based Assessment- a general *brief* description of EB assessment of the disorder and how the specific instruments are typically used
  - iii. Evidence-based Treatments- a *brief* description of the available treatments and evidence from at least one study for each (should be related to client demographic)

### II. Client

- a. General description of client characteristics that includes demographic data
- b. Describe the presenting problem and/or reason for treatment
- c. Relevant historical information about the client including family history, history of the problem, and previous treatment
- d. Include a brief description of the client's strengths and challenges that effect the progress and outcome of treatment
- e. Describe relevant information about the client's clinical presentation (affect, mood, motivation, etc.) and all symptoms exhibited by the client consistent with the diagnosis
- f. Stage of Change and how it was determined

### III. Assessment

- a. Describe the assessment instruments used to determine/confirm the diagnosis. Also include any pre-post measures used to monitor progress and measure outcome. Data used to support diagnosis. Pre-post data can be described/presented later to demonstrate progress and outcome. Provide a rationale for selection

#### IV. Diagnosis

- a. Using the DSM-5, provide a diagnosis for the client

#### V. Rationale For Treatment Selection

- a. Describe briefly which treatment (from the available EB treatments) was selected to be used with the client and why
- b. Must defend the student's selection of the treatment
- c. Must be based on all of the following:
  - best research data,
  - clinical data (e.g., information obtained about the client), and
  - client characteristics (demographics, stage of change, preferences, etc)

#### VI. Description of Treatment Applied To Client

- a. Treatment setting
- b. Description of treatment
  - i. Theoretical overview of the treatment approach
  - ii. Specific components and application of treatment/intervention

#### VII. Case Conceptualization

- a. Provide a theoretical conceptualization of your client's problem that includes the etiology and is based on the selected theory

#### VIII. Treatment Plan

- a. Provide an overview of treatment received by the client (number of sessions, other tx modalities and medication, etc not necessarily delivered by student)
- b. Treatment plan goals and objectives
  - i. Goals should be measureable and specific
  - ii. There should also be an indication of how goals will be measured (i.e., as evidenced by...clinical observation, client self-report, pre-post data)

## IX. Treatment Summary

- a. Summary of the sessions you conducted with the client(s). Should include:
  - goal of session(s),
  - specific intervention used,
  - client response to intervention and progress
- b. Include any data from sessions (e.g., worksheets used, drawings, etc.)
- c. Include any missed sessions with explanation for interruption in treatment

## X. Treatment Outcome

- a. Progress on Treatment Goals
  - i. Provide specific information and explanation regarding progress and/or deterioration, toward treatment goals **and** evidence to support claims
  - ii. Progress made toward each treatment goal should be specified.
- b. Explain any obstacles or barriers that impacted the process and progress of treatment (e.g., social support, medical issues, financial problems, treatment compliance, medication compliance, etc.)
- c. Pre-post measure data should be presented here
  - i. Charts and graphs should be developed to illustrate data

## XI. Prognosis

- a. Prediction of probable course or outcome based on client data

## XII. Recommendations

- a. Provide recommendations for follow up (e.g., continued therapy, support group, medication, psychiatric consultation, etc.)

### XIII. Ethical Concerns

- a. Describe relevant ethical issues related to the selection of treatment, implementation process, and treatment outcome, etc.

### XIV. Limitations

- a. Provide an explanation of barriers to treatment
  - i. Due to client
  - ii. Due to treatment setting, time, intern, lack of resources, etc.

### XV. Conclusion

- a. Provide a general summary of your conclusion about the effectiveness of your treatment approach applied to your specific case

### XVI. References

## Paper Template