



## Course Syllabus

### Crisis Intervention with Youth

Psychology or Special Education 620  
(Graduate course only)

Instructors of Record: Dr. Nicholas Long and Dr. Frank Fecser

*This graduate course is designed for advanced professional staff who serve children and youth who engage in destructive and self-defeating behavior. It is offered by the **Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) Institute** in collaboration with Augustana College Graduate School.*

#### Course Description

This course provides carefully structured theoretical and applied instruction in crisis intervention skills for use in reclaiming children and youth involved in patterns of self-defeating behavior. Life Space Crisis Intervention (LSCI) is applicable with troubled and at risk students in residential and day treatment, special education, alternative schools, public school guidance and inclusion programs, and in mental health and juvenile justice programs. The course provides 27 specific competencies for using crisis as a teaching and therapeutic opportunity with students showing six different patterns of self-defeating behavior. This intervention model is a multi-modal psycho-educational methodology first described by Fritz Redl and David Wineman in their classic book, *The Aggressive Child*. The method was employed in interdisciplinary clinical training programs directed by graduate faculties of psychology, special education and social work at the National Institute of Mental Health. Successful completion leads to advanced LSCI certification from the Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute. This course is approved for three semester hours of graduate credit in psychology or special education from Augustana College.

#### Course Goals and Objectives

Evaluate efficacy data on LSCI as a therapeutic technique involving cognitive mediation of significant events or crises in the life of a troubled or troubling child or adolescent.

- ❖ Articulate the dynamics of conflict cycles, which lead to self-defeating behavior.
- ❖ Recognize student-thinking errors that interfere with communication and problem solving.
- ❖ Recognize the process of staff counter-aggression, which precludes effective intervention.
- ❖ Assess the circumstances under which LSCI is or is not an appropriate intervention.
- ❖ Demonstrate effective de-escalation, decoding, and counseling strategies for youth in crisis.
- ❖ Differentially diagnose these six common patterns of self-defeating behavior:
  - Problems originating elsewhere in a child's ecology
  - Problems rooted in a child's reality distortions
  - Problems resulting from social skill deficits
  - Problems related to negative peer influence
  - Problems caused by lack of prosocial values
  - Problems of guilt and self-abusive behavior
- ❖ Match specific reclaiming interventions with each of the six patterns of self-defeating behavior.
- ❖ Utilize a six-step sequence and specific communication skills for each reclaiming intervention.
- ❖ Reflect on how certain problems of youth relate to the helper's own personality and values.

## **Course Organization and Resources**

**Course Format:** This is a highly interactive course with lectures, discussion, video analysis, role-playing, tutorial sessions, skill demonstrations and assigned readings and projects.

**Course Participation:** The curriculum requires a time block of 45 hours as well as study outside of class. A schedule is provided by the instructor. Attendance at all sessions is required for credit and certification.

**Instructional Resources:** The *Life Space Crisis Intervention Series* and the *American University/Rose School Videos* include thirty video crisis situations and counseling intervention with highly aggressive children and youth in Cleveland, OH and Washington, DC. Registrants receive a complete set of materials including a course notebook with handouts, bibliography, reprints of selected articles and a copy of the text, *Life Space Intervention: Talking to Children and Youth In Crisis* by Mary Wood and Nicholas Long.

## **Course Outcomes and Evaluation**

**Demonstrate Skills:** Participants will demonstrate intervention skills in role-play situations.

**Demonstrate Knowledge:** Participants will be tested on key concepts from presentations and assigned readings in an objective exam with a pass/fail criterion of 90% correct.

**Written Synthesis and Reflection for Graduate Credit:** Participants will do a written analysis and self-assessment of LSCI or an alternative research project approved by the instructor. This paper is generally 6-10 pages in length and is due at a date set by the instructor (usually within 60 days of the completion of the training).

**Grading:** The instructor gives a letter grade when course outcomes are met.

**Course Instructors:** This course follows a highly specific competency-based curriculum developed by Nicholas J. Long, Ph.D. and Frank A. Fecser, Ph.D. of the Life Space Crisis Intervention Institute of Hagerstown, MD. Dr. Long is a licensed psychologist and has authored over 100 publications on troubled and at-risk youth. He served as professor and Chair of Special Education at American University, Washington, DC. Dr. Fecser is a special educator and a licensed clinical counselor with emotional and behavioral disorders. Both are on the editorial staff of the journal, *Reclaiming Children and Youth*. Nationally certified LSCI senior trainers with advanced academic credentials and extensive clinical experience and leadership roles in programs serving troubled children and youth facilitate the course. All courses are subject to quality control and evaluation by the LSCI Institute and by Drs. Long and Fecser who are the Instructors of Record.

**Registration and Transcript:** Participants in LSCI training desiring to enroll for three hours of graduate credit must complete Augustana College registration forms ([course title: Crisis Intervention with Youth](#)) and pay \$300 (U.S. Dollars) to **Reclaiming Youth International**. After final grades are submitted, the students receive a grade report. The grade report can be expected approximately 30 days after the due date of the paper. Official transcripts must be requested in writing. Send requests to Augustana College, Office of the Registrar, 2001 S. Summit Avenue, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD 57197, or fax to 605-274-4450 (include a signature with your request).