

**Khazar University**

**Term:** Spring 2023

**Instructors:** Elnur Gajiev, PsyD

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**Introduction to Art & Creative Therapy**

**Time:** Thursdays, 18:40–20:40pm

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### **Course Catalog Description**

*“As we shape the world, we shape ourselves.*

*Therefore, change the world.*

*Only then can we be free.”*

*- Stephen K. Levine*

Welcome to Introduction to Creative Therapies. It is an honor to have you here and to serve as your guides as we explore the emerging world of the healing arts and sciences together.

Creative Therapies entail the utilization of multimodal, expressive, and holistic approaches to facilitate health, healing, well-being, and transformation. It is an interdisciplinary, integrative, and ecologically innovative approach to counseling and psychotherapy. It can be used across a wide range of settings and contexts, from clinical to nonclinical, with notable effects, if practiced with intention, integrity, and reverence for the inherent wisdom of healing and growth.

Over the course of our time together, we will immerse ourselves in learning the foundations of Creative Therapies firsthand — meaning, we will paint, and draw, and sculpt, and move, and write, and act, and play, and yes, even dance, together — in short, we will **create** together.

Through doing so, we will fuse theoretical & conceptual frameworks with vivacious, lived experience. And we will reflect; we will reflect on what our experiences reveal to us about ourselves, about our worlds, about the appropriate use of these practices with friends, family, and those whom we serve. As we investigate the capacity of our imaginations to unveil creative solutions to complex problems, we will expand our understanding of how such modalities may be applied to support individuals, families, organizations, and communities to heal and grow.

Please note that this course, at its essence, is simply an entryway to the Creative and Expressive Therapies. Though we will do our best to present an evocative experience of each of the major modalities of Creative Therapies, our ultimate goal is to provide you with moments of realized recognition, through which you find a resonance that inspires you to further pursue a given creative approach and thus grow in the path that fits you best.

### **Course Website**

<https://shine-fly-78d.notion.site/Syllabus-349c0dcab6884b99abe645308cdc406f>

### **Course Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will learn the theoretical and pragmatic foundations of Creative and Expressive Therapies, entailing Art, Music, Movement, Drama, Writing, Play, Nature, and others.
2. Students will develop an applied understanding of therapeutic stances and approaches to utilizing Creative and Expressive therapies with diverse populations and settings.

3. Students will use the methodology of intentional reflection to explore and expound upon personal and communal applications of psychological theories and techniques.
4. Students will expand their own creative capacities and abilities as means of being of service to themselves and their respective communities, which will be demonstrated through culminating Creative Therapy Projects.
5. Students will gain an understanding of the evolving field of Creative and Expressive Therapies along with the career and growth opportunities available to them.

### **Course Language**

Our course will be taught in both English and Azərbaycan dili. The intention of this is to make this learning and practice available to as many students as we can, while also inviting a diversity of experiences, insights, and inputs. Given this, there will invariably be moments of things lost in translation or simply miscommunicated. In those moments, we will do our best to clarify, resolve, revisit, and reiterate any points that were not previously well understood. Since this is a first for all of us, we kindly ask for your patience and graciousness throughout this process.

### **Readings, References, & Required Texts**

All required & recommended readings will be made digitally available in our [Class Library](#). We will specify reading assignments for the following week at the end of each class. If you have any trouble accessing a text online, please contact us at least 24 hours prior to our next class so we can support you in resolving the issue and ensure that you are caught up in time for class.

### **Course Schedule & Topics**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Dates</b>	<b>Chapter/Topic</b>
<b>1</b>	2/16	Intro to Creative Therapies
<b>2</b>	2/23	Art Therapy
<b>3</b>	3/2	Art Therapy
<b>4</b>	3/9	Music Therapy
<b>5</b>	3/16	Movement Therapy
<b>6</b>	3/23	<i>No Class – Novruz Holiday</i>
<b>7</b>	3/30	Midterm Exam
<b>8</b>	4/6	Drama Therapy
<b>9</b>	4/13	Writing & Poetry Therapy
<b>10</b>	4/20	Writing & Poetry Therapy
<b>11</b>	4/27	<i>No Class - Focus on Group Project</i>
<b>12</b>	5/4	Play Therapy
<b>13</b>	5/11	Nature Therapy
<b>14</b>	5/18	Azəri Arts Therapy + Future Directions
<b>15</b>	5/5	Student Presentations
<b>16</b>	6/1	Student Presentations
<b>17</b>	6/8	Final Exam

## **Grading Criteria**

<b>Components</b>	<b>Points Per</b>	<b>Scale</b>
Reflection Journal	15	A = 90-100%
Engagement & Participation	10	B = 80-89%
Creative Therapy Project	15	C = 70-79%
Midterm Exam	25	D = 60-69%
Final Exam	35	F = 0-59%

## **Course Assignments**

### ***Reflection Journal***

To foster the powerful practice of intentional reflection and to support the process of integrating knowledge with application, you will be asked to compose a weekly reflection based on that week's topic and theme. We will provide weekly Journal Prompts to stimulate introspection and impel reflective writing, though we fully encourage you to go in whichever direction you feel inspired to reflect, write, and share with us. Please note that whatever you choose to share in your Reflection Journals will be kept confidential between the instructors.

Each week's Reflection Journal submission is expected to be 1 page in length (typed, single-spaced, 12-sized font). The two core criteria for a well-composed Reflection Journal entry are:

1. The depth of comprehension and understanding of that week's content, and
2. The breadth of reflection about the relevance and application to one's personal life.

In other words, we want to see that you understood the week's content *and* we want to hear how the concepts and practices you learned may apply to your life. Your Reflection Journals will be instrumental building blocks for your Creative Therapy Projects (see below) and will bolster your Engagement in class discussions.

### ***Engagement & Participation***

We invite all students to be as fully engaged as they can be. We embrace the fact that not every one of us feels 100% extroverted, particularly at the beginning of the semester when we're just getting to know each other. That said, we invite all expressions of engagement because we inherently value every voice in our class, and the more that we are able to share, the richer our collective experience becomes. Ultimately, we learn best when we learn together.

We also deeply welcome questions and curiosity. Curiosity is the engine that drives true education. And so, if you have a question — about a concept, about a text, about something that we said, or something that a fellow student shared — please ask. Chances are, someone else might be wondering about something quite similar.

Lastly, over the course of the semester, we will have multiple opportunities to model & practice various therapeutic approaches — both as providers and as clients. To do so well, it is important to be aware of your bounds of comfort and safety. Just as in the practice of Yoga, we invite you to stretch just beyond your comfort zones, *but not* to any point of pain, dysregulation, or

complete loss of balance. We have no interest in forced vulnerability; rather, we encourage you to take your time with each medium you experience and to share only what feels right by you.

### ***Midterm & Final Exams***

To support the consolidation of learning and long-term comprehension of our course content, we will hold comprehensive exams at the midpoint and end of our semester. Exams will be multiple-choice and take approximately 1-1.5 hours. The Midterm Exam will cover all course content reviewed from the beginning of the semester until the Midterm, and the Final Exam will cover all content reviewed from the Midterm until the end of the semester.

### ***Creative Therapy Project***

To build your multidimensional professional identities, we will invite each of you to design a project that expresses your unique interests as budding Creative Psychologists. To do so, you will be invited to select a particular modality of creative therapy — *or better yet, to create a completely new one* — and to design a project that demonstrates how you might use your unique therapeutic approach to serve a specific community. Projects must meet the following criteria:

- Selection of Therapeutic Modality & Why
- Purpose of the Creative Therapy Project
- Intended Community/Population
- Identified Therapeutic Mechanisms
- Implementation Method
- Assessment of Therapeutic Impact
- Long-Term Sustainability Plan

Each Creative Therapy Project will entail both [1] a 4-5 page paper (typed, double-spaced, 12-sized font) with at least 5 peer-reviewed citations; and [2] an in-class presentation in which you will present your design and lead us through an experiential activity related to your project.

The paper portion will electronically be due May 25th, which can be [submitted here](#). Student presentations will take place our final two weeks of our semester.

### **Student Expectations**

To honor and respect our university learning environment, students are expected to attend class regularly and engage in discussions, written reflections, quizzes, and presentations. Excessive absences and/or latenesses will result in lowered grades. We expect students to contact us in the case of an absence or anticipated lateness and to provide an adequate rationale.

Additionally, to ensure that the entire course is moving at a similar rhythm, we expect students to follow our weekly reading assignments and to be prepared to meaningfully contribute to class activities. With respect to in-class interactions, we hold everyone to the standard of kindness, thoughtfulness, and mutual respect. As budding mental health counselors, we expect you to provide supportive and encouraging space for yourselves and your peers to continue growing and learning together.

We encourage you to use notebooks and laptops for note-taking and course-relevant research (when guided to do so). That said, we also advise you to keep your cell phones tucked away so that we can all be more present with one another and with the experience before us.

Moreover, we expect and encourage you to be original and authentic in the work you choose to share with us. Though Picasso may have once said, “good artists borrow, great artists steal,” we will have no theft in our class. Presenting someone else’s ideas or work as your own, either verbatim or poorly paraphrased will not serve your learning nor our ability to support your growth as emerging professionals. Plus, it is an academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in our university’s policies.

If at any point, you find yourself struggling with our course, we deeply encourage you to reach out sooner than later, so that we may support you in the most appropriate manner possible. If we notice struggles or differences with meeting these expectations, we will be sure to let you know so that we may move forward in the best manner for all.

Thank you for entrusting us with the honor of serving as your instructors and your guides.

We are truly excited to learn, grow, and create together.