



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

University of Colorado at Denver Department of Psychology

PSY. 4730 – CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY: ETHICS & ISSUES

Syllabus and Additional Information – Fall 2005

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Office: NC 5002J

Office Hours: My office is here 24 hours a day.

Professor Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00-11:00 A.M. You can also catch me after class or set up other times to meet with me.

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30-12:45, King Center 212

Blackboard Site: You can log on to the Blackboard site for this course by going to www.cuonline.edu and clicking on “Log into [Blackboard](#)” on the right side.

Dear Students—

Welcome to the ethics class! I am very excited to be teaching this course. Last fall I taught ethics at the undergraduate level for the first time in about 10 years! The course went pretty well, but I've made some changes that the class members suggested, so this semester should be *great!!*

The theme of the course is that learning to be ethical in this (or any) profession is an acculturation process (you'll read about this more fully next week). Being an ethical professional is more than just being a nice person—it really is like going to a different culture.

This “ethical acculturation” approach leads to two fundamental assumptions. First, ethical acculturation is a process. When we move from one culture (being a student, engineer, ski instructor, etc.) to another (psychology), it takes time to learn the ethical values and traditions of the new culture, to learn what to keep from the old culture, and to reconcile differences between the two. We're going to start this ethical acculturation process this semester. The second assumption is that becoming ethical is an active process; it's more than just learning rules and staying out of trouble. Active, positive acculturation includes inspiration, excellence, and virtue in addition to codes and laws.

Because of the active and enduring nature of ethical acculturation, ***this is not a lecture course!*** My role is not to tell you what was important in what you read. Rather, we will help each other explore the readings together. In this way, you will learn the skills necessary to read and learn actively so that after you graduate you can still learn even when there's no professor!

Thus, I invite you to be active, to come along and explore with me how we make the transition from nice, caring, bright people to effective, ethical, caring professionals (and/or consumers of professional services).

Sincerely,

— Mitch

COURSE DESCRIPTION (From the CU-Denver Catalog, 2005-2006)

“An in-depth exploration of the values and ideas that guide professional practice in psychology, including professional codes of conduct and philosophical ethical principles. Topics include confidentiality, informed consent, competence, integrity, and respect. Prereq: six hours of psychology.”

PREREQUISITES: If you do not have the prerequisite 6 hours of psychology, you will not receive credit for this course, *even if you enroll and complete all the requirements.*

GOALS OF THE COURSE – I design and teach this course so you can:

1. Begin the process of active ethical acculturation by learning how to read, discuss, and appreciate the ethical dimensions of professional activities and behaviors, and how they fit with your own values and background.
2. Learn how to make good decisions about ethical issues in psychology using a comprehensive decision making procedure which includes the APA Ethics Code, general ethical principles, and other sources of guidance.
3. Do some deeper thinking and research about one particular issue (via the major paper).
4. Develop oral and written communication skills.
5. Learn to critique your own writing, and the writing of others, and to use feedback from others in revising your work.
6. Explore more active ways of learning.
7. Develop the ability to follow directions and meet deadlines.

READINGS

At the Bookstore:

Knapp, S., & VandeCreek, L. (2003). *A guide to the 2002 revision of the American Psychological Association's ethics code*. Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Press.

On Blackboard (these can be downloaded):

American Psychological Association. (1990). Guidelines for providers of psychological services to ethnic, linguistic, and culturally diverse populations. Washington, DC: Author. [Also available at www.apa.org/pi/oema/guide.html.]

American Psychological Association. (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57, 1060-1073. [Also available as an appendix in the Knapp & VandeCreek book and at www.apa.org/ethics.]

“APA Cases” – ten case vignettes we’ll discuss in class.

Colorado Revised Statutes, excerpts. These are all in one file on Blackboard, and are also available at <http://www.dora.state.co.us/mental-health/MHStatutes0703.pdf>. The specific sections we will read

are

- a. 12-43-222 (Prohibited Activities)
- b. 12-43-214 (Mandatory Disclosure)
- c. 12-43-218 (Confidentiality)

Handelsman, M. M., Gottlieb, M. C., & Knapp, S. (2005). Training ethical psychologists: An acculturation model. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 36, 59-65.

McKelvie, S. J., Black, S. L., & Standing, L. G. (2004). *Guide to academic honesty for the department of psychology*. Unpublished manuscript Bishop's University.

In a Readings Packet (5 of these packets are in a file cabinet outside NC 5002, in a drawer with my name on it:

Gottlieb, M. C. (1993). Avoiding exploitive dual relationships: A decision-making model. *Psychotherapy*, 30, 41-48.

Gutheil, T. G., & Gabbard, G. O. (1993). The concept of boundaries in clinical practice: Theoretical and risk-management dimensions. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 150, 188-196.

Handelsman, M. M. (1998). Ethics and ethical reasoning. In S. Cullari (Ed.). *Foundations of clinical psychology* (pp. 80-111). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Handelsman, M. M. (2001a). Accurate and effective informed consent. In E. R. Welfel & R. E. Ingersoll (Eds.), *The mental health desk reference* (pp. 453-458). New York: Wiley.

Handelsman, M. M. (2001b). Learning to become ethical. In S. Walfish & A. K. Hess (Eds.). *Succeeding in graduate school: The career guide for psychology students* (pp. 189-202). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Handelsman, M. M. & Krest, M. (1996). Improving your students' writing: Arts and drafts. *APS Observer*, 9(2), 22-23; 31.

Kitchener, K. S. (1984). Intuition, critical evaluation and ethical principles: The foundation for ethical decisions in counseling psychology. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 12(3), 43-55.

Romm, E. G. (1992, February). Active vs. passive voice: What a difference! *Writing!*, pp. 14-15.

Sue, D. (1990). Culture-specific strategies in counseling: A conceptual framework. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 21, 424-433.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **SHORT PAPER: THE ETHICS AUTOBIOGRAPHY** —To explore how to acculturate to the profession of psychology and its ethical traditions, you need to know where you're coming from. To help accomplish this goal (Course Goal #1), the short paper (2-3 pages, double-spaced) will be an "ethics autobiography" in which you will explore the aspects of your background that might make it easier or harder to acculturate into the mental health professions. Some of the specific questions that you can address: What exposure have you had to the field? What is your idea of right and wrong professional behavior? Where does your conception of right and wrong professional behavior come from? What aspects of the field are most compatible with who you are as a person, and which aspects are least compatible? What aspects of this profession strike you as "not intuitive?" You should make use of the readings, especially about acculturation, but much of the paper will be exploring what *you* bring to the profession. Having said this, it's important that you know that you do NOT need to self-disclose personal information that you don't want to. (See the APA Ethics Code, Standard 7.04.)
2. **REACTION PAPERS** — Part of being active is reflecting on what you are learning. A great way to do that is through short reaction papers, in which you *use* what you are reading and discussing in the course. In the reaction papers you can integrate the readings with (a) class discussions, (b) something that you read in the newspaper, (c) something that you study in another course, or (d) something that happened to you. You can design an empirical study to test an idea you have. You can look up laws

(in Colorado or elsewhere) and report on what you find. You can present two arguments on different sides of an issue. In any case, it should be obvious from your reaction papers that you've been to class, done the reading, and *thought* about what's happening.

Each reaction paper is to be no more than one page, typed (12-point font), double-spaced. You will submit 7 journal entries to me during the course, no more than one in any given week (this is so that you will be thinking throughout the semester!). Of the 7, the best five will count toward your grade. The *last reaction paper* will be a second look at your ethics autobiography. This last reaction paper is due in class on December 6 at the latest. *Please note that when you turn in reaction papers is up to you!! Do not get behind!* I'd encourage you to write your first one soon, to get you into the habit.

3. ***FINAL*** – The two-hour open-book final will consist of two questions designed to have you analyze cases, potential dilemmas, policies, etc., from an ethical perspective. It will be another chance to demonstrate the skills and knowledge that we will develop throughout the course. (We will be discussing cases all semester, and you will have written 7 reaction papers using the course concepts, so you'll be prepared for the final.) See "What Are the Criteria for a Good Ethical Analysis?" on page 10 of this syllabus for some ideas that should be useful for the final, as well as for the major paper you write. Speaking of which:
4. ***MAJOR PAPER – INCLUDING ROUGH DRAFTS AND CRITIQUES*** – You will write a major paper which will be a more in-depth exploration of a question or issue related to ethics. You can write: (a) a review of the literature on a specific issue; (b) an application of ethical reasoning to some issue or activity in clinical psychology; (c) an "I-search" paper exploring your own policy regarding a particular issue; (d) an "I-search" exploring your professional acculturation process in light of a key issue; (e) a research proposal; or (f) another creative paper that we agree on. In this paper, you should make use of course readings and at least a few outside readings (and not just from the web!).

I will use the following criteria to evaluate the paper:

- *Ability to use and integrate sources.* This paper is a chance for you to develop your ability to think about, use, and integrate what you've read. You should go beyond just a summary of what you've read. You should also be well-balanced in your arguments, and go beyond the obvious ("we should be aware of ethical issues and follow the APA Code") into specifics, gray areas, and more subtle questions.

- *Ability to apply and integrate course concepts.* This paper should demonstrate that you are taking this course and learning something from it.

- *Ability to think, and to communicate those thoughts.* Writing is a reflection of thinking; one cannot write well if one is not thinking well. Sometimes, however, even good ideas are diminished by poor communication skills. I will consider the organization of your paper and your ability to say what you mean.

- *Logistical concerns:* The paper should be *no longer than 10 pages, including the cover page, abstract, and references.* This means that there's only about 5-7 pages of text. Papers can be longer if the purpose of the paper is served; but remember that readers (like me!) get upset if the quality of the ideas and conciseness of the writing don't justify the extra length. Also, please proofread your papers to make sure that grammar, punctuation, and other "little" mistakes don't hinder the communication of your ideas. Fasten your paper with a staple (no plastic folders). The references need to be in APA Style (see the READINGS part of this syllabus for a model).

- *Promptness* (see Course Goal #7). You are welcome to turn in your paper early.

Rough drafts. A rough draft of your major paper is due on November 10, 2005 at the beginning of class. You will submit enough copies of your draft to distribute to me and to your workshop group. Because you are obligated to your classmates, I strongly encourage you to meet this deadline. Late drafts will earn 0 points.

Most writing, even for very good writers, consists of more than one draft. Complex ideas develop over time, and writing is *part* of the thinking and learning process, not just an outcome. Thus, the purpose of the rough draft is to get your thoughts started and down on paper before the usual two-week crunch at the end of the semester, and to give you more time to reflect on and develop your ideas. The rough draft will be a stimulus for revision (“re-vision,” to look at again) of both your thoughts and your writing.

I do not expect a perfect paper for a rough draft. However, it should be a substantive effort. The better the draft, the more feedback you will get from others and from me. I will give relatively more weight to content in my grading of the rough drafts, but you still need to pay attention to style and mechanics.

When deciding on topics, remember that the paper needs to (a) answer or explore a question, not just report what others have said, (b) demonstrate that you are taking the course, (c) be well-written, and (d) be fun (stimulating) for you to research and write.

It is a very good idea to get started early in thinking about topics. I will be happy, at any time, to talk with you about topics, and/or to look over lists of topics, outlines, or any other writing that you do regarding the major paper.

Paper critiques. Good writing is very often a collaborative process. You will receive several rough drafts from other students on November 10. You will read these papers and write two-page critiques of each of them by November 17, and have copies of the critiques to distribute to me and to your group members. I grade critiques on your ability to provide useful feedback—the kind you would find helpful. I’ve included “Paper Critique Guidelines” on Page 11 of this syllabus.

5. **CLASS PARTICIPATION** – Most of our class time will be devoted to discussing—either as a big group or in small group exercises—readings, cases, issues, and your papers (see “Class Participation Skills” on Page 12 of this syllabus). I require class participation to help achieve course goals, and to help motivate you to do the reading. Please try to attend class every day—it not only helps your grade (attendance is part of participation), but we need your input! I also encourage you to visit me during my office hours (or by appointment) at least once during the semester to talk about how you’re doing in participation and the other aspects of the course.

Grading class participation is subjective, but it is not arbitrary. To assess class participation I ask myself the following types of questions: “Is the student exploring actively, or merely sharing old ideas?” “Can the student move beyond sharing their experiences and grapple with new ways of looking at those experiences?” “Can I predict what issues this student sees as important?” “Can I tell that the student has read and thought about course material?” “Are the student’s comments helpful to others?” “Is the student respecting what (I and) other students are contributing?” “Is the student participating in a variety of ways?”

At some point in your careers, I can guarantee that each of you will teach a class or workshop, lead a case conference, facilitate a psycho-educational group, pitch an idea to the board of directors, or try to impress people at a cocktail party. I want to help you develop some of the necessary skills for such activities. Also, I want to motivate you to do the reading *and think about it* before class. Therefore, at the beginning of most class periods (unless we have a guest speaker) I will ask the class what you want to talk about. I encourage you to have something with which to answer this question! Take an active role in the course by bringing your own experience of the readings to class. For example, what excited you, confused the heck out of you, shook a core belief or understanding you had, reminded you of other material you’ve studied? What do you think is important enough to be covered on a test? Anything that will stimulate the rest of us to explore some of the material for that class.

We all share the responsibility to make every discussion a good one. Your responsibility is to bring some ideas for discussion to class and to help us decide what we want to talk about. My responsibility is to turn your ideas into good use of class time.

FINAL GRADE WEIGHTS AND POLICIES – Your final grade will consist of a maximum of 1,000 possible points.

Ethics Autobiography:	50
Reaction Papers (30 points per entry):	150
Rough Draft:	200
Critique:	100
Paper:	200
Final:	150
Class Participation:	150
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TOTAL:	1000

- I grade each requirement of the course on a straight 90-80-70%, A-B-C system. The minimum points needed for each final grade are:
 - 920 = A
 - 900 = A-
 - 880 = B+
 - 820 = B
 - 800 = B-
 - 780 = C+
 - 720 = C
 - 700 = C-
 - 680 = D+
 - 620 = D
 - 600 = D-
- Be advised that there is no rounding at the end; 899 points is a B+, and 900 points is an A-.
- I base your grade on the *quality* of the work you produce, not on the amount of time and effort you expend. (In most cases, of course, these two variables are correlated. Come see me about ways to make the most of your effort.)
- I do not grade on a curve, so your grade is not dependent AT ALL on the grades of your colleagues.
- Here are my general criteria for assigning grades:
 - An “A” is for those products that show some creativity as well as a clear mastery of the material. Students earn As when they grasp and can communicate the intricacies and subtleties involved in ethical reasoning. Their participation is multi-faceted—they can effectively contribute to the class in many ways. They are self-reflective—able to appreciate and consider alternatives to their initial position (even if they don’t change their position). Their papers go beyond reporting what others have said; their own ideas are well-formulated and well-developed. Responses to critiques show that they have thought through the issues rather than merely incorporated suggestions. Their written work explores more than one position, or at least presents the weaknesses as well as the strengths of their positions. Their attention to detail—regarding both concepts and logistics

involved in assignments—is excellent.

- A “B” reflects a good mastery of material, and the ability to think about it. High 80s reflect understanding that is very good if not exceptional, participation that makes a substantial contribution to the class, and writing that is clear and correct in terms of concepts and technical/logistical aspects. Low 80s reflect thinking that is adequate but perhaps somewhat simplistic, participation that is inconsistent or limited, and writing that has trouble communicating ideas (e.g., suffering from some lack of focus or organization).
- A “C” is a sign of a problem, such as simplistic thinking, factual errors, poor mechanics, or failure to grasp basic ideas. Students who earn Cs may have limited, ineffective, or rigid ways of participating. They may have difficulty formulating ideas and developing them in papers. They may have difficulty moving past their own experience to incorporate new ideas and ways of thinking. Journal entries are not much more than reporting on what they’ve read, perhaps with a simple judgment attached, like, “I think that was unethical.” They may not meet deadlines.
- A “D” (which is rare) reflects more serious versions of the problems of the “C”—it shows a serious lack of engagement in the course.

COURSE POLICIES

- Because I have designed this class to have you be active and involved, it may not be possible or desirable to stick rigidly to the schedule outlined below. I reserve the right to change the due dates for reading assignments, to add readings, and to cancel assignments. I will make changes for good reason, in consultation with the Student Management Team (SMT; see below), and with adequate notice.
- **SNOW POLICY** — If school is canceled (and class won’t be canceled unless the entire campus is closed), all reading assignments hold; please do that day’s reading AND the next day’s reading. If there was a paper due the day of the cancellation, the paper is due the next class meeting.
- **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY** — This takes three major forms: (a) plagiarism—quoting another person without giving them credit, (b) using the IDEAS of another person without giving them credit, which includes (c) using previous tests or answers, supplied by current or former students, to study from. Be familiar with CU-Denver’s policies, which are posted in the Catalog. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, the *minimum* being failure in the course (After all, it’s an *ethics* class!). And because ignorance is not an excuse, your first reading addresses plagiarism in a comprehensive way. If you have *any* questions about whether what you’re doing is plagiarism, come talk to me about it.
- **COLLEGE POLICY ON INCOMPLETES** — “Incomplete grades (IW or IF) are not granted for low academic performance. To be eligible for an Incomplete grade, students must (1) successfully complete 75 percent of the course, (2) have special circumstances (verification may be required) that preclude the student from attending class and completing graded assignments, and (3) make arrangements to complete missing assignments with the original instructor.”

STUDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM

One way to help us all get the most out of this course is the SMT, a group of class members whose responsibility is to monitor the course through their own experience, to receive comments from the rest of the class, and to work with me on a regular basis to make recommendations about how the course can be improved. This way, you don’t have to wait until the end of the semester to evaluate the class, and changes can be made before it’s too late. I am especially interested in suggestions for making class time as active and useful as possible, and for more effectively incorporating our acculturation theme.

We will select four people to serve on the SMT. The team will meet weekly, and I will meet with the team every other week. Members of the SMT receive NOTHING for their service but a chance to help other students (and themselves) get the most out of the course. *There is no extra course credit for members of the team.* And the SMT is not an exclusive “club.” All class members are invited to SMT meetings, and you are all free to talk with me about the course.

I will ask in a couple weeks about your interest in serving on the SMT. Be thinking about it, and let me know if you have any questions.

BLACKBOARD

The Blackboard course site is a wonderful way to facilitate communication and share documents. I will use it to post announcements, share thoughts about the class, answer questions, etc. You can use it to communicate with me or the entire class; for example, by posting a question to the discussion board.

Log onto the site soon and take a look around. The course readings are under “Course Documents.” Also, make sure your preferred email address is listed.

Blackboard problems? Please contact Tim McMahon: tim.mcmahon@cudenver.edu or call 303-556-6527.

Fall 2005 Registration and Academic Deadlines

- CLAS students must always have an accurate mailing and e-mail address:
<http://www.cudenver.edu/registrar>
- Students are responsible for completing financial arrangements with financial aid, family, scholarships, etc.
- 15 August (5:00 pm) Payment plan deadline for students registering by 22 July 2005. Students who have *not applied for financial aid* are administratively disenrolled for non-payment.
- 25 August Last day to be added to the wait-list for a closed course.
- 29 August – 7 September Students are responsible for verifying an accurate Fall 2005 registration via SMART.
- 1 September (midnight) Last day to add courses via the web SMART system.
- 7 September (5:00 pm) Last day to add 16-week structured courses without a written petition for a late add.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS — Readings should be **completed** by the date indicated.

Date	Readings and Assignments
Aug. 25	1. McKelvie, Black, & Standing, 2004 (Plagiarism)
Aug. 30	1. Handelsman, Gottlieb, & Knapp, 2005 (Acculturation model)
Sep. 1	1. Handelsman, 1998 (“Ethics and Ethical Reasoning”)
Sep. 6	1. Kitchener, 1984
Sep. 13	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapters 1-4 2. APA, 2002 (APA Ethics Code) 3. Take a look at “APA Cases,” and bring it with you to class
Sep. 15	ETHICS AUTOBIOGRAPHY IS DUE IN CLASS
Sep. 20	1. Colorado Revised Statutes (CRS) 12-43-222 (“Prohibited Activities”) 2. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Sections 1-2
Sep. 22	1. APA, 1990 (“Guidelines for Providers of Services to ... Diverse Populations”) 2. Sue, 1990 (Culture) 3. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Sections 3.01-3.04
Sep. 27	1. Readings TBA
Sep. 29	1. Handelsman, 2001a (Informed Consent) 2. CRS 12-43-214 (Mandatory Disclosure)
Oct 4	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Sections 3.10-3.12; 10-01-10.05; 10.09-10.10
Oct. 6	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Section 6
Oct. 11	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Section 4 2. CRS 12-43-218 (Confidentiality)
Oct. 18	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Section 5
Oct. 20	Be ready to discuss your paper topics.
Oct 25	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Sections 3.05-3.09; 10.05-10.08 2. Gutheil & Gabbard, 1993 (Boundaries)
Nov. 1	1. Gottlieb, 1993 (Dual relationships)
Nov. 3	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Section 7
Nov. 8	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Section 8
Nov. 10	ROUGH DRAFT IS DUE IN CLASS (Enough copies for me and your group) 1. Handelsman & Krest, 1996 2. Romm, 1992
Nov. 15	1. Knapp & VandeCreek, 2003, Chapter 5, Section 9
Nov. 17	CRITIQUES DUE IN CLASS (Rough drafts, obviously, need to be read by today.)
Nov. 22 Nov. 24	**THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY; NO CLASSES**
Nov. 29	1. Handelsman, 2001b (“Learning to Become Ethical”)
Dec. 6	LAST REACTION PAPER (REVISION OF AUTOBIOGRAPHY) DUE IN CLASS
Dec 8	MAJOR PAPER DUE IN CLASS (2 copies)
Dec 13 OR 15	FINAL EXAM (Two-hour; Open-book)

SOME USEFUL INFORMATION!

In the following pages, I present some information that I've put together over the years to help you with various aspects of the course. Much of it comes, directly or indirectly, from former students and SMTs.

References on Style and Grammar

- Baker, S., & Yarber, R. E. (1986). *The practical stylist, with readings* (6th ed.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Glazier, T. F. (1986). *The least you should know about English*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (1999). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

What Are the Criteria for a Good Ethical Analysis?

Obviously, not all of these criteria are relevant for each paper, final answer, etc. Nevertheless, these criteria are useful to consider any time you're thinking through the ethical dimensions of your work.

- I. Knowledge – accurate, relevant
 - A. Ability to bring findings from course readings into the analysis
 - B. Does the analysis demonstrate that you have taken this course?
 1. E.g., demonstration of an understanding of facts vs. values
- II. Comprehensiveness – nothing important left out
 - A. E.g., when talking about informed consent, covering issues like competency to consent, assent, and possible exceptions
- III. Balance – seeing several sides of the issues involved
 - A. E.g., “There are ethical pitfalls involved,” is a better way to organize an analysis than, “Anybody who tapes a therapy session should be shot, for the following reasons.”
 - B. Understanding the complexity of the decision-making process
- IV. Application of principles to specifics of cases (rather than saying, e.g., “Justice is important.”).
- V. Creativity in relating and integrating:
 - A. Parts of analysis to each other
 1. E.g., how would different values change the importance given to different ethical principles?
 - B. Empirical, legal, and ethical issues
 - C. General and APA principles
 - D. Facts (or potential facts) of the case to values and principles
- VI. Quality of speculations – can you think of the ethical problems two or three steps down the line?

Paper Critique Guidelines

The following suggestions should help you formulate your ideas about the papers you read. Often a good first step is to outline the paper to give you a sense of the organization of the paper and the point of each paragraph.

Not all of these questions will be applicable to every paper. Also, you need not answer EVERY question in the two pages allotted for your critique. But going through all the questions is a good first step. You can then include in your critique those aspects that will be most helpful to the writer. You can write some of your comments (about spelling, etc.) on the paper itself.

CONTENT LEVEL

- I. What is the major thesis or question of the paper?
 - A. Is it clearly stated in an introductory section?
 - B. Does the author deliver on the “promises” made in the introduction?
- II. What are the arguments that support this thesis, or answer the question?
- III. Which arguments are the strongest; which weakest? Is each argument appropriate and/or necessary?
- IV. How good are each of the following types of arguments?
 - A. Evidence
 1. Is the research review clearly written? Is the research cited relevant to the argument? Is there important, relevant research not covered?
 2. What analogies does the author use from other cases or other professions? Are they appropriate?
 - B. Case studies
 1. Are they clearly and succinctly presented?
 2. Too many, too few?
 3. Are they appropriate?
 - C. Examples
 1. Clear? Relevant? Supportive of the argument?
 2. Are there others?
- V. Is there a conclusion?
 - A. Does it address the major thesis or question?
 - B. Does it follow from the arguments presented?

STYLE AND MECHANICS LEVEL

- I. Is the paper well organized?
 - A. Are there paragraphs out of place?
 - B. Are the subheading helpful? Should there be more?
- II. Are there spelling, punctuation, grammatical mistakes?
- III. Are there sentences that are poorly or awkwardly written? Are words used properly, or do they have incorrect connotations?
- IV. Are all references cited? Correctly?
 - A. Are all the listings in the references mentioned in the paper?
 - B. Are there ideas in the paper that seem to come from sources that are not cited?

Class Participation Skills

Thanks to the 1998 Student Management Team for the inspiration for this

Reading and listening carefully are useful, but class participation includes other skills. Here is a long (although not exhaustive) list of such participation skills. Feel free to come see me to discuss which skills you have demonstrated well and which you could develop more.

- Respecting others (including not interrupting)
- Encouraging and supporting the contributions of others
- Listening actively
- Clarifying what others have said
- “Punctuating” the discussion by summarizing or pointing out relevant issues
- Asking questions (that clarify or that extend the point made)
- Volunteering personal views or other information
- Applying principles, course material, or others’ contributions to personal examples
- Looking critically (but respectfully) at points made by others
- Approaching with a critical attitude your own previous contributions
- Exploring the implications of other contributions: taking the “next step”
- Furthering the discussion by presenting an alternative view or direction

In his Student Management Team Handbook

(<http://www.isu.edu/ctl/facultydev/webhandbook/smt.htm>), Ed Nuhfer lists these

NONFUNCTIONAL group behaviors:

- **BEING AGGRESSIVE:** working for status by criticizing or blaming others; showing hostility against the group or some individual; deflating the ego or status of others.
- **BLOCKING:** interfering with the progress of the group by going off on a tangent; citing personal experiences unrelated to the problem; arguing too much on a point; rejecting ideas without consideration.
- **SELF-CONFESSING:** using the group as a sounding board; expressing personal, irrelevant feelings or points of view.
- **COMPETING:** vying with others to produce the best idea, talk the most, play the most roles, gain favor with the leader.
- **SEEKING SYMPATHY:** trying to induce other group members to be sympathetic to one’s problems or misfortunes; deploring one’s own situation; disparaging one’s own ideas to gain support.
- **SPECIAL PLEADING:** introducing or supporting suggestions related to one’s own pet concerns or philosophies; lobbying.
- **HORSING AROUND:** clowning; joking; mimicking; disrupting the work of the group.
- **SEEKING RECOGNITION:** attempting to call attention to one’s self by loud or excessive talking, extreme ideas, unusual behavior.
- **WITHDRAWAL:** acting indifferent or passive; resorting to excessive formality; daydreaming; doodling; whispering to others; wandering from the subject.