



ONLINE REMOTE LEARNING

# FERTILITY COUNSELING POSTGRADUATE COURSE

Live, Interactive Teleconference

Ten Monthly Sessions

September 2024 to June 2025

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This FCPG course is a foundational step in learning the key aspects of fertility counseling and has been a long-standing course taught by experts, Sharon Covington, MSW and Linda Applegarth, Ed.D. Continuing the quality, integrity and legacy of this work, this course will be taught by two professionals with an abundance of training including past collaboration with Sharon and Linda teaching on this topic. Drs. Koser and Covington have numerous publications, course teachings, and presentations in the fertility counseling field. Whether infertility is a presenting problem or occurs during the course of therapy, clinicians need to understand challenges faced by individual clients as they navigate the complex and multifaceted world of assisted reproduction. The FCPC will address the following topics including:

- Psychological and Medical Overview
- Treatment Approaches
- Donor-Assisted Reproduction & Gestational Surrogacy: Assessment and Counseling
- Modern Families: LGBTQ+ and Advanced Age, etc.
- Racial/Cultural Diversity Issues
- Pregnancy and Postpartum Adjustment
- Reproductive Trauma and Loss
- Fertility Preservation
- The Pregnant Therapist
- Complex Issues in Family Building
- Transference and Countertransference
- Legal/Ethical Challenges
- Practice Building

### Readings and discussion are based on the texts:

- (2022) *Fertility Counseling: Clinical Guide, 2nd Ed.* and *Fertility Counseling: Case Studies, 2nd Ed.* S.N. Covington (Ed.)
- (2006) *Infertility Counseling: A Comprehensive Handbook for Clinicians, 2nd Ed.* SN Covington and LH Burns, (Eds.)

The FCPG course is a formal, live, interactive, teleconference-based program in fertility counseling for mental health professionals to address a broad range of issues seen in clients experiencing impaired reproduction and psychosocial functioning. This is a 10-month closed cohort course, that utilizes didactic, interactive visual presentations and clinical case discussions. Participants will have the opportunity to integrate knowledge into practice.

The fee for the 10-month study group is \$2000, which can be paid in two segments (September and January). There will be two monthly class options available: **Wednesday 9am-12pm (ET) and Thursday 12pm-3pm (ET)**. **All classes are taught as a closed cohort of no more than 20 students, providing opportunity to build collegial relationships throughout the course.**

All ten classes are expected to be attended, there is no partial continuing education provided for any missed class meetings.

*register your spot today!*

**APPLICATION: [HTTPS://FORMS.GLE/V4AMEFQCM78NJJSBA](https://forms.gle/v4amefocm78njjsba)**

**FERTILITYCOUNSELINGCOURSE@GMAIL.COM**

## **Peer Discussion Group**

In addition to the regularly scheduled class meeting there will be an additional peer discussion group hour scheduled the week after class to further topic discussions and provide the opportunity for networking and group discussion. This is a completely optional meeting and there is no requirement to attend. No CEs will be offered for this meeting. The peer discussion group will meet every Thursday after the week of class from 12-1pm EST.

## **Learning Objectives:**

- Identify the psychological impact of infertility on individuals and couples
- Compare the various medical interventions associated with assisted reproductive technology (ART)
- Explain how families are created with the use of genetic and non-genetic material and its psychological impact
- Utilize relevant psychological approaches for clients who have had or who are currently experiencing impaired reproduction and reproductive loss
- Assess the ethical challenges occurring when counseling clients using assisted reproduction and/or working in a reproductive medical setting
- Analyze the importance of understanding the role of culture and the interplay of reproduction and disclosure
- Apply the understanding crucial long-range implications for families created through ART
- Apply the impact of previous psychological trauma and the experience it can have in trying to conceive, pregnancy, and post-partum
- Explain a framework for understanding key components to helping intended parents select gamete donors
- Assess transference and counter-transference reactions when working with a broad range of reproductive issues
- Compare psychological theoretical frameworks and understand the impact of interventions for intended parents
- Create awareness of personal ethical blind-spots and how this can impair competency when working with diverse clients
- Describe the legal process and its importance in third party reproduction
- Create a set of tools to help fertility patients navigate the psychological impact of infertility
- Identify areas of professional competency and create an appropriate referral action plan
- Identify the unique challenges in family building for the LGBTQAI+ community
- Explain the limitations of the current psychological professional literature and areas for future research
- Compare the various mental health professional roles with clients using ART and how to best utilize each when creating a treatment plan
- Assess the psychological ethical dilemmas surrounding self-disclosure and infertility
- Explain the challenges for post-partum recovery after experiencing infertility
- Demonstrate ethical decision-making abilities through the use of case study materials

## **Continuing Education**

### **\*This course will offer 30 hours of continuing education hours**

Kristy Koser, PhD is a clinician at Aporia Counseling and Psychotherapy, PLLC

Aporia Counseling & Psychotherapy, PLLC is approved by the **American Psychological Association** to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. Aporia Counseling & Psychotherapy, PLLC maintains responsibility for this program and its content.

Aporia Counseling & Psychotherapy, PLLC has been approved by the **National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)** as an Approved Continuing Education Provider, ACEP No. 6985. Programs that do not qualify for NBCC credit are clearly identified. Aporia Counseling & Psychotherapy, PLLC is solely responsible for all aspects of the programs.



Covington & Hafkin and Associates is authorized by the **Board of Social Work Examiners in Maryland** to sponsor social work continuing education learning activities and maintains full responsibility for this program. This training qualifies for 30 Category I continuing education units, including 3 for Ethics.

Cancellation policy. Participants will be granted a full refund if registration is cancelled at least 7 days in advance of the first class; after this time, your registration fee may be only partially refunded. If the program is cancelled by the instructors for any reason, a full refund will be granted. No commercial support has been or will be provided to CE instructors.

## **Presenters**



**Kristy Koser, PhD, LPCC** is in private practice in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia and is an author, speaker, and educator on the topic of reproductive mental health. She has been invited to speak, collaborate and contribute to the growing field of reproductive psychology many times over the last decade. Dr. Koser has written extensively in peer reviewed journal articles and other outlets about infertility and the impact on the couple relationship. She has created several self-help courses for fertility patients and along with her colleagues created a successful educational course with PESI that is available to professionals world-wide. In addition, Dr. Koser has contributed countless blog posts, guest lectures, and more recently several book chapters in foundational fertility counseling texts. She is a member of ASRM and her speciality areas include the working with couples during and after fertility treatment and the transition to parenthood.



**Laura Covington, PhD, MSW**, owns the private practice, The Center for Reproductive Mental Health, in the Washington, DC metro area. Dr. Covington's written several publications, include topics related to trauma and the impact related to reproduction, being a pregnant practitioner, known donation, and postpartum care after infertility. She has also been invited to speak and provided education and training around assisted reproductive technology (ART) care and third-party reproduction, including through American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) and an educational course with PESI which is available worldwide. Her special interest include providing counseling to individuals, couples and groups around reproductive health issues, including primary ovarian insufficiency (POI), and reproductive traumas, with a focus on the military and combat-related injuries that impair fertility. Dr. Covington provides counseling for the use of donor conception and/or gestational carriers and the transition to pregnancy and parenting after fertility challenges. She also volunteers on Support Group Oversight Committee with RESOLVE and is a member of the ASRM Mental Health Professional Group and ESHRE.

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