

ALBIZU UNIVERSITY – MIAMI CAMPUS
PSYM 501 – COUNSELING THEORIES AND PRACTICE

GUIDELINES FOR THE CLINICAL ORIENTATION ASSIGNMENT
16 POINTS

In this class, we discussed the importance of beginning to formulate a “clinical orientation” (sometimes referred to as a “theoretical orientation”). The clinical orientation will be your guiding principle in planning treatment for your clients. It may change as you acquire more experience throughout the years; however, this assignment will help you define your initial orientation.

Chapter 15 in the text describes how to achieve an “integrative perspective” for arriving at a clinical orientation. Corey believes that one single approach may not be enough to work with all types of clients and problems, but that an integrative approach can address not only your own values and beliefs, but will better serve different types of clients and problems.

Now that you have acquired knowledge of many different types of approaches to counseling, you will discuss in detail where you are in terms of the development of a clinical orientation. This entails analyzing your philosophy about how problems develop and the best way to treat them using the approaches in the textbook.

In order to meet the requirements of this assignment, you will need to:

- Read Chapter 15, “An Integrative Perspective” in order to understand the importance of psychotherapy integration and how to go about integrating different approaches.
- Pay special attention to the four pathways of psychotherapy integration in Chapter 15, as you will be using these to describe your clinical orientation.
- Chapter 15 also has multiple tables addressing each one of the 11 approaches studied in the class. The tables focus on a specific aspect of each approach, such as the key concepts, the goals of therapy, the relationship between the counselor and the client, the techniques of each approach, the limitations, and much more.
- The tables in this chapter will help you compare the different approaches in terms of their characteristics so that you can formulate your clinical orientation. Keep in mind that when you integrate one or more approaches within your clinical orientation, the approaches must flow in harmony with each other. They must not be contradictory.
- An example of approaches that might be contradictory would be one approach that believes that behavior can be controlled by the client (non-deterministic), with an approach that proposes that behavior is controlled by external forces and

motivations (deterministic). Another example might be one approach that proposes that clients are the experts in their own lives versus an approach where the therapist interprets and defines what is going on in the client's life.

- When selecting approaches for integrating in the clinical orientation, the tables in Chapter 15 will give you much of the information you need to ensure that the approaches flow together and do not contradict each other.
- Chapter 2 in the course textbook will also help you answer the section of who you are as a counselor (please see below).

Assignment Requirements

- This assignment requires a formal cover sheet with your name and class, and a minimum of 6 typed pages, excluding the cover sheet and any references you might use. Please note that references are not required, as the expectation is that the information you use for this assignment comes from the course textbook. The assignment must be submitted in MS Word, and not as a pdf.
- **PART 1 – Your Characteristics as a Counselor**
The assignment should begin with an analysis of who you are as a counselor. Who you are will guide the type of approaches that you include in your clinical orientation. Chapter 2 of the text addresses counselor characteristics that may impact the approach a counselor uses. These include your values, the choices you make and how you define and confront problems.
- **PART 2 – Your Pathway to Integration**
Following the self-analysis, the chosen integrative pathway from Chapter 15 should be discussed. Begin by describing the details of your pathway. Why did you choose that pathway? What appeals to you about it?
- **PART 3 – Your Clinical Orientation**
Next, you will be addressing the approaches to therapy that appeal to you in formulating your clinical orientation and discuss why these would be best for you. **This becomes your clinical orientation.** It is suggested that no more than three approaches be selected for this section in order to avoid mixing up of approaches and techniques, which can be confusing for you and for your client.

- **PART 4 – Your Clinical Orientation in Practice**

Finally, you will discuss how your Clinical Orientation will be used in Counseling Practice in terms of the following (Note that each of the sections below has a corresponding table in Chapter 15 for each approach):

- the goals of the approaches – do they align?
- the therapist's function and role in each one – are they similar?
- the relationship between the therapist and the client
- techniques of therapy – will they flow in harmony?
- application of the approaches – diagnoses and clients that are best served by the approaches

Grading of the Assignment

The assignment's 16 points will be assigned as follows to the four Parts described above:

Part 1 – Your Counselor Characteristics	3 points
Part 2 – Your Pathway to Integration	3 points
Part 3 – Your Clinical Orientation	4 points
Part 4 – Your Clinical Orientation in Practice (based on the five sections listed above)	<u>6 points</u>
Total possible points	16 points
