

Innovative Learning, Teaching and Assessment  
Strategies:  
Basic Intervention Training in Counselling Skills

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# Basic Intervention Training in Counselling Skills

## Aims and Goals

- Increase students' knowledge of counselling theory and skills
- Increase students skills in facilitative communication, assessment and intervention formulation
- Encourage an appreciation of attitudes, beliefs and values in counselling
- Introduce an understanding of professional issues relevant to counselling psychology. E.g confidentiality, privacy, legal issues

# Basic Intervention Training in Counselling Skills

- Content
  - Basic counselling microskills
  - Four therapeutic approaches: behavioural, cognitive, affective and systems
  - Client assessment including risk assessment;
  - Grief and loss
  - Client Resistance
  - Supervision and self care.
  
  - Text: Hackney, H.L.& Cormier, S. (2009). *The professional counsellor* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). New Jersey, USA: Pearson

# Basic Intervention Training in Counselling Skills

## Activities

- Experiential emphasis
- One hour lecture and two hour workshop plus 'work groups' out of class activities/homework
- Lecture demonstrations
- Ice-breaker; values auction
- Microskills practice
- Behavioural tasks (personal); relaxation techniques; desensitisation hierarchies; genograms (with family photos); personal concerns about therapy; implicit and explicit family rules; cognitive methods in reducing personal anxieties

# Basic Intervention Training in Counselling Skills

## Assessment of the subject

- Videorecorded role played interview (35 minutes) with emphasis on students evaluating their own performance not their actual skill being judged by staff.
- Examination (2 hours) involving applying the therapeutic perspectives to unseen case studies

# Basic Intervention Training in Counselling Skills

## What works?

- The selection of experiential exercises
- Out of class practice...it is done!
- The assessment tasks, especially the interview
- The scheduled time of the week: Friday afternoon
- Student evaluations are consistently high:
- “I’ve waited four years to do this stuff”
- “This is what I always thought I wanted to do”
- “Why do we have to wait so long to do these practical things?”