Overall course objectives: At the end of this thirty-week course, students will be able to describe the breadth of contemporary Freudian theory, particularly with reference to how different theoretical emphases within Freudian theory lead to different conceptions of an analyst’s optimal stance; demonstrate how to analyze readings and put them into a theoretical context; and discuss and critique different aspects of a psychoanalytic process, from initial consultation to termination.

Theory of Psychoanalytic Technique

Part 1:

1. Introduction:

Week 1: The relation between theory and technique 1:


Week 2: The relation between theory and technique 2:


Recommended:


Week 3: The relation between theory and technique 3: The interplay of conflict and deficit 1:


Recommended:


Week 4: The relation between theory and technique 4: The interplay of conflict and deficit 2:

Recommended:


Week 5: The relation between theory and technique: Trauma and (Non) Representation:


Recommended:


Specific learning objectives, classes 1-5: At the end of classes 1-5, students will be able to describe the breadth of contemporary Freudian theory through addressing three interconnected questions: what is wrong with a patient, what would be helpful and achievable goals for that patient, and, in the light of the first two questions, what is an optimal stance for the psychoanalyst. Students will be able to articulate a Freudian theory of how symptomatology is developed.
They will be able to discuss and critique the basics of modern conflict theory including concepts of drive derivative, dysphoric affect, defense, superego, compromise formation, and unconscious fantasy. They will be able to demonstrate how modern conflict theory prescribes a specific stance for the analyst with respect to variables such as analytic listening, abstinence, neutrality, and interpretation of transference. Students will then be able to describe (and compare with modern conflict theory) a different emphasis within contemporary Freudian psychoanalytic theory, based on a multiplicity of variables coming into play in the process of conflict and compromise and on the interplay of conflict and deficit (difficulties in structural development). They will demonstrate a clinical sense for differences between patients at different structural levels. Further, they will be able to describe a representational focus in contemporary psychoanalytic thinking. Finally, they will be able to explain how these emphases in Freudian theory lead to a broadened optimal role for the analyst, with special attention to the analyst as a facilitator of psychic development along with interpreter of intrapsychic conflict.

II. Beginnings:

Week 6: Consultation 1:


Week 7: Consultation 2:


NOTE: As you will see in these readings, Rothstein, like most contemporary analysts, is against using the old diagnostic ways of assessing analyzability. He believes, as do most contemporary analysts, that analyzability is a function of the particular analytic pair. However, I believe that most analysts of Rothstein’s stature and generation, in all theoretical schools, were trained in these traditional tools of observation and assessment, and are aware of them, to some
extent, as they begin and continue to work with their patients, even if they do not explicitly think about them or rely on them. Current analytic candidates are not taught these ways of assessment and, in my opinion, lose by not learning them and then having them in the back of their mind as they work.

Accordingly, if the class participants are interested, we can read yet another paper this week: Greenspan, S.I. and Cullander, C.C.H. (1973). A Systematic Metapsychological Assessment of the Personality: Its Application to the Problem of Analyzability. JAPA, 21: 303-327. The paper is dated (and boring), but it is a good guide to what factors one might want to consider when assessing a patient. If we choose to discuss it, I suggest we do so with (at least) a few questions in mind:

a. Does this paper help you in refining your thinking about a patient? Why and/or why not?

b. What is not included in their assessment?

c. What is included that you would now think of differently?

d. What dynamic assumptions are made as the analyst thinks of these factors? In other words, what assumptions do they make about why a factor is the way they see it?

e. How do these factors reflect the changes in Freudian thinking over the past half century?

f. What assumptions about the distinction between psychotherapy and psychoanalysis and about the optimal role of the therapist/analyst are made in the author’s decision at the paper’s end?


Specific learning objectives, classes 6, 7: At the end of class 7, students will be able to list and explain factors affecting their recommending psychoanalysis to patients in initial consultation sessions. These will include countertransference to recommending psychoanalysis as well as diagnostic considerations.

Week 8: The Psychoanalytic Situation 1:


Specific learning objectives, class 8: At the end of class 8, students will be able to discuss Freud’s technique papers dealing primarily with establishing a psychoanalytic setting and a psychoanalytic process. They will be able to identify a psychoanalytic process. Students will be able to list elements of a psychoanalytic frame and demonstrate how these contribute to establishing and maintaining a psychoanalytic process both within a Freudian orientation and within any other theoretical orientation.
Week 9: The Psychoanalytic Situation 2:


Recommended:

Specific learning objectives, class 9: At the end of class 9, students will be able to describe concepts of analytic abstinence and neutrality as originally formulated within the “classical” psychoanalytic tradition and also as reference points, default positions, for the analyst, as the analyst tries to maintain an optimal “gap” that maintain a space within which a patient’s inner life may unfold. Students will also be able to critique this position of relatively minimal self-disclosure.

Week 10: The Psychoanalytic Situation 3:


Specific learning objectives, class 10: At the end of class 10, students will be able to discuss and critique concepts of abstinence, neutrality, use of the couch, and free association from a clinical perspective. They will apply these concepts to analyzing issues that come up in establishing a psychoanalytic frame.

Week 11: The listening process 1:

Week 12: The listening process 2:


Specific learning objectives, weeks 11, 12: At the end of classes 11 and 12, students will be able to list, critique, and use different ways of analytic listening. They will know what they are listening for and why they are listening for one thing in preference to another.

III. The Patient and the Analyst:

Week 13: Transference 1:

Recommended:


Specific learning objectives, classes 13 and 14: At the end of classes 13 and 14, students will be able to analyze Freud’s technique papers dealing with transference. They will be able to explain how Freud moved from transference as defense to transference as memory in action. They will be able to demonstrate how and why transference has never been clearly understood. They will be able to discuss how Freud’s ideas about transference did not solely derive from his theory but represented his attempt to find an analytic stance that would facilitate transference and its analysis. Students will be able to explain and critique controversies around conceptions of the working alliance, of the transference neurosis and negative transference. They will also be able to explain how transference cannot be separated into “reality” and “fantasy” and how it has highly adaptive as well as distorting features, both of which may manifest themselves simultaneously. Finally, students will be able to discuss how transference and countertransference become part of an analytic “field”, with its own informative and resistive features.

Week 14: Transference (and countertransference) in the intersubjective field:
Some important papers and issues:


Recommended:


Week 15: Countertransference in the intersubjective field:


Specific learning objectives, class 15: At the end of class 15, students will be able to discuss the broadened understanding and analytic use of countertransference, with special attention to how analytic countertransference may impede deepening of an analytic process. Students will also be able to demonstrate and discuss the analytic situation as a dynamic field.

Part 2:

Week 16: Regression in the analytic environment 1:


Week 17: Regression in the analytic environment 2:


Specific learning objectives, classes 16, 17: At the end of classes 16 and 17, students will be able to discuss and critique the concept of psychoanalytic regression. They will be able to explain and evaluate approaches to regression that see it as creating a mutative environment in its own right. Students will be able to explain the conception of an optimal psychoanalytic stance within this theoretical framework and discuss how this enlarges its boundaries in ways that may be problematic for some.
Week 18: Violations of the Frame:


Recommended:


Specific learning objectives, class 18: Students will apply what we have learnt to evaluating Winnicott’s treatment of Masud Khan. They will be able to apply concepts of diagnosis and of therapeutic regression to analyze whether Masud Khan was diagnosed correctly by Winnicott as being appropriate for this form of psychoanalytic treatment. Students will also be able to list factors that influence an analyst’s violation of the patient and discuss how the analytic situation, per se, may make violations more possible.

Week 19: Enactment:


Recommended:


Specific learning objectives, class 19: At the end of class 19, students will analyze the analytic field and the analyst’s optimal posture by discussing the
enacted dimension of psychoanalysis and non-verbal ways in which transference and countertransference are expressed. They will utilize this concept and the assigned readings to critique or reaffirm traditional conceptions of the analyst’s role.

Week 20: Disruption, impasse, the negative therapeutic reaction and the “creation” of an object: 1


Recommended:

Week 21: Disruption, impasse, the negative therapeutic reaction and the “creation” of an object: 2:


Recommended:

Specific learning objectives, classes 20-21: At the end of classes 20-21, students will evaluate different ways of viewing the "negative therapeutic reaction" and its role in the path towards internalization.

Week 22: The psychoanalytic situation revisited:

3. Greenberg, J. (2001). The analyst’s participation: A new look. *JAPA*, 359-426 (includes commentaries on the paper; the paper itself is pp. 359-381 and it is required; the commentaries are optional).

Recommended:

Specific learning objectives, class 22: At the end of class 22, students will have revisited conceptions of the analytic situation in light of what we have learned about transference-countertransference, the intersubjective field, regression, and enactment. Students will be able to explain and evaluate in greater detail issues involved in the analyst’s self-disclosure and in how the analyst participates in what some feel is the inevitable transference-countertransference intersubjective situation.

Week 23: Interpretation 1:


Week 24: Interpretation 2:


Specific learning objectives classes 23 and 24: At the end of classes 24 and 25, students will be able to describe in greater detail factors involved in interpreting within the intersubjective field, both with patients who are capable of symbolization and self-reflection and those who are not.

Week 25: What is mutative in psychoanalysis? 1:


Week 26: What is mutative in psychoanalysis? 2:


Specific learning objectives, classes 25-26: At the end of classes 25 and 26, students will be able to explain and demonstrate how Loewald’s conception of drive and optimal structural development leads to an enlarged and integrative view of the analyst’s combined “real” and “transference” mutative impact on a patient.

Week 27: What is mutative in psychoanalysis? 3:

Recommendation:

Specific learning objectives, class 28: At the end of class 28, students will be able to compare and contrast different current views of what is mutative in psychoanalysis and how these views lead to different views of the optimal psychoanalytic stance.

IV. Endings:

Week 28: Termination 1:


Recommendation:

Week 29: Termination 2:


Specific learning objectives, classes 28 and 29: At the end of classes 28 and 29, students will be able to list and evaluate criteria for termination, and they will be able to discuss whether there are certain kinds of issues that are ultimately “unanalyzable” either for a given patient or for a given analytic pair. They will be able to compare Freud’s paper on termination to those of Loewald, Bergmann, and Gabbard as a way of describing development of Freudian psychoanalytic theory.

Week 30: On becoming a psychoanalyst:


Specific learning objectives, week 30: At the end of class 30, students will be able to discuss and analyze their own experiences of becoming an analyst and of doing analysis.