Core Peer Support Skills

**Instructors:** Joy von Steiger, PhD  
**Email:** jvonst@Brandeis.edu

**Co-Instructor:** Aaron Kaplan, PsyD  
**Email:** aekaplan@brandeis.edu

**Location:** Napoli Room  
**Day/Time:** Monday 2-3:20  
**Credits:** PE credit

**Course Description:**

Core Peer Support Skills is a 90 min per week course that consists of a lecture component, discussion, experiential component and practice of skills learned in lecture. This course will expose you to the basic skills necessary to engage in a supportive consultation with a distressed peer. You will learn about basic listening and attending skills and, by the end of the course, will be trained in Campus Connect which provides you with the knowledge and skills necessary to engage with a peer who endorses suicidal thoughts.

**Course Materials:**

2. **Course Articles:** Made available on LATTE.

**Goal:**

Students will learn how to use the concepts and principles of listening and attending skills to describe and demonstrate important techniques in providing support to a peer in distress.

**Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Define the different listening and basic attending skills
2. Illustrate appropriate use of listening and attending skills through class discussion and role play
3. Demonstrate the different methods of engaging with and supporting a distressed student and a student in crisis through in class practice
4. Engage in class discussion and activities about concepts discussed/introduced in readings

**How You Will Be Evaluated:**
1. Attendance at all classes is mandatory
2. Weekly readings and weekly response papers sent via email cc:d to both instructors and submitted 2 days prior to class
3. Final three classes will be held for evaluation of skills. Evaluation is conducted by instructor. Participants are required to sign up for a 15 min block in which they and their partner from the class demonstrate the skills they have learned in peer support through role play. It is expected that you demonstrate the ability to appropriately utilize and apply the skills taught in class (i.e., 10 commandments of peer counseling, listening and attending skills, ICAD and Problem solving).

Course Schedule and Outline:

**Wk 1:** Orientation, Introductions, and Icebreakers

**Wk 2:** Introduction to Peer Counseling; Ethics; Listening and Basic Attending Skills


**Wk 3:** Paraphasing, Open and Closed Questions


**Wk 4:** Working With Feelings and Supporting in Difficult Situations


**Wk 5:** Problem Solving; Summary and Integration


**Wk 6:** Interpersonal Conflict


**Wk 7: Crisis Counseling, Part 1 (Campus Connect)**


**Wk 8: Crisis Counseling, Part 2 (Campus Connect)**


**Wk 9: Self Care for Peer Counselors**


Managing Secondary Trauma

**Wk 10: Final Role Play Sign Up**

**Wk 11: Final Role Play Sign Up**
Wk 12: Final Role Play Sign Up