SUL ROSS STATE UNIVERSITY - RIO GRANDE COLLEGE
CAREER AND COUNSELING SERVICES

INFORMED PRIOR CONSENT DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Introduction

Career and psychological counseling is provided to students of Sul Ross State University - Rio Grande College. Services include brief, solution-focused counseling. If other services such as parenting classes, family counseling, and counseling for children and teens are needed, referral to outside agencies will be done. Consultations with schools, pastors and other professionals can be provided, when needed.

All services are provided in the context of a strong commitment to the integrity of the individual, the family, and the community. This is a service to the whole person, psychologically, spiritually, and socially. All services are provided under the laws of the State of Texas regarding such services and the licensing of counselors.

Who needs counseling?

Man times we face crises in life that we cannot resolve by ourselves. We face questions about our present or future decisions. We may need someone to help us to sort out the many facets of our actions and to help us make healthy choices. We may feel that we have lost control of life and we need someone to help us to regain power to repair emotional scars which have resulted from past decisions. Sometimes we may not quite understand our conflicting feelings and actions and we need someone to help us choose a healthier behavior. Alcohol or drugs, crime or other illegal behavior may be a problem with which we need assistance. We may seek someone to help us learn better ways of expressing and meeting our needs. At times our families and marriages may need strengthening, our children may need guidance. A counselor can help us with these life needs.

What is counseling?

Counseling is when you meet with someone else who is trained to provide such services. The counselor will listen to you, help you sort out all the elements of the problem and assist you to set new goals and directions for your life. The counselor will help find ways to implement your decisions. In short, counseling is when a professional helps you to grow into the human being that you want to be. We encourage a growth model based upon accepted and proven psychological theory and counseling methodology.

What are the goals of counseling?

You and your counselor will set the specific goals of counseling to meet your individual needs. In general however, the following are the goals of counseling:

- To establish or restore healthy relationships such as with friends, family, and God.
- To restore control, meaning, and direction to life; empowerment of the individual, the marriage, the family. Yet, we must realize that one is never in complete and total control and that victim status is total loss of control. Balance is the chosen path.
- To restore and energize the natural, normal growth processes that are inherent in human life.
- To maximize and channel one's energies into healthy behaviors, thought processes and feelings and to take responsibility for choices and outcomes.
- To learn how to organize and structure one's personal characteristics for success and efficiency.
- To gain the ability to respond in health ways to one's own needs as well as to the needs of others and to balance self-differentiation in our human bonds with others.
What about confidentiality and anonymity?

The counselor, and the office staff, is required by Texas law to conform to certain procedures regarding records of your counseling sessions. Your records cannot be seen by anyone other than yourself without your expressed permission except in very specific circumstances. In cases of a minor child, the counselor must have permission of a parent or legal guardian to break confidentiality. Your name and your records are strictly confidential except in the circumstances described below.

If your counselor is being supervised as part of his/her training, the supervisor will have access to your records. You will be informed of these circumstances. The supervisor is under the same legal constraints as your counselor.

Texas law requires your counselor to report any indications of child abuse or neglect, abuse or neglect of the elderly, and abuse or neglect of the disabled.

Your counselor must take reasonable action to inform medical or law enforcement personnel if there is a probability of immediate physical injury by you to yourself or others or there is a probability of immediate mental or emotional injury to you as a result of your own or the actions of others.

In certain cases, court proceedings may require disclosure of your records. Such cases may include but are not limited to divorce, child custody, or criminal prosecution. The counselor may be issued a subpoena in such cases. You must inform your counselor if such things are a possibility.

What is expected of me when I ask for counseling?

You will be asked to fill out a form and sign several necessary documents.
You will be asked to make a commitment to the counseling process including cooperating with the counselor and making sure that you show up for your scheduled appointments.

What can I expect from my counselor?

The counselor will be available to you at scheduled times and will attempt to help you in case of an emergency in your life. The counselor will not be available to talk to you on the phone except in cases of extreme emergency.
At the conclusion of each session, your counselor will summarize for you what was discussed and the goals, which may have been agreed upon between you.
At times your counselor may suggest that you talk to another professional such as your family physician, your pastor, a psychiatrist, or even another counselor. Such referrals will be discussed with you and you will have choices in the matter.

How long will it take to help me with my problems?

Each counseling session will normally run about one hour. There will be six (6) sessions. Should you and the counselor agree there is a need for more than six (6), more may be arranged or a referral to an outside agency can be provided.
You will meet with the counselor on a schedule that the two of you agree upon during the first session. If you are in a crisis at the time, the counselor may recommend an immediate referral to an outside agency which will allow for close monitoring.

The counselor is a professional and if he/she cannot be of help to you quickly, then he/she will suggest a referral to someone more qualified. No referrals of your case will be made without your consent.

What is meant by counselor supervision?

There are several classes of counselors, which by law must be supervised. One is a Masters’ degree student who is fulfilling practicum requirement as part of his/her degree program at an accredited university. These students are supervised by a university professor who is licensed to do so. Another category is persons who have finished their degrees in counseling and are working under a temporary license granted by the State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors. These persons too are being supervised by a fully licensed individual. Another category of counselor is Masters’ Social Workers or Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT) who have completed their degrees, taken the licensure exam and are granted Licensed Master of Social Work/ MFT credentials and are in practice under supervision working toward the Clinical Social Worker/MFT certification.
I, (print name)_________________________________________________________________________ have read the

I understand and am in agreement with the conditions contained therein. My counselor has
answered my questions and has explained the provisions of this disclosure to me.

Client Signature ______________________________  Date __________________________

Counselor signature ______________________________  Date __________________________