Welcome to “Basic Concepts”! Our seminar is designed to provide an overview of fundamental concepts in psychoanalysis, and then see how those ideas have been reworked in contemporary psychoanalysis. Together we will examine some core concepts including transference, countertransference, defense, object, self, intersubjectivity and the psychoanalytic field. We’ll visit some of the major schools of psychoanalytic thought, such as ego psychology, object relations, self-psychology, relational theory and field theory. We’ll briefly consider the historical, political, and cultural contexts in which psychoanalytic theories develop, and ask how each new model seeks to respond to cultural change and address gaps in earlier theory. How does the same concept evolve and change, and which ideas are important to hold onto? How does theory affect how we listen? Or our clinical technique? What can we say about our models of therapeutic change? The current “pluralistic” climate of psychoanalytic practice involves being able to hold in mind differing ways of understanding the material a given patient brings to us. For that reason, readings are chosen from select classic and contemporary papers, from multiple perspectives. We hope our work together will help provide a foundation for the class to engage deeply in learning together throughout your psychoanalytic training!

I: September 28 - The Clinical Unconscious


Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to discuss the potential transference implications of behavior by patients in opening sessions.
II. October 5 – Transference


Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to describe two features of Almond’s updated examination of transference.

III. Oct 12 – Ego and Defense


Brenner, C. (2007) Psychoanalysis or Mind and Meaning. Psychoanalytic Quarterly Monograph, Chapter 4: pp. 47-70. [Available in the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to articulate one example of using the concept of the ego in analytic interventions.

IV. Oct 19 – Object

Fairbairn, W. R. D.( 1943a). PEP Web Link

Ogden (1979) On Projective Identification IJP 60: 357-373. PEP Web Link

Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to compare how Winnicott’s approach to pre-Oedipal object relations was helpful in Guntrip’s case as opposed to his first analysis.

V. October 26 - Self


Kohut, H. (1979). The Two Analyses of Mr. Z. International Journal of Psychoanalysis 60: 3-27. PEP Web Link

Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to define the self-psychological concepts of empathy and self-object.
VI. November 9 – Countertransference


Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to describe the term enactment and how it can be useful clinically.

VII. November 2 – Intersubjectivity and the Field


Learning Objectives - Candidates will be able to describe Ogden’s idea of the analytic third.

VIII. November 16 – Psychoanalytic Process and Change


Learning Objective - Candidates will be able to articulate two non-interpretive mechanisms of therapeutic change.