

**University of Utah
Department of Educational Psychology
Counseling Psychology Program
Doctoral Qualifying Examination**

Fall 2008

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Doctoral Comprehensive Examination: Ethics Question
Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program
Fall 2008

1. Briefly describe your own personal ethical decision-making model, or choose such a model from the psychological ethics literature to briefly describe.
2. Apply that model to the vignette below, including the following elements:
 - A. Your initial reactions to this situation;
 - B. The ethical issue(s) involved;
 - C. Relevant ethical principles and codes from the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2002). Cite specific principles (by letter and name) and codes (by number and name);
 - D. Any relevant statutes or laws that pertain to this case (again, specifically cited);
 - E. Your consideration of multicultural and diversity factors in this case;
 - F. Specify your ultimate course of action, including your rationale for your decisions.

Vignette (Fictitious):

You are a middle-aged European American counseling psychologist who works in a university counseling center, where you are the Clinical Services Coordinator. One afternoon you receive a phone call from the university Dean of Students, Dean Reynolds, asking for your advice in dealing with a difficult student. She reports that the student is a 20 year-old, single, male, Chinese American student named Lee, who is a junior at the university majoring in film studies. Dean Reynolds says that residence hall staff report that Lee has repeatedly accused residents on his floor of following him around campus, damaging his car, and trying to poison his food in the cafeteria. A preliminary investigation of the situation, however, has found no evidence of wrong-doing by the residents. Dean Reynolds reports that she met with Lee yesterday, who complained vociferously of residence hall staff members who “have it in for me” and who are trying to kick him out of the residence halls, if not the university. The Dean confirms that residence hall administrators have, in fact, discussed possibly terminating Lee’s rental agreement on the basis of “consistently disruptive interpersonal behaviors.”

You immediately recognize Lee as one of your counseling center clients. He was referred to you about a month ago by a professor who was concerned by Lee’s unfounded accusations against two classmates. You have seen Lee for 3 sessions and suspect that he may be suffering from Delusional Disorder, Persecutory Type. While there are no indications that Lee is a danger to himself or others, he does appear to have several fixed beliefs regarding others’ intentions of ruining his life in various ways. Other than these fixed beliefs, however, he is quite functional and has maintained a 3.1 GPA. In your last session, you referred Lee to see the staff psychiatrist for further evaluation; however, Lee did not keep that appointment and also missed last week’s appointment with you.

Dean Reynolds is now asking you for a recommendation about how she should deal with this student. She confides that she is inclined to support the residence hall Director’s idea to remove Lee from the residence halls. She strongly suggests that if you have independent knowledge of the student, it may be to his advantage to share that now.

Measurement and Assessment Question - Fall 2008 Prelims

Background: You are a licensed psychologist working in private practice and routinely provide psychological assessment services. You received a referral to conduct an assessment with a 33 year old adult male named John. From the initial interview with John you learned that he was self-referred but was strongly encouraged to “seek assistance” by his employer. John is in the process of building a successful career in his law firm but has “hit some stumbling blocks” in the past year. He stated that his “mental problems” have begun to negatively impact his work and have gained the attention of his boss. He willingly comes to your office in order to “find some answers” but will also need to provide “some type of report” to his employer that indicates he is working on resolving the things that are affecting his work performance.

From the initial interview you learn: John is Latino and previously went by his birth name of “Juan” but changed to “John” after being hired by his law firm (5 years ago) because it sounded more “White.” He stated that he is called John in his professional life and still goes by “Juan” with family and friends. He is single and has had a few “serious relationships” that ended mostly due to him being a “workaholic.” He said that he does not have much time for relationships anyway. John has been suffering from sad and irritable mood for the past “6 to 8 months or so” and has a hard time getting out of bed some mornings which has resulted in missing some “important meetings” at work. He said that after coming home from working long hours he is frequently unable to fall asleep so he has “some drinks” and/or “takes some sleeping pills” to help him fall asleep. He said that other people in his family have drug problems but his use of substances is “under control” even though he admits to being “hung over” some mornings before work. He also said that he rarely has time for “fun” and spends much of his time working or “worrying about work.” He said that he frequently worries about “not being good enough” at work or “making sure people like me.” He is close to his working-class family; he is the third of his siblings to receive a college education and the first to receive a graduate degree. His parents are generally supportive of him but he said that “they really don’t understand what I do.”

Your Task:

- 1) Using the information above, choose 4 instruments and only 4 that you think are relevant and appropriate for this assessment.
 - a. Your response needs to include:
 - i. A clear rationale for selecting each instrument
 - ii. Discussion of the relevant psychometric properties for each instrument
 - iii. Discussion of additional issues or concerns that you need to consider for each instrument selected.

- 2) Discuss the issue of communicating information to John’s employer based on them encouraging him to “seek assistance” and to obtain “some type of report.” In other words, how will this issue be addressed with your client in the context of conducting the assessment?

University of Utah
Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program
Doctoral Comprehensive Examination
Fall 2008, September 3, 2008
Methods and Quantitative Research Design and Analysis

A student proposes to conduct a dissertation research project at a university counseling center (UCC) that examines the effectiveness of CBT when homework is provided. The proposed intervention involves a 5-session CBT treatment group that is coupled with planned homework assignments provided at the end of each of the five sessions (that the counselor will follow-up on in the subsequent session). The control condition will also receive CBT, but no homework will be provided to clients. The outcome of interest involves a measure (that the student has chosen) that assesses client satisfaction with the counseling experience. This measure will be administered (across all clients in this study) at the 5th (or final) session.

The student has proposed performing an independent-sample t-test to compare the means between the treatment and control subjects on the client satisfaction measure. The student believes that there will be a significant effect in favor of the treatment group over the control group in client satisfaction.

At the student's colloquium, a member of the student's dissertation committee argues that "homework" should do more than simply improve client satisfaction; that it may actually impact a client's psychological state as well. Second, the committee member also wondered whether students who had high GPA's might benefit more from the homework intervention than students with lower GPA's (or, at least, GPA might be a confounding variable). His reason is that students with high GPAs may have gotten more value out of doing homework in other "academic" settings than students with lower GPAs. The committee member asks that the student revise the dissertation proposal to incorporate these two suggestions:

- (1) What is the nature of the difficulty with the student's chosen analytical strategy if the student changes to proposal to conform to the committee member's two suggestions?
- (2) Describe an alternative method for analyzing the data that would incorporate these two suggestions. Provide details about this analysis. How would it differ from a t-test. What are the advantages of this alternative method over the method that the student is proposing?

University of Utah ~ Counseling Psychology Program
Doctoral Qualifying Examination ~ Fall 2008
Multicultural Counseling & Human Diversity

Considerable attention has been focused on identity development models in multicultural counseling, including a number of models of racial and cultural identity development related to people of color as well as White racial identity development. Although these models can be extremely useful in a cross-cultural counseling relationship (e.g., a Black therapist counseling a White client, a White therapist working with a Mexican American client), the models also have their drawbacks.

In this question, you are asked to select one racial/cultural identity development model for people of color (may be related to a specific racial/ethnic group or a more general model) and one White racial identity model to describe in depth. Then, discuss how knowing these models would facilitate effective multicultural counseling in a counseling relationship between a counselor and client of different racial/ethnic groups, where one member of the dyad is a person of color and the other is White. You may find it helpful to create a vignette or example to illustrate this. Finally, discuss cautions, limitations, drawbacks, and potential risks of using these models.

Criteria for Evaluation (to be included with the question for examinees):

1. The description of the two identity development models, one racial/cultural for people of color and the other White, is clearly explained, with therapeutic implications of each in the counseling relationship. The response includes relevant primary sources and, where available, research supporting the models.
2. The integration of the two models as applied to the counseling relationship, process, and outcome reflects a clear understanding of how these various stages interact with one another in the cross-cultural relationship. The primary criterion here is the ability to take two well-understood models and demonstrate how they actually play out in the therapeutic relationship.
3. The discussion of cautions, limitations, drawbacks, and possible risks of using the models demonstrates depth and complexity and goes beyond mere textbook caveats.

Preliminary Exam Question
Research and Psychological Interventions in Counseling Psychology
Fall 2008

Directions: Read the following vignette and respond to all four questions below.

Vignette: Dwayne is a single, 25-year-old, African American male engineer who was recently transferred from a large city to an isolated rural area for work. When he began to experience a lack of energy, severe headaches, indigestion, and insomnia he called his Baptist minister back home who recommended he seek services from the local community mental health center. Although Dwayne had never been to counseling, he followed his minister's advice and scheduled an appointment with you.

During the initial interview, Dwayne seemed depressed and anxious. He responded to inquiries with short, polite statements and seldom volunteered information about himself. He avoided any statements that involved feelings and presented his problem as strictly a biological one. Although he never expressed it directly, Dwayne seemed to doubt the value of counseling.

Questions:

1. According to the empirical literature, will psychotherapy be effective with this client? Explain and support your answer. (*Approximately 3 pages*)
2. How would client characteristics affect your choice of change interventions or treatment strategies? (*Approximately 1 page*)
3. How would counselor characteristics affect your choice of change interventions or treatment strategies? (*Approximately 1 page*)
4. Describe an evidence-based treatment strategy or intervention that might be useful in working with Dwayne. Comment on one or two challenges you may face given the cultural context and how you would address it. (*Approximately 2 pages*)

Career Prelim Question

Person-environment fit (P-E fit) is a foundational construct in many career theories. Select two career theories and briefly describe; how they operationalize P-E fit, how P-E fit is measured and calculated, and the impact of high and low levels of fit. Finally, relying on empirical research, critically evaluate the viability of the construct of P-E fit in these two theories.