



303 – Contemporary Psychoanalytic Theories

Instructors: Christine Erskine, LCSW, and Renu Goel, MD

Meeting Dates: Tuesdays – August 19, 2025, through December 9, 2025

Time: 5:30PM-7:00PM Eastern

Location: Zoom/Virtual

of Credit hours: APA CE: 24 clock hours / NBCC: 24 clock hours / All others: Letter of Attendance

Target Audience: This course is appropriate for intermediate through advanced students.

Prerequisites: This class is open to matriculated students in the Adult, Adult/Child, or Child-Focused psychoanalytic tracks. Students will need to have completed nearly all the classes in the core curriculum (including the Life Cycle courses). Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy students and graduates who have completed the core curriculum and have at least one intensive case may also take this course.

Other students may be eligible to attend only with the permission of the instructor(s). If applicable, please reach out for permission prior to registering for the course.

Contact: [Chris Erskine, LCSW](#), and [Renu Goel, MD](#)

Format: This class will be limited to 10 participants and will combine lecture and seminar formats; student participation is not only encouraged but required for credit. We will engage in small group discussions which require participants to read and synthesize the materials presented. Classes will include discussion of clinical material of both the instructors and the participants. PCC faculty ensure that gaps in knowledge are addressed.

Description: In this course, we will be discussing psychoanalytic ideas that have developed, for the most part, since 1980 (an exception is some work by Melanie Klein and Wilfred Bion, who pre-figured some of the more recent theory development). This time period witnessed a paradigm shift in psychoanalysis that frequently goes under the rubric “Relational Theory.” But what does “relational” mean? It does have some implications for our theory of technique, but its significance goes far beyond that. It opens up psychoanalytic thought to research and to interactions with our sister professions; it opens up our practices to a broader spectrum of patients; and it opens up our minds to a larger area of “containment” within which to listen to patients. The more we expand and deepen our understanding of what we are actually doing when we help our patients, the more we are free, as Bion indicates, to “learn from experience” and to become accustomed to “trusting the process.”

Course Syllabus: [Contemporary Psychoanalytic Theories](#)

Training Program Credit: Students who successfully complete this course can earn credit in the psychoanalysis Adult, Child, or Adult/Child combined training programs.

Continuing Education Credit: At the end of the course, participants must complete the evaluation form to receive continuing education credit. The instructor(s) have no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies to disclose. CME hours are not offered to physician learners for this course.

About the Instructors:

Christine Erskine, LCSW, was a founding member of the Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Study Center of NC (now included in the PCC). She is a graduate of the Washington Psychoanalytic Institute and a former analytic instructor in the Washington Center for Psychoanalysis. Having mostly retired from her full-time psychoanalytic practice in Washington, she now sees patients privately by Zoom from Raleigh. Having served on the PCC Board of Directors and as President, she is enjoying her current role as Faculty Chair and Instructor in the Training and Education Program. Contemporary psychoanalytic theories are her particular interest.

Renu Goel, MD, is an adult psychiatrist and psychoanalyst in Cary. Since her graduation from UNC psychiatry residency in 2001, she has maintained her private practice in Cary, providing psychotherapy, psychoanalysis, and medical consultation. She is a recent graduate of the PCC Adult Psychoanalysis track. She is faculty in the PCC and at Atrium Health, and adjunct faculty of Wake Forest University School of Medicine. She has a particular interest in the overlap of psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. She is a graduate of UC Berkeley's Center for the Science of Psychedelics (BCSP) Psychedelic Facilitation Training Program, and a Health Equity Leadership Scholar of the MAPS MDMA Assisted Therapy Program.

Registration and Tuition Deadline is August 5, 2025.

Tuition

PCC Matriculated Students: **\$525**

Graduate Students and Residents: **\$665**

All others: **\$730**

Registration Fee: \$25 per term (Matriculated Students are exempt from registration fee).

Payment plans can be arranged with the Business Manager, [Lisa Long](#).

[Course Cancellation Policy](#)

[Register Here](#)

Course Learning Objectives

Class participants will be able to:

1. Explain in what way the study of theory assists the analyst/therapist with his/her own sense of being securely "held" during the treatment.

2. Describe the mental functioning of a patient who requires the analyst to keep his "Depressive Position" interpretations silent for a long time before they can be usefully received.
3. Describe Ogden's three "modes of meaning-making" and how they are related to the Kleinian "positions."
4. Describe the similarities and differences between Kleinian and American Interpersonal understandings of interaction between patient and analyst.
5. Describe the difference between psychoanalytic focus on "content" and psychoanalytic focus on "mental functioning."
6. Describe the effect of trauma on the mental functioning of the patient.
7. Define "mentalization" as an aspect of mental functioning and give some examples of how impaired mentalization shows up in the patient's communications.
8. Describe an interaction between mother and infant in which healthy attachment is in jeopardy.
9. Describe the major differences between open and closed systems, and to demonstrate an understanding of how these "systems" appear in attachment patterns.
10. Describe the origins of "Neuropsychoanalysis" - its research, its journal, and its primary goals.
11. Describe two theoretical threads leading from Bion's ideas of container/contained to the work of present-day neuropsychoanalysis.
12. Describe how the mind is "structured like a language" (Lacan's words) - i.e., based on the basic building block of metaphor.
13. Explain how psychoanalysis works as a "talking cure," based on the principle and key role of metaphor in language-building.
14. Describe both the idea and the *feeling* of discovering how one unconsciously plays the role of perpetrator or victim in a vast social "projective identification" system.
15. Describe the current assault on nature and our preoccupation with "walls" in psychoanalytic terms.
16. Describe the effects of true gratitude and of the defenses against it in both individual and societal terms.

Confidentiality Statement: All case material will be carefully disguised. We ask that participants agree to hold all material presented with the utmost care, following ethical and professional guidelines.

Course Participants agree to review and abide to the following:

[Professional and Ethical Guidelines for the Classroom](#)

Accommodation Statement: To request an accommodation for this program, please contact the Administrator at Kayla@CarolinaPsychoanalytic.org by two weeks before the start date.

Continuing Education Disclosures:

The Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas has been approved by NBCC as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6518. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. The Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas is solely responsible for all aspects of the program.

The Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Psychoanalytic Center of the Carolinas maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Social workers will receive a letter of attendance documenting their hours of continuing education. This certificate may not be acceptable verification in all states.

Contact: Kayla@CarolinaPsychoanalytic.org

Kayla Schilke, Training and Education Program Manager

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101 Cloister Court, Suite A | Chapel Hill, NC 275614

Phone: 919.490.3212 | Fax: 877.897.4034 | www.CarolinaPsychoanalytic.org

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