

Florida Psychoanalytic Center
Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Course (PPC) 2025-2027
Course Outline for Year 1: September 2025-May 2026

All Classes meet on Saturday mornings from 9:00 until 12:00
at: The Florida Psychoanalytic Center Library or by Zoom

4649 Ponce de Leon Blvd. Suite 303
305.669.4353

Class format:

Class time is divided between discussion of the assigned readings, presentation of relevant clinical material by the instructor, and discussion of students' case material from their clinical work. Each student is asked to think about a case that is relevant to the class topic. Discussing cases is the most effective means of illustrating immediate clinical application of the class topic. Presentation of cases is meant to be informal. Students who are not currently seeing patients can draw on past clinical work.

Course Outline and Schedule

Class 1
Sept 13, 2025

Let's Talk About It: Introducing Psychodynamic Psychotherapy

This class will provide an introduction to psychodynamic themes and concepts utilizing patient vignettes. Themes related to initiating treatment, the unconscious, the therapeutic frame, and dreams will be discussed. Opportunities for discussion, self-reflection, and classroom engagement will be provided.

Stefania Prendes-Alvarez, M.D., Daniel Sheridan, Ph.D.,
Gretchen Suarez, L.M.H.C.

Class 2
Sept 20, 2025

Ego Psychology

This class will cover Freud's theories of ego psychology, including drive theory, the topographic model, the structural model, primary and secondary thought processes, sources of anxiety, defense mechanisms, ego functioning, and the clinical implications of these concepts.

Gennifer Lane Briggs, L.M.H.C.

Class 3
Oct 4, 2025

Kleinian Theory

This course provides a foundational overview of Melanie Klein's core contributions to psychoanalytic theory and practice. Key concepts such as unconscious phantasy, the paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions, projective identification, and the internal world of object relations will be explored. Students will gain insight into how Klein's theories expanded upon Freud's work and laid the groundwork for contemporary psychoanalytic theory and clinical practice today.

Alessandra Barroso, L.M.H.C.

Class 4
Oct 18, 2025

Object Relations Theory

This three-hour class introduces therapists to the essential ideas of object relations theory in a clear and approachable way. Together, we'll look at how early relationships shape our inner world and influence emotional life and the therapy process. We'll touch on the work of key object relations thinkers and consider how their ideas can help us listen more deeply, think about our cases, and respond in ways that move the work forward.

Manuela Menendez, Psy.D.

Class 5
Nov 8, 2025

Introduction to Interpersonal Psychoanalysis, Part 2: Edgar Levenson

This course will introduce participants to core concepts in contemporary interpersonal psychoanalysis. In particular, it will explore the contribution to Edgar Levenson, as they built on and extended the foundational ideas of Harry Stack Sullivan.

Eugenio Duarte, Ph.D.

Class 6
Nov 22, 2025

Introduction to Relational Psychoanalytic Theory and Clinical Applications

This class offers an overview of the central ideas and clinical implications of Relational Psychoanalysis. We will emphasize the shift from a one-person to a two-person psychology and how that influences contemporary therapeutic practice. The course explores how subjectivity and meaning emerge within relationships, both in life and in the therapeutic encounter. Students will examine key concepts such as mutuality, intersubjectivity, transference-countertransference through a relational lens, the co-construction of experience and enactments.

Luly Casares, Ph.D., Claudia Pimentel, Ph.D.

Class 7
Dec 6, 2025

Between Practice and Training: A Psychodynamic Case and the Candidate Experience

This class will provide an in-depth exploration of psychodynamic psychotherapy through the lens of a single patient case. Participants will follow the clinical process across the course of treatment, with attention to central psychoanalytic concepts such as transference, countertransference, resistance, and the therapeutic frame. The case will serve as a springboard for discussion of theory in practice, illuminating how psychodynamic principles unfold within the analytic hour. Following the case presentation, the class will transition into a conversation about the pathway to becoming a psychoanalytic candidate. We will consider the lived experience of training, including the intellectual, emotional, and professional demands of candidacy. Attention will be given to the opportunities and challenges this process entails, as well as the ways in which analytic training reshapes clinical identity.

Gina Joy-Reyes, Psy.D., Dan Sheridan, Ph.D.

Class 8
Jan 10, 2026

The Analyst's Vulnerability

This class will examine the concept of the analyst's vulnerability as a central dimension of psychoanalytic practice. Moving beyond a traditional emphasis on neutrality and authority, contemporary theorists have highlighted how the analyst's openness to being affected can foster deeper attunement, authenticity, and connection in the analytic encounter. Participants will consider how vulnerability intersects with transference, countertransference, and enactment, and how it can expand analytic possibilities when contained within the frame. The discussion will address both the clinical risks and the transformative potential of the analyst's willingness to engage from a position of genuine subjectivity.

Gretchen Suarez, L.M.H.C.

Class 9
Jan 24, 2026

Evaluation Phase/Beginning Treatment

This course focuses on the evaluation phase and the initial stages of treatment. Students will learn how to establish the therapeutic frame, including setting session frequency, duration, fees, and effectively communicating the treatment process. The course will also explore common forms of resistance that may arise early in treatment and strategies for addressing them.

Elise Suna, L.M.F.T

Class 10
Feb 7, 2026

The Frame

The Frame explores the structural, temporal, and interpersonal boundaries that make psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy work possible. This course examines the frame not as a static set of rules, but as a vital clinical instrument that shapes transference, countertransference, and the unfolding of the analytic process. Through clinical vignettes, theoretical readings, and group discussion, participants will deepen their understanding of how maintaining and thoughtfully modifying the frame supports containment, fosters psychic regression and transformation, and ultimately protects the analytic space.

Shirley Malove, Ph.D.

Class 11
Feb 21, 2026

Defenses, Conflict & Compromise Formation

This interactive, clinically focused class will introduce core principles of Ego Psychology—ego defenses, conflict, and compromise formation. Though psychoanalysis has evolved beyond its early formulations, these foundational concepts remain essential, and we will bring them to life through clinical and real-world examples.

Michelle Paley, M.D.

Class 12
March 7, 2026

Transference & Countertransference

This course offers an exploration of transference and countertransference as central organizing principles in psychodynamic and psychoanalytic treatment. Beginning with the foundational Freudian formulation, this course briefly traces the evolution of these concepts through contemporary schools of thought. Emphasis will be placed on how transference and countertransference are not only diagnostic and interpretive tools but also dynamic lived experiences that shape the therapeutic relationship. Students will engage with clinical material to develop the capacity to recognize, tolerate and work through complex transference and countertransference enactments in the therapeutic dyad.

Patricia Gilmore, L.M.H.C.

Class 13
April 25, 2026

The Centrality of Loss in Everyday Life and Clinical Work

*Loss is a more common experience in our lives than most of us fully recognize. We experience loss not only in the death of a loved person, but in every choice we make; in normal life transitions and changes (even desired ones); and in the inevitable experiences we all have of disappointment in others, ourselves, and life. No loss, small or severe, can be survived well without the work of mourning. Our capacity to succeed, love, have peace of mind, or be vitally alive hinges on our ability to face loss and grieve. Freud spoke poignantly about loss in one of his most important papers, *Mourning and Melancholia*. We will describe how Freud differentiated between mourning, which is a painful but healthy and essential process, and melancholia, which is, at its core, a refusal to mourn, with damaging - sometimes catastrophic - effects on the self. Issues of loss, grief, and the facing or avoidance of mourning thread throughout our clinical work on a daily basis.*

Lynne Harkless, Ph.D., Sheri Ashcraft, Ph.D.

Class 14
May 9, 2026

Supervision/Consultation of 2 Student Cases

Class 15
May 16, 2026

Resistance as Communication

This class explores the concept of resistance in psychodynamic psychotherapy...how it manifests in the therapeutic relationship, its many meanings, and its role in the patient's internal world. We will discuss ways of recognizing resistance, understanding its defensive and adaptive functions, and responding to it in a manner that deepens the therapeutic process.

Stefania Prendes-Alvarez, M.D.