Year V Seminar, Winter 2017

Instructors: Rodrigo Barahona, Psy.D and Karen Roos, LICSW

Course Description:

This course will explore many of the key concepts that Bion developed over the course of his career, with a special emphasis on the clinical implications of these ideas. The main focus will be on studying the evolution in his thinking as well as anchoring the phenomena he describes in the day-to-day realities of clinical practice. This is not a survey course, but rather an in-depth concentration on the meaning of Bion’s work for contemporary psychoanalysis.

1. February 9, 2017 - Introduction

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to define Bion’s concepts of attacks on linking, and identify one essential characteristic of Bion’s early period and one essential characteristic of Bion’s late period.


Ogden, T. (2004a) An introduction to the reading of Bion. IJP, 85: 285-300. PEP Web Link

2. February 16, 2017 - Bion’s Pre-psychoanalytic Experiences

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to explain how the experience of Sweeting’s death influenced the development of Bion’s concept of alpha function.

Brown, L.J. (2012) Bion’s discovery of alpha function: Thinking under fire on the battlefield and in the consulting room. IJP, 93: 1191-1214. PEP Web Link

3. February 23, 2017 - Bion’s Bedrock: Learning from Experience

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to define Bion’s concepts of alpha function, beta elements, and contact barrier.


4. March 2, 2017 - Bion’s Theory of Thinking

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to describe Bion’s concept of apparatus for thinking, and Bion’s assertion that in hallucinations, “the sense organs operate in reverse.”


5. March 9, 2017 - Dreaming and Reverie

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to describe Bion’s concept of waking dream thought.


6. March 16, 2017 - Memory and Desire

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, candidates will be able to explain Bion’s injunction to abandon “memory and desire” in psychoanalytic listening.
The text is already in plain format as requested. No further conversion is needed.