

**FOUNDATIONS OF PEER COUNSELING AND PEER EDUCATION:  
THEORY AND PRACTICE II  
ECPY 403  
COURSE SYLLABUS  
FALL SEMESTER 2006**

**DAY, TIME, AND LOCATION:** To be arranged with Instructors

**INSTRUCTOR:** M. Dolores Cimini, Ph.D.  
Licensed Psychologist  
Director, Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program  
Health and Counseling Building, Room 206  
442-5800  
[dcimini@uamail.albany.edu](mailto:dcimini@uamail.albany.edu)

**INSTRUCTOR, GRADUATE ASSISTANTS AND PROGRAM SUPERVISORS:**

Michele Reich, Instructor, Psychology Intern	205	442-5800	<a href="mailto:mreich1@uamail.albany.edu">mreich1@uamail.albany.edu</a>
Hilary Flagg, Outreach Coordinator	202B	442-5891	<a href="mailto:OutreachCoordinator@uamail.albany.edu">OutreachCoordinator@uamail.albany.edu</a>
Carolyn Gordon, Hotline Coordinator	202A	442-5894	<a href="mailto:HotlineCoordinator1@uamail.albany.edu">HotlineCoordinator1@uamail.albany.edu</a>
Lindsay Pirozzi, Hotline Coordinator	202A	442-5894	<a href="mailto:HotlineCoordinator@uamail.albany.edu">HotlineCoordinator@uamail.albany.edu</a>

All Coordinators can be reached in the Health and Counseling Services Building at the Middle Earth office area on the second floor. Their telephones are equipped with voice mail, and their direct numbers are listed above.

**OFFICE HOURS:** Office hours will be posted on the office doors of instructional staff.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course, which is a companion to ECPY 400 (Foundations of Peer Counseling and Peer Education: Theory and Practice I), students will have the opportunity to practice peer counseling and peer education skills through supervised experiences which will occur on the Middle Earth crisis hotline and/or in the Middle Earth outreach education service. Students will also participate in weekly supervision groups which are facilitated by instructional staff. A primary strength of this course is that learning can take place in the context of a campus service agency, allowing students the opportunity to apply skills which they have learned.

**COURSE ADMISSION:** Students are enrolled in this course by permission of the Instructor. Enrolled students must already be part of the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program or go through its formal application process. Students must also demonstrate a genuine interest in learning helping skills and providing service to others. ECPY 400 or its equivalent must be completed prior to admission to ECPY 403. For further information about participation in ECPY 400 and 403, please contact Dr. M. Dolores Cimini at 442-5800.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To practice the skills that are necessary for peer helping as it takes place in peer counseling and peer education activities;
- To apply the basic theories and principles of peer counseling, such as listening and attending skills, to hotline service activities;
- To apply the basic principles and theories associated with peer education, such as effective workshop preparation and presentation, to activities held on and off campus;
- To gain more extensive knowledge of issues of concern to college students, such as alcohol and substance abuse, rape and sexual assault, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and other topics, so that this information may be applied to peer counseling and peer education activities;
- To carry out basic crisis intervention techniques in order to learn how and when to seek assistance from professional backup personnel;
- To practice the standards and behaviors that are consistent with ethical conduct and professionalism.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

Middle Earth Training Manual. Updated summer 2002.

Middle Earth Policy Manual. Updated summer 2002.

Millman, J. et. al. Talking with the Caller: Guidelines for Crisisline and Other Volunteer Counselors. Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications, Ltd. 1998.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

Tindall, Judith A. Peer Power, Book One. Bristol, PA, Accelerated Development Press. (2000).

Carkhuff, R. R. The Art of Helping VII. Amherst, MA. Human Resources Development Press. (2000).

Carkhuff, R. R. Student Workbook for The Art of Helping VI. Amherst, MA. Human Resources Development Press. (2000).

Additional readings which relate to specific topics will be assigned as appropriate and will be placed on reserve in the University Library.

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to complete all reading assignments; one copy of each textbook will be placed in the hotline room to facilitate access by volunteers. PLEASE NOTE THAT TEXTBOOKS THAT ARE IN THE HOTLINE ROOM ARE TO BE USED AT MIDDLE EARTH; IF ANY TEXTBOOK IS FOUND TO BE MISSING, IT CANNOT BE REPLACED.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING SYSTEM:** This course carries 3 semester credits, and student performance in the course will be graded on an A-E scale on the basis of criteria which have been specified in a Learning Contract discussed between the student and the instructional staff. In all cases, the Learning Contract requires that each enrolled student meet with a member of the instructional staff on a weekly basis for supervision. A sample learning contract for the crisis hotline component appears below:

**ECPY 403 and ECPY 497  
INDIVIDUAL LEARNING CONTRACT  
PEER COUNSELING TRACK**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**STUDENT I.D.#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**COURSE SECTION:**             ECPY 403     ECPY 497

In this course, students will have the opportunity to practice the skills learned in ECPY 400 under the supervision of instructional staff. The course will take place on the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program premises. Students will earn 3 credits when the course is successfully completed. Grading is on an A-E scale for ECPY 403 and on an S/U scale for ECPY 497. As this experience is both an academic course and a job, the criteria for grading Contained within this contract reflect high standards of professional conduct. Expectations are as follows:

**PART I: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

1. **Attendance at all group supervision sessions:** Each student will be required to be scheduled for a weekly one-hour supervision group led by one of the Middle Earth Hotline Coordinators. Students must sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of each supervision group. Students cannot attend a supervision group at another time if the regularly scheduled group is missed. Students cannot attend supervision groups at the same time that they are involved in other Middle Earth requirements, such as fulfilling required hotline shifts. A student will be allowed one "free" absence from a supervision group, which should only be used in the event of illness or other personal emergency. If a supervision group is missed, the student is responsible for learning the material that is covered on that day and demonstrating this knowledge to the group supervisor. It is not permissible to use the free absence for the last supervision session "just to use it up". If more than one supervision group is missed, the student will be referred to the Middle Earth Director for a final grade deduction.

2. **Participation in all group supervision sessions:** Each student, over and above their attendance at supervision groups, will be required to actively participate in all supervision activities and remain awake and alert throughout the duration of the supervision hour. Participation includes respectful and appropriate interaction with the group supervisor and other group members, involvement in role-plays and group activities, completion of all in-class and homework assignments, and demonstration of interest and commitment to the Middle Earth program.
3. **Completion of one (1) three-hour shift per week on the Middle Earth crisis hotline:** Each student must schedule a weekly three-hour block of time to fulfill duties on the Middle Earth hotline. This scheduled time will occur on the same day and at the same time each week, and students must participate in shifts from the week that the hotline opens until the end of final exam week; this means that one temp shift at the beginning of the semester and one temp shift during finals week are required of each student. During all shifts, each student must remain awake, alert, and ready to respond to calls or to be a supportive and involved shift partner. If a student cannot participate in the regular shift for any reason, including a serious and documentable illness, the student is responsible for looking for a replacement peer counselor for that time and getting it approved through the agency shift change procedure. If a permanent shift is missed, the final grade will be dropped by seven (7) points. If a temp shift at the end of the semester is missed, the final grade will be dropped by ten (10) points. If a student misses a shift for any reason without getting an approved replacement, the student will be placed on probation and will be referred to the Middle Earth Director for a final grade deduction.
4. **Completion of two (2) daytime weekend shifts and one (1) overnight weekend shift during the semester on the Middle Earth crisis hotline:** Each student is required to sign up for weekend shifts on a master schedule by the beginning of the second week of classes. Expectations for participation and seeking approval for replacement peer counselors is the same as described in Item 3. It is not sufficient to merely sign up for weekend shifts; students must COMPLETE all shifts for which they are scheduled. Students are responsible for remembering their shift selections, and no allowances will be made for students who report that they forgot a shift commitment. During all shifts, each student must remain alert to callers, ready to respond to calls or to be a supportive and involved shift partner. If a weekend day shift is missed, the final grade will be dropped by ten (10) points. If a student misses an overnight weekend shift, the final grade will be dropped by fifteen (15) points.
5. **Participation in Middle Earth Student Training Activities.** All students are mandated to participate in Middle Earth student training activities. Such activities may include retreats, in-services, community service activities, or relevant papers or other assignments. Students who do not participate in these activities due to extenuating circumstances must complete an additional overnight shift during the semester to make up for this requirement.
6. **Adherence to all agency policies and procedures and principles of ethical and professional behavior:** All students are required to read and abide by the policies listed in the Middle Earth Policy Manual as well as all agency codes of professional conduct. All agency procedures, particularly the notification of supervisors and backup personnel in emergency situations, must be followed.
7. **Other evaluation criteria:**
  - Punctuality for supervision groups and hotline shifts (arrive at least 5 minutes before the beginning of a supervision group and 15 minutes before the beginning of a shift)
  - Record-keeping must be thorough and detailed documentation. This means that all items on the Middle Earth Call Sheet and other forms must be completed immediately, fully and professionally, as these are legal documents. All Call Sheets must be entered by the student receiving the call on the computer in the Hotline Record Entry Program in room 203. If the computer is not available, students must handwrite the Call Sheet immediately and must input the sheet on the computer within 7 days.
  - Participation in all supervision group discussions and activities
  - Completion of assignments by due dates
  - Ability to work well with other staff members and supervisory staff
8. **If a student has a concern, issue, or question, the student must take responsibility to approach the group supervisor in a timely way as a first step and, if the group supervisor is not available, the Director of Middle Earth.**
9. As Middle Earth is a student organization with student officers and its own identity and governing structure, Middle Earth will continue to be staffed by students who are volunteering their services to the agency as well as by students who are seeking course credit. All students at Middle Earth will have the same expectations and opportunities within the agency structure, and all students within Middle Earth are welcome to participate in its governance, social events, and other activities. If a student wishes to switch from volunteer status to credit status or vice versa from one semester to another,

this can be arranged by speaking to the Director of Middle Earth. Students who complete course requirements are encouraged to remain involved with Middle Earth on a volunteer basis in order to gain more experience and prepare more intensively for graduate study or the work world.

## **PART II: CODE OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT**

1. Students shall promote the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program's mission and/or goal, as stated on pages 1 and 2, of the Middle Earth Policy Manual and shall abide by and support all agency policies and procedures outlined therein.
2. Students shall not discriminate on the basis of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or for any other reason.
3. Students shall treat all individuals with respect and recognize that worth is not diminished by characteristics such as age, culture, ethnicity, gender, disability, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
4. Students shall refrain from attitudes or actions that impinge on the dignity, privacy, or worth of fellow students, Middle Earth staff and the agency.
5. Students shall not use profanity and/or derogatory words while participating in any Middle Earth activity.
6. Students shall work to protect the rights of fellow students and members of the community at large and shall promote an appreciation of human diversity.
7. As representatives of the Middle Earth program, students shall strive to be positive role models at all times, both on and off campus.
8. Students shall abstain from sexual harassment, which includes public displays of affection during any Middle Earth related activity as defined in Community Rights & Responsibilities.
9. Students shall protect fellow students, callers' or audience members' rights to confidentiality and will inform them of the limits to confidentiality based on agency policy.
10. Students shall inform their instructors and the Middle Earth Director of any condition that is likely to harm fellow students and/or others.
11. Students shall recognize that they have a responsibility to the agency, fellow staff members, clients and program participants.
12. Students shall act as representatives of the agency and shall assure that information provided about the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program is factual and accurate.
13. As role models and representatives of the Middle Earth program, students shall not engage in high-risk behaviors which include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Underage drinking or illegal drug use of any kind
  - b. Public intoxication
  - c. Driving under the influence of alcohol or any other drugs
  - d. Engaging in high-risk sexual behavior
14. Students shall honor the legal rights of fellow students, callers, or audience members.
15. Students shall strive to acquire the knowledge taught in class and practiced in either the laboratory class or resource training shift and to improve their skills so as to become effective in their roles as either outreach or hotline members.
16. Students shall inform instructors of conditions that may reduce their effectiveness in performing Middle Earth responsibilities.
17. Students shall seek assistance from instructors, resource trainers, and fellow students when needed.
18. Students shall inform the instructors and the Middle Earth Director of conditions that may be disruptive or damaging including incompetent, unethical, and/or illegal practices by other Middle Earth students or staff.

19. Students shall strive to maintain a learning environment in which the optimum amount of learning and personal development can take place.
20. Students shall maintain a clean learning and working environment while participating in all Middle Earth activities and responsibilities, including training classrooms and all work areas.

**PART III: PROBATION POLICY**

All students who do not meet the responsibilities of their Individual Learning Contract and course syllabus will be placed on **probation**. The following situations are grounds for probation:

- Failure to complete a hotline shift for which you were scheduled
- Failure to attend a required supervision group (other than the “free” miss or excused absences)
- Failure to obtain an APPROVED replacement for Middle Earth hotline or outreach shift responsibilities
- Undocumentable/unexcused absence(s) in Middle Earth training class
- Undocumentable/unexcused absence(s) in Resource Training shifts
- Lateness for Middle Earth responsibilities, including classes and supervision groups
- Failure to follow through with an outreach-related obligation
- Unprofessional behavior
- Violation of Middle Earth policies and ethical standards

**Procedure:**

All Middle Earth Coordinators will be required to report to the Middle Earth Director the names of students who do not fulfill their responsibilities; **there will be no individual “deals” with Coordinators to make up unfulfilled tasks.** These students will be placed on probation immediately and will receive a memo to that effect. Copies of all probation-related documents will remain in the student’s permanent file at Middle Earth.

**Consequences:**

In addition to receiving the consequences stated in the course syllabus and Individual Learning Contract, violators will be on probationary status for the remainder of the semester. *During this time, any recommendations or references that students on probation request from Middle Earth will reflect the fact that they are on probation and will list the reason(s).*

**Criteria for Dismissal:**

At the end of the semester, the Middle Earth Director, Instructors, and Coordinators will review the behavior of all students on probationary status. If there are no additional contract violations, students will be released from probationary status and be permitted to return to Middle Earth the next semester with a “clean slate”. If there are any additional contract violations, students will be dismissed from the program at the end of this semester and will not be permitted to return to Middle Earth at any time in the future. Students who are dismissed from Middle Earth will not be provided with references or recommendations from our agency.

***I have read this Learning Contract and agree to abide by all of its learning objectives. I understand that my continued participation in the Middle Earth program is on a semester-to-semester basis and that continued participation in Middle Earth will be determined based upon an evaluation of my performance in Middle Earth and my academic and judicial standing at the University at Albany. I hereby authorize the Middle Earth Director to verify my student status, academic performance and judicial standing.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor’s Signature Date

**ECPY 403 and ECPY 497  
INDIVIDUAL LEARNING CONTRACT  
PEER EDUCATION TRACK**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT I.D.#: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE SECTION:             ECPY403     ECPY497

In this course, students will have the opportunity to practice the skills learned in ECPY 400 under the supervision of instructional staff. The course will take place on the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program premises. Students will earn 3 credits when the course is successfully completed. Grading is on an A-E scale for ECPY 403 and on an S/U scale for ECPY 497. As this experience is both an academic course and a job, the criteria for grading Contained within this contract reflect high standards of professional conduct. Expectations are as follows:

## **PART I: GENERAL EXPECTATIONS**

1. **Attendance at all group supervision sessions:** Each student will be required to be scheduled for a weekly two-hour supervision group led by the Middle Earth Outreach Coordinator. Students must sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of each supervision group. Students cannot attend a supervision group at another time if the regularly scheduled group is missed. Students cannot attend supervision groups at the same time that they are involved in other Middle Earth requirements, such as fulfilling required outreach programs or office hours. A student will be allowed one "free" absence from a supervision group, which should only be used in the event of illness or other personal emergency. If a supervision group is missed, the student is responsible for learning the material that is covered on that day and demonstrating this knowledge to the group supervisor. It is not permissible to use the free absence for the last supervision session "just to use it up". If more than one supervision group is missed, the student will be referred to the Middle Earth Director for a final grade deduction.
2. **Participation in all group supervision sessions:** Each student, over and above their attendance at supervision groups, will be required to actively participate in all supervision activities and remain awake and alert throughout the duration of the supervision time. Participation includes respectful and appropriate interaction with the group supervisor and other group members, involvement in role-plays and group activities, completion of all in-class and homework assignments, and demonstration of interest and commitment to the Middle Earth program.
3. **Completion of forty hours (30 program/exhibit table hours and 10 office hours) of outreach education-related work during the semester:** Each student is expected to be available for forty hours (30 program/table hours and 10 office hours) of work over the semester on the outreach education component of Middle Earth, and, in addition, the student should be prepared to be accessible on a consistent basis for at least one weekday evening per week to deliver outreach programs. The scheduled time for office hours will occur on the same day and at the same time each week. During all outreach responsibilities, each student must remain awake, alert, respectful of others, and ready to respond as a supportive colleague to peers and positively as a public representative of Middle Earth. If a student cannot participate in a regular responsibility for any reason, including a serious and documentable illness, the student is responsible for looking for a replacement peer educator for that time and getting it approved through the agency shift change procedure. If a student misses a responsibility for any reason without getting an approved replacement, the student will be placed on probation and will be referred to the Middle Earth Director for a final grade deduction
4. **Completion of an approved project beyond the presentation requirement, to be worked on during specific class time or during office hours.** Each student is required to develop a project (a complete workshop module and Middle Earth Players module), which will add to some aspect of the student's knowledge of outreach education and benefit the Middle Earth Outreach Education Program. A project proposal must be submitted to the Outreach Coordinator for approval by the third week of classes.
5. **Participation in Middle Earth Student Training Activities.** All students are mandated to participate in Middle Earth student training activities. Such activities may include retreats, in-services, community service activities, or relevant papers or other assignments. Students who do not participate in these activities due to extenuating circumstances must complete additional outreach hours during the semester to make up for this requirement.
6. **Adherence to all agency policies and procedures and principles of ethical and professional behavior:** All students are required to read and abide by the policies listed in the Middle Earth Policy Manual as well as all agency codes of professional conduct. All agency procedures, particularly the notification of supervisors and backup personnel in emergency situations, must be followed.
7. **Other evaluation criteria:**
  - Punctuality for supervision groups, office hours, and programs/exhibit tables (arrive at least 5 minutes before the beginning of a supervision group and office hours and 15 minutes before the beginning of presentation/exhibit table responsibilities)
  - Record-keeping (thorough and detailed documentation. This means that all items on Middle Earth forms, such as program evaluations, must be completed or collected from audience members immediately after a program in a professional and courteous manner. All outreach documents must be delivered to the Outreach Coordinator within 24 hours of a program.)
  - Participation in all supervision group discussions and activities

- Completion of assignments by due dates
  - Ability to work well with other staff members and supervisory staff
8. **If a student has a concern, issue, or question, the student must take responsibility to approach the group supervisor in a timely way as a first step and, if the group supervisor is not available, the Director of Middle Earth.**
9. As Middle Earth is a student organization with student officers and its own identity and governing structure, Middle Earth will continue to be staffed by students who are volunteering their services to the agency as well as by students who are seeking course credit. All students at Middle Earth will have the same expectations and opportunities within the agency structure, and all students within Middle Earth are welcome to participate in its governance, social events, and other activities. If a student wishes to switch from volunteer status to credit status or vice versa from one semester to another, this can be arranged by speaking to the Director of Middle Earth. Students who complete course requirements are encouraged to remain involved with Middle Earth on either a volunteer basis in order to gain more experience and prepare more intensively for graduate study or the work world.

## PART II: CODE OF PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

1. Students shall promote the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program's mission and/or goal, as stated on pages 1 and 2, of the Middle Earth Policy Manual and shall abide by and support all agency policies and procedures outlined therein.
2. Students shall not discriminate on the basis of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, or for any other reason.
3. Students shall treat all individuals with respect and recognize that worth is not diminished by characteristics such as age, culture, ethnicity, gender, disability, race, religion, or sexual orientation.
4. Students shall refrain from attitudes or actions that impinge on the dignity, privacy, or worth of fellow students, Middle Earth staff and the agency.
5. Students shall not use profanity and/or derogatory words while participating in any Middle Earth activity.
6. Students shall work to protect the rights of fellow students and members of the community at large and shall promote an appreciation of human diversity.
7. As representatives of the Middle Earth program, students shall strive to be positive role models at all times, both on and off campus.
8. Students shall abstain from sexual harassment, which includes public displays of affection during any Middle Earth related activity as defined in Community Rights & Responsibilities.
9. Students shall protect fellow students, callers' or audience members' rights to confidentiality and will inform them of the limits to confidentiality based on agency policy.
10. Students shall inform their instructors and the Middle Earth Director of any condition that is likely to harm fellow students and/or others.
11. Students shall recognize that they have a responsibility to the agency, fellow staff members, clients and program participants.
12. Students shall act as representatives of the agency and shall assure that information provided about the Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program is factual and accurate.
13. As role models and representatives of the Middle Earth program, students shall not engage in high-risk behaviors which include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Underage drinking or illegal drug use of any kind
  - b. Public intoxication
  - c. Driving under the influence of alcohol or any other drugs
  - d. Engaging in high-risk sexual behavior

14. Students shall honor the legal rights of fellow students, callers, or audience members.
15. Students shall strive to acquire the knowledge taught in class and practiced in either the laboratory class or resource training shift and to improve their skills so as to become effective in their roles as either outreach or hotline members.
16. Students shall inform instructors of conditions that may reduce their effectiveness in performing Middle Earth responsibilities.
17. Students shall seek assistance from instructors, resource trainers, and fellow students when needed.
18. Students shall inform the instructors and the Middle Earth Director of conditions that may be disruptive or damaging including incompetent, unethical, and/or illegal practices by other Middle Earth students or staff.
19. Students shall strive to maintain a learning environment in which the optimum amount of learning and personal development can take place.
20. Students shall maintain a clean learning and working environment while participating in all Middle Earth activities and responsibilities, including training classrooms and all work areas.

### PART III: PROBATION POLICY

All students who do not meet the responsibilities of their Individual Learning Contract and course syllabus will be placed on probation. The following situations are grounds for probation:

- *Failure to complete a hotline shift for which you were scheduled*
- *Failure to attend a required supervision group (other than the "free" miss or excused absences)*
- *Failure to obtain an APPROVED replacement for Middle Earth hotline or outreach shift responsibilities*
- *Undocumentable/unexcused absence(s) in Middle Earth training class*
- *Undocumentable/unexcused absence(s) in Resource Training shifts*
- *Lateness for Middle Earth responsibilities, including classes and supervision groups*
- *Failure to follow through with an outreach-related obligation*
- *Unprofessional behavior*
- *Violation of Middle Earth policies and ethical standards*

#### **Procedure:**

All Middle Earth Coordinators will be required to report to the Middle Earth Director the names of students who do not fulfill their responsibilities; **there will be no individual "deals" with Coordinators to make up unfulfilled tasks.** These students will be placed on probation immediately and will receive a memo to that effect. Copies of all probation-related documents will remain in the student's permanent file at Middle Earth.

#### **Consequences:**

In addition to receiving the consequences stated in the course syllabus and Individual Learning Contract, violators will be on probationary status for the remainder of the semester. *During this time, any recommendations or references that students on probation request from Middle Earth will reflect the fact that they are on probation and will list the reason(s).*

#### **Criteria for Dismissal:**

At the end of the semester, the Middle Earth Director and Coordinators will review the behavior of all students on probationary status. If there are no additional contract violations, students will be released from probationary status and be permitted to return to Middle Earth next semester with a "clean slate". If there are any additional contract violations, students will be dismissed from the program at the end of this semester and will not be permitted to return to Middle Earth at any time in the future. Students who are dismissed from Middle Earth will not be provided with references or recommendations from our agency.

***I have read this Learning Contract and agree to abide by all of its learning objectives. I understand that my continued participation in the Middle Earth program is on a semester-to-semester basis and that continued participation in Middle Earth will be determined based upon an evaluation of my performance in Middle Earth and my academic and judicial standing at the University at Albany. I hereby authorize the Middle Earth Director to verify my student status, academic performance and judicial standing.***

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Student's Signature

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Date

Supervisor's Signature

Date

**ECPY 403  
GRADING SCALE**

The final grade for ECPY 403 is calculated based on the total number of points earned by each student during the course of the semester. Students can earn a maximum total of 102 points for excellent performance in all areas specified in the Individual Learning Contract above. Point deductions from the maximum total are made as specified by the Individual Learning Contract.

Total points at the end of the semester are converted into a final grade according to the following scale:

<b>FINAL GRADE</b>	<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>
A	93-102
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-87
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
E	0-60

**OTHER GRADING INFORMATION:**

- If any student becomes involved in behaviors that are unprofessional or unethical and/or faces disciplinary action within the middle earth program, the student will not receive a passing grade in the course.
- There will be no incompletes in this course.

**CELL PHONE POLICY:**

During all classroom and training activities, all cell phones are to be placed in the **"off"** position. If a student uses a cell phone at any time, he/she will be asked to leave the class immediately and will be marked as absent from the class for that day.

**AGENCY DESCRIPTION AND EXPECTATIONS:**

The Middle Earth Peer Assistance Program, a student organization funded by the Student Association and the Division of Student Affairs, is a campus service agency which has three components: a crisis hotline, an outreach education program, and a staff development component. Established in 1970 in the spirit of students helping students, the agency is operated under the supervision of a Director who is a licensed psychologist and is governed under the leadership of an undergraduate student Executive Board. Students can participate in any component of Middle Earth on either a volunteer basis or through registration for a credit-bearing course (ECPY 400 and ECPY 403).

With an interest and commitment to the Middle Earth program, students express their desire to help others in the campus community and surrounding Capital District area. In embarking on such a task, students also agree to share in the agency's collective responsibility to be prepared to respond to life and death situations when they arise. In the same way as an Emergency Medical Technician must learn all the skills to respond to a variety of situations, so too do Middle Earth students.

In this course, students will learn helping skills as well as a variety of intervention techniques. Students will learn about topics and issues that impact callers, such as alcohol and substance abuse, eating disorders, depression and anxiety, sexuality and interpersonal issues, sexual assault, and other areas. The Middle Earth coordinators, officers, and backup personnel are present to help and support each student, and communication and feedback are welcome.

In order to assure that all students are best prepared to be peer counselors and peer educators, the following must be remembered:

1. Group supervision sessions are held weekly in Room 203 at Middle Earth as arranged with instructional staff on the first day of class. Please be on time for all supervision sessions and sign the weekly attendance sheet. If any students are chronically late, we will have no alternative but to adopt a "lateness policy".
2. Each group supervisor will announce the topic of the following week's supervision group. Please prepare for each session by reading any corresponding assignments. All written assignments are due at the beginning of the supervision session for which they have been assigned.
3. It is essential that each student receive information from ALL supervision groups. Students may miss one session, but work must be made up through an assignment demonstrating that the student knows the subject material missed.
4. Student participation in ALL hotline or outreach shifts at Middle Earth is critical, as it is in this context that practice regarding what is learned in this course will take place. Students will be expected to attend the same hotline shift each week. If a shift must be missed due to an emergency, the student is responsible for obtaining his/her own replacement. The student must also notify the group supervisor of his/her absence for record-keeping purposes. Any missed shift must be made up before the course requirements are deemed to be completed.
5. Each Middle Earth member is an integral part of the agency. All students should become familiar with all agency policies and procedures.
6. The Middle Earth staff is composed of professionals and students who come from a variety of backgrounds and who have had diverse life experiences. As critical and sensitive issues are discussed in this course, it is important to keep in mind that these issues can affect different people in different ways. Therefore, as class topics are discussed, it is important to remain sensitive to the feelings and reactions of others, as well as to listen to others with respect and sensitivity. It is also critical to monitor the ways in which different topics affect us and to discuss any related concerns with group supervisors.

**CLASS DATES AND TOPICS:**

(subject to change)

<b>WEEK OF</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>
<b>09/07-09/13/06</b>	Registration and Contracting Scheduling of Supervision Groups and Hotline Shifts Course Overview <b><u>09/0705- Campus Center Assembly Hall - 7:15 PM</u></b> <b><u>DEADLINE FOR SIGNING UP FOR SEMESTER TEMP SHIFTS</u></b> <b><u>AND WEEKEND SHIFTS : To be announced</u></b>
<b>09/14-09/20</b>	Week 1 <b><u>HOTLINE OPENS FOR SEMESTER ON 09/13 AT NOON: TEMP SHIFTS BEGIN</u></b> <b><u>SUPERVISION GROUPS BEGIN ON 09/14</u></b>
<b>09/21-09/27</b>	Week 2 <b><u>PERMANENT SHIFTS BEGIN ON 09/20 AT NOON</u></b> HOTLINE CLOSES 09/29 AT 5:00 PM FOR HOLIDAY AND RE-OPEN ON THE 09/25 AT NOON HOTLINE RE-OPENS 10/3 AT NOON
<b>09/28-10/04</b>	<b><u>Week 3</u></b> HOTLINE CLOSES 09/22 AT 1:30 PM FOR HOLIDAY AND RE-OPEN ON THE 09/25 AT NOON HOTLINE RE-OPENS 9/25 AT NOON
<b>10/05-10/11</b>	Week 4 <b><u>MANDATORY ALCOHOL RESPONSIBILITY WEEK ASSIGNMENT</u></b>
<b>10/12-10/18</b>	Week 5 <b><u>MIDTERM CONFERENCES</u></b>
<b>10/19-10/25</b>	Week 6
<b>10/26-11/01</b>	Week 7
<b>11/02-11/08</b>	Week 8
<b>11/09-11/15</b>	Week 9
<b>11/16-11/22</b>	Week 10 HOTLINE CLOSES ON 11/20 AT MIDNIGHT
<b>11/23-11/29</b>	Week 11 HOTLINE RE-OPENS ON 11/27 AT NOON
<b>11/30-12/06</b>	Week 12
<b>12/07-12/13</b>	Week 13
<b><u>FINALS WEEK</u></b> <b>12/14-12/21</b>	<b><u>TEMP SHIFTS BEGIN 12/13 AT NOON: SIGN UP FOR 1 TEMP SHIFT FOR FINALS WEEK</u></b> <b><u>HOTLINE CLOSES FOR SEMESTER 12/19 AT 5:00PM</u></b>