

CNS 563/CNS 663G Course Outline  
**Existential Issues in Counseling**  
Spring 2005: 1 (563) or 2 (663) Semester Hours  
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***Texts:***

- 1) Yalom, Irving. Existential Psychotherapy.
- 2) Edited by Newton, Maloney. A Christian Existential Psychology; the Contributions of John Finch.
- 3) Edited by Joen Fagan and Irma Lee Shepherd. Gestalt Therapy Now; Theory, Technique, Applications.

***Course Description and Goals:*** This course will survey the major contributors to existential philosophy and psychology and introduce practical strategies and techniques to achieve existential goals in a psychotherapy session. Particular emphasis will be given to integrating these with Christian spirituality and achieving an experiential understanding of existential issues that affect the therapeutic process.

***Learning Objectives***

- 1) Students will be able to identify and understand the major contributors to the existential perspective, both in terms of philosophy and psychological theories.
- 2) Students will be able to see how existential issues and values facilitate healing in the therapeutic process.
- 3) Students will come in contact with some of their own existential issues and will grasp how these may affect the therapeutic process with clients.
- 4) Students will be able to identify and understand how to implement strategies and techniques that facilitate the resolution of existential issues in the therapeutic process.

***Course Requirements:***

- 1) Complete all assigned reading and participate in class discussions. (20%)
- 2) Complete one paper on an existential book. (40%)  
Students will write a 12 page paper an existential author's perspective as found in an original work by that author. The paper will include a summary of the book, an evaluation of the book, an application of the book to their personal lives, a comparison of the book to other course material, and the student's integration of the existentialism found in the book with a Christian perspective.
- 3) Complete one paper on an existential experience. (40%)  
Students will spend an extended period of time alone in a prescribed existential experience/exercise identifying, focussing upon and experiencing their existential issues, and, following this experience, write a 10 page paper describing their experience and relating it to other class material.

## Course Schedule

<b>Week</b>	<b>Reading &amp; Projects Due</b>	<b>Topics</b>
1		Introduction
2		Existential Principles
3	Read Yalom	Existential Principles
4		Soren Kierkegaard
5		Finch
6	Read Kierkegaard	Yalom/Sartre/Nietzche
7		Review
8		Existential Experience #1
9	Read Finch	Intensive Therapy
10		Gestalt #1
11	Read <u>Gestalt Therapy Now</u>	Gestalt #2
12	Existential Experience #2	In Class Demonstration #1
13		In Class Demonstration #2
14	Experiential Papers Due	