

*Sul Ross State University*  
**Rio Grande College**  
**Counseling Program**

*Department of Education*

**ADVANCED STRATEGIES  
IN PLAY THERAPY**

EDUC 6331

3 semester credit hours

Spring Semester 2017

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## **Course Purpose**

This course is designed to provide counselors, advanced graduate students, and mental health professionals with the opportunity to develop a comprehensive understanding of the history, theories, techniques, and applications of advanced strategies in play therapy, action-oriented counseling, and the therapeutic use of the expressive arts for working effectively with diverse and multicultural clients of all ages. Students will develop their own unique and integrated approach to action-oriented counseling while engaging in the clinical supervision of students enrolled in the initial **Play Therapy** (EDUC 6330) course. **Prerequisite:** *Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in EDUC 6330 and/or have permission of the instructor.*

## **Course Objectives**

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the philosophical basis for utilizing advanced play therapy as a mode of mental health treatment of diverse clients of all ages. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project and clinical supervision.*
2. Understand and discuss the theoretical base for counselor behavior in specific play-related or action-oriented relationships. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*
3. Identify basic themes and symbolism as presented by clients in the therapeutic process. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight, and clinical supervision.*
4. Delineate and describe the most widely accepted theoretical models of play therapy and the formats in which they are most commonly offered. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project and clinical supervision.*
5. Conceptualize a client's presenting clinical problems developmentally and theoretically. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight, and clinical supervision.*
6. Describe and demonstrate the use of therapeutic metaphors. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the teaching project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*
7. Develop an understanding of the rationale and technique of expressive arts as a therapeutic modality. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*
8. Identify elements of, and stages within the play therapy relationship, from intake to termination. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the teaching project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*
9. Understand the person of the counselor or therapist and how it impacts on the unfolding relationship with the client. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*
10. Appreciate the legal and ethical issues relevant to play-related or action-oriented counseling. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*

11. Describe and discuss the evolving body of qualitative and quantitative research in play therapy and the therapeutic use of the expressive arts. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*

12. Recognize issues of diversity and how they impact on every facet of the therapeutic process. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted through class participation and class discussion, the instructional project, blog oversight and clinical supervision.*

## Readings

There are no required texts for this course. The required readings will be posted on Blackboard under the Assignments for each particular week in the semester. Readings will include journal articles, chapters from books, papers presented at conferences, and various handouts. Additionally, students will share valuable information and resources with one another through the online journal Blogs.

## Class Sessions

This is primarily an online course design, with oversight and supervision of the students in the beginning level **Play Therapy** (EDUC 6330) class. All students will serve as clinical supervisors for the beginning level students and must meet once a week for supervision either in person or via cyber connections. Every other Wednesday evening, from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm, the instructor will convene class meetings on the Collaborate feature of Blackboard. These class sessions will consist of lectures, presentations, demonstrations and discussions.

## Course Requirements and Grading

*regular attendance and participation	50 points
*oversight and monitoring of play therapy blogs	50 points
*clinical supervision of counseling relationship	50 points
*mentoring of beginning play therapy student	50 points
*instructional project	100 points

According to this scale, there are 300 total points possible on which your final course grade will be based. A final point total of 270 or greater will earn you a final grade of A, a total of 240-269 will be a final grade of B, and a total of 200-239 will be a C grade.

# PROPOSED COURSE OUTLINE

**Note:** The following course outline delineates the content and processes of the initial course, *Play Therapy* (EDUC 6330). Graduate students enrolled in *Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy* (EDUC 6331) should plan to participate in the bi-weekly Collaborate class sessions in order to closely monitor the learning, growth and development of their supervisees from the beginning class.

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPICS, ACTIVITIES, AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE</b>
January 18 (No Collaborate)	*Introductions *Course overview and expectations *Building your play therapy resource kit *Planning the semester of play therapy *** <b>Blackboard Assignments and Readings</b>
January 25 (Collaborate)	*Ethical and legal issues in play therapy *To talk or not to talk! *Traditional verbal approaches to psychotherapy *Developmental decision-making in play therapy *Play as catharsis, projection, conflict-resolution, and problem solving *** <b>Blackboard Assignments and Readings</b>
February 1 (No Collaborate)	*Historical perspective of play therapy *Theoretical assumptions of play therapy *** <b>Blackboard Assignments and Readings</b>
February 8 (Collaborate)	*Play therapy techniques *Play therapy skills practice *Puppetry and puppet techniques *Dollhouses and toy boxes *Healing power of natural play *** <b>Blackboard Assignments and Readings</b>
February 15 (No Collaborate)	*Historical perspective of sand tray therapy *Theoretical assumptions of sand tray therapy *** <b>Blackboard Assignments and Readings</b>

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February 22  
(Collaborate)      \*Sand tray techniques  
                         \*Sand tray skills practice  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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March 1  
(No Collaborate)      \*Historical perspective of art therapy  
                         \*Theoretical assumptions of art therapy  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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March 8  
(Collaborate)      \*Art therapy techniques  
                         \*Art therapy skills practice  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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March 13-17      \*\***Spring Break: No Class!**

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March 22  
(Collaborate)      \*Historical perspective of music therapy  
                         \*Theoretical assumptions of music therapy  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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March 29  
(No Collaborate)      \*Music therapy techniques  
                         \*Music therapy skills practice  
                         \*Dance and movement therapy  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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April 5  
(Collaborate)      \*Historical perspectives of game play and adventure-based counseling  
                         \*Theoretical assumptions of game play and adventure counseling  
                         \*\***Due 4/9/17: Instructional Project**  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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April 12  
(No Collaborate)      \*Game play and adventure-based counseling techniques  
                         \*Game play and adventure-based counseling skills practice  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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April 19  
(Collaborate)      \*Bibliotherapy and storytelling techniques  
                         \*Bilingual bibliotherapy  
                         \*Scriptotherapy and Cinematherapy  
                         \*\*\***Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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April 26  
(No Collaborate)      \*Integrating the various nonverbal play-related techniques  
\*Play therapy skills practice  
\*Developing integrated personal approach to counseling  
**\*\*Due: Play Therapy Technique Activity**  
**\*\*\*Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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May 3  
(Collaborate)      \*Play therapy with special needs clients  
\*Play therapy with families  
\*Play therapy with older adults  
\*Termination issues in play therapy  
**\*\*\*Blackboard Assignments and Readings**

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May 10  
(No Collaborate)      **\*\* Due 5/10: Final Examination from May 5 – May 10, 2017**  
**\*\* Due 5/10: Play Therapy Blog completed**  
**\*\* Due 5/11: Client Case File completed**  
**\*\* Due 5/12: Grade Scores for Activity, Blog & Case File**

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**\*Note:** The due dates in **red font** relate to the beginning **Play Therapy** (EDUC 6330) class. The due dates in **blue font** related to the **Advanced** (EDUC 6331) class. Graduate students in **Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy** (EDUC 6331) are responsible for monitoring and grading the Play Therapy Blogs, the Play Therapy Technique Activity, and the Client Case File.

## Remember these important dates:

January 17	Spring semester classes begin
January 20	Last day for late registration and schedule changes
January 25	First class meeting on Collaborate 6:00 pm
March 7	Mid-Semester
March 13-17	Spring Break
April 7	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from University
April 9	Instructional Project is due
April 14	Good Friday Holiday
April 26	Play Therapy Technique Activity is due
May 3	Last class meeting on Collaborate 6:00 pm
May 10	Play Therapy Counseling Blog must be completed on Blackboard
May 10	Final Examination must be completed on Blackboard
May 11	Client Case File is due via Blackboard
May 13	Spring Commencement in Del Rio at 7:30 pm

# ASSIGNMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

## Class Participation

Advanced students are expected to participate in the virtual classroom community to monitor, oversee and mentor the students in beginning *Play Therapy* (EDUC 6330). Participation is evaluated by the instructor on a subjective basis and through Blackboard user statistics available to the instructor. Participation in the virtual worlds of Collaborate and Blackboard is worth a total of **50 points** toward your final grade in this course.

On the evenings designated as **Collaborate** on the course outline for *Play Therapy* (EDUC 6330), the instructor will facilitate a class meeting in real time on Collaborate beginning at 6:00 pm and ending around 8:30 pm. Students will log in a couple of minutes before 6:00 pm from their homes or offices (anywhere you have a reliable Internet connection). Students are required to turn off or completely silence electronic devices such as cell phones, iPhones, iPads, and laptop computers while participating in the Collaborate class meetings. Furthermore, if a student is participating in the Collaborate class session from his/her home, then she/he must make all necessary arrangements to not be disturbed by family members or visitors.

The instructor will maintain contact with students in both the beginning and advanced courses via email and Blackboard announcements. The instructor will rely on email to make special announcements and/or notifications. Please get in the habit of checking your various email accounts regularly each day, including your Sul Ross account.

All course materials will be posted on Blackboard. Advanced graduate students have access as **Teaching Assistants** to the Blackboard site for beginning *Play Therapy* (EDUC 6330) and access as regular graduate students to the Blackboard site for *Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy* (EDUC 6331). Having TA access to the Blackboard site for the beginning students allows you to post articles, resources, presentations and announcements without going through the instructor. You are encouraged to contribute materials, resources, ideas and discussions.

## Instructional Project

Students in ***Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6331) are expected to create an instructional project on a topic directly related to play therapy, nonverbal therapy, and/or action-oriented counseling. Since designing and crafting an instructional project is a demanding endeavor, students are encouraged to work with partners and collaborate on an instructional project. Additionally, students are required to seek instructor approval of their project topic. The final version of the instructional project is due on or before **Sunday, April 9, 2017** and is worth a total of **100 points**.

The purpose of the instructional project is two-fold:

1. To provide knowledge and skill development on a particular intervention relevant to the course, ***Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6330).
2. To produce a video recorded instructional unit that can be utilized in future courses of ***Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6330) independent of the designer and the instructor.

The instructional project must be in a format that can be independently accessed by the learner and compatible with a distance-learning teaching format. The final product will be of continued use beyond the end of the current semester. The format (medium) should be a 20-30 minute video which provides background information and skill training on a particular topic or counseling intervention relevant to the study and practice of ***Play Therapy*** (nonverbal or action-oriented approaches). The target audience of this instructional project is graduate students and professional counselors.

Using *Windows Movie Maker* (or similar programs) it is fairly simple to create a video presentation using a wide variety of instructional media and materials (video clips, PowerPoints, stills, audio clips, video/audio narration, images, and music). The instructional project can also include supporting handouts, workbooks, or other instructional resources.

The instructional project will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Teaching Effectiveness
- Organization and Structure
- Originality, Creativity, and Interest
- Quality of Media Resources



Students enrolled in ***Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6331) should collaborate with one or two others to create one single instructional project. All topics must be approved in advance by the instructor. The final product is due on or before **Sunday, April 9, 2017** and is worth a total of **100 points**. All instructional projects will be uploaded to the Blackboard site for the beginning ***Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6330) and they will be mandatory viewing by the beginning students.

To assist you in getting started with this creative project, let's explore a hypothetical example. Let's imagine that Susie and Ramona have decided to collaborate on an instructional project that is focused on using particular sandplay interventions with Hispanic children who were physically abused by their caretakers. Susie and Ramona are interested in the applications of various sand-oriented tools and techniques with this special population of child clients. The first thing the "co-producers" do is research their topic through the academic sources and the Internet. Then they begin to design and organize their project. They want the final product to be user-friendly but also practical and useful to graduate students or professional counselors. They want their target audience to learn new information about the particular topic and to develop two or three new and effective therapeutic skills. Susie and Ramona decide to integrate various resources that they have acquired such as PowerPoint slides, brief video clips, and their own audio narration accompanying various images and photographs. Their final product is a 25-minute digital recording (DVD) composed of an introduction to the topic of Hispanic children who suffer abuse at the hands of their caretakers, video and audio clips of interviews with adult survivors of child abuse, brief clips of interviews with a mental health professional, an explanation of sandplay therapy and application to working with abused children, PowerPoint slides of relevant images of sandplay, and a particular skill application for effecting therapeutic change in the child client. Susie and Ramona succeed in creating an instructional project that is both engaging and educational.

## Monitoring Play Therapy Blog

Advanced graduate students are required to monitor, oversee and grade the Blog assignment for beginning **Play Therapy** (EDUC 6330). The blogs are intended to be documentations and demonstrations of personal growth, struggle, awareness and professional/academic understanding. They should include a running log of the professional play therapy (counseling) relationship. They must consist of at least twice weekly (or more) entries based on the events and experiences of that week's class activities. Each entry must be comprehensive, insightful, and analytically in-depth. The advanced graduate students are free to maintain their own blogs, but are not required to do so. Throughout the semester you will review and monitor the blog space of your assigned supervisee/mentee. You will provide regular feedback, direction and encouragement on the content and style of the student's blog. At the end of the spring semester you will provide a grade (0 to 30 points) for your supervisee's blog work. This mentoring and oversight task is worth a total of **50 points** toward your final grade in the course.

## Supervision of the Play Therapy Counseling Relationship

You are expected to engage in weekly supervision of the play therapy counseling sessions conducted by your assigned supervisee/mentee. The beginning students are required to conduct a minimum of five (5) action-oriented counseling sessions (30-50 minutes each) with a volunteer client. You will supervise skill application; ensure client safety, review progress notes, and monitor student learning objectives.

You are expected to engage in weekly face-to-face (in-person or via Skype or FaceTime) clinical supervision meetings with your assigned supervisee. These one-hour supervision sessions will be individual, and a minimum of six (6) supervision sessions are required during the course of the semester. This relationship is not solely based on the video-recorded counseling sessions, but rather on the cultivation of the supervisor-supervisee relationship. Supervision sessions must be held weekly for 50-60 minutes and you, as the Clinical Supervisor, will balance the amount of emphasis placed on video-recordings, client conceptualization, counselor strengths and weaknesses, and the parallel process of the clinical supervision relationship.

The time spent in supervision can be logged as direct contact time in your **Practicum** or **Internship** logs, and the time devoted to all other mentoring, coaching and grading can be logged as indirect contact. Throughout the semester you will keep the instructor informed on the performance of your supervisee, and at the end of the semester you will submit a final evaluation of the student's counseling performance. There are **50 points** possible for providing regular and appropriate clinical supervision of the beginning student's counseling relationship.

## **Mentoring of Beginning Student**

The purpose of the advanced graduate students serving as mentors to the beginning ***Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6330) students is to provide the new students with guidance, advice, suggestions and feedback on skill attainment and successful navigation of the Counseling Program. Through establishing and maintaining a trusting relationship the mentee will have access to support and information only available from one student to another.

At the beginning of the semester you should assess your mentee's current level of expertise, knowledge, and skill levels relative to play therapy and counseling in general. Determine the mentee's strengths and weaknesses, so that individual realistic goals for growth and change can be established. Advise and recommend specific goals and objectives for the mentee/supervisee. Provide guidance and support by creating an atmosphere of openness where meaningful communication and trust can exist. Your role and function as a mentor is worth a total of **50 points** toward your final grade in this course.

## **Distance Education Statement**

Since ***Advanced Strategies in Play Therapy*** (EDUC 6331) is an enhanced web-based course, a large portion of the full experience of this course will take place on Blackboard. All students are expected to regularly access the class site on Blackboard and participate fully in the virtual aspect of this course. Additionally, students must log on to the Collaborate feature of Blackboard on a biweekly basis (indicated in the Proposed Course Outline) in real time from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm.

**The policy on Distance Education at Rio Grande College is as follows:** Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

## **Professional Counseling Identity and Behavior**

The Counseling Program of Rio Grande College is a professional graduate program designed to meet the standards for Texas school counselor certification and professional state licensure. The Counseling Program does not train students for specific job descriptions, but rather provides a comprehensive preparation meeting the national and state standards of professional knowledge and skill in Counseling. The Counseling Program has specific policies and procedures which provide students with a sequential, growth-oriented progression of courses to take; students are fully responsible for knowing and following these policies and procedures. This is not a singular academic program to prepare students for advanced levels of teaching or beginning levels of administration, but rather a distinctly different profession entirely. Counseling is not an appropriate career field for all students. In the process of pursuing professional training in Counseling, some students discover (or faculty may advise) that they are not appropriate for the Counseling field, nor is the field of Counseling appropriate for them. Faculty of the Counseling Program will provide continuous, honest and pragmatic feedback to each student regarding progress and suitability in this program.

It is the personal and professional responsibility of each and every graduate student in the Counseling Program of Rio Grande College to be familiar with the most current issue of the ***Counseling Program Handbook***. This document details and describes all aspects of the Counseling Program, from taking the first courses to passing the Comprehensive Oral Examination and graduating with the Master's in Counseling.

Unethical behavior (as defined by the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* of the American Counseling Association) by a student enrolled in any counseling course will result in the exclusion of that student from the Counseling Program of Rio Grande College, and may subject the student to civil penalties as well. Professional behavior is expected of each and every student at all times across all Counseling courses. Failure to maintain professionalism is considered unethical behavior.

## **Accessibility and Learning Environment**

The Counseling Program of Rio Grande College is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from intentional or unintentional sexual harassment, as defined below, or harassment on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, medical condition, marital status, veteran status or on any other basis protected by law. Such conduct is unprofessional, unproductive, illegal, and generally unacceptable. All conduct of this nature is expressly prohibited, regardless of whether it violates the law.

The Counseling Program supports equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by Rio Grande College on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.

The Counseling Program is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disability Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in gaining opportunities for full participation in programs, services and activities. The Disability Services Coordinator is the Director of Student Services (830-758-5006) in Eagle Pass, Texas. Services available to all students include consultation, information and referral as well as personal counseling and academic advising. A student is eligible for disability services if s/he has been admitted to Rio Grande College and has a documented physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Qualified students with disabilities who need academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services or other accommodations to ensure equal access must register with Disability Services. It is the student's responsibility to bring disability documentation with them to an appointment with the Disability Services Coordinator to discuss their individual needs at this time. Each request is considered on an individualized, case-by-case basis. As considerable time may be involved in obtaining complete and adequate documentation and arranging for qualified service providers, prospective and current students should request services in a timely manner. These services should be requested well in advance of the anticipated need.

Recent disability documentation from appropriate qualified professionals must be provided by the student to establish current functional limitations and the impact of the disability. Any recommendations for specific accommodations may be helpful in making determinations and these will be considered as part of the documentation review process. Documentation of disability status and other related information is handled in a confidential manner and is maintained in files separate from a student's educational record.

In compliance with applicable laws, unless Rio Grande College can demonstrate that an academic requirement is an essential component of a degree or program, the University will make reasonable adjustments to requirements to ensure that the requirements do not discriminate against qualified students with disabilities. A student with a disability may request a course substitution or a modification of a degree or program requirement through the following process.

The student's first point of contact for assistance with this process should be the Disability Services Coordinator. The student should submit:

1. A written request for the modification explaining his/her difficulties in the relevant areas and reasons for requesting the modification;
2. Information about the results of previous efforts in the relevant area (transcripts, etc.); and
3. Comprehensive documentation of the disability and the specific aspects of the disability which impair the student's ability to learn or perform in the area in which the student is requesting the modification. The Disability Services Coordinator will meet with the student, review the documentation and prepare a recommendation on the request.
  - a. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation (within a 5 year period), and the date of the original diagnosis.
  - b. A description of the diagnostic criteria and/or diagnostic test(s) used.
  - c. A description of the current functional impact/limitations of the disability.
  - d. Treatments, medications, assistive devices/services currently prescribed or used.
  - e. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability over time.
  - f. The credentials of the diagnosing professional(s) to include the training and experience which enable the person capable of making the diagnosis(es).

Recommendations for accommodation are helpful and will be given due consideration. If a student feels that s/he has been discriminated against based on disability, it is recommended that the student first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the individual or group suspected of discrimination. If this procedure is non-productive, a second step may be to seek assistance from the Disability Services office. Students may also file a complaint with the appropriate university officer for ADA/504 compliance, the ADA Compliance Officer, according to the student grievance procedure.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances; demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies; leering; whistling; touching; pinching; assault; coerced sexual acts; suggestive, insulting or obscene comments or gestures. The Counseling Program prohibits all conduct of this nature whether or not such conduct violates any applicable laws.