

**Texas A&M University – Commerce**  
**Department of Counseling**  
**COUN 501: INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNSELING PROFESSION**  
**Fall 2014**

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Office Hours: By appointment only

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF COURSE**

501. *Introduction to the Counseling Profession*. Three semester hours.

Recommended as initial course in a student's program to serve as an introduction to the counseling profession. Roles of counselors and related professionals in various settings are presented. Professional goals and objectives; trends; professional associations; ethical and legal issues; history; credentialing; preparation standards for counselors; and essential interviewing and counseling skills, characteristics, and behaviors that influence helping processes are explored.

**GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION**

This course should be taken early in the student's preparation program. This course serves primarily as an orientation to the counseling profession and as a course where students develop basic interviewing and counseling skills and self-awareness that promotes appropriate counselor-client relationships. A grade of "B" or higher must be earned in COUN 501, 510, 528, and 516 for admission to candidacy status (or its equivalent for those seeking school counselor certification only), which is required before practicum (COUN 551).

**COURSE OBJECTIVES include, but are not limited to, the following.**

Students will demonstrate understanding of:

1. essential interviewing and counseling skills so that the student is able to develop a therapeutic relationship
2. counselor and consultant characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes including verbal and nonverbal behaviors and personal characteristics, orientations, and skills;
3. self-awareness so that the counselor-client relationship is therapeutic and the counselor maintains appropriate professional boundaries;
4. history and philosophy of the counseling profession, including significant factors and events;
5. requirements for entry into, progress through, and completion of the Texas A&M University–Commerce counselor preparation program.
6. professional roles, functions, and relationships with other human service providers;
7. integration of technological strategies and applications within counseling and consultation processes;
8. professional organizations, primarily ACA, its divisions, branches, and affiliates, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current emphases;
9. professional credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues;
10. public and private policy processes, including the role of the professional counselor in advocating on behalf of the profession;
11. advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients;
12. a general framework for understanding and practicing consultation, including an examination of the historical development of consultation;
13. ethical standards of ACA and related entities, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling;

**CONTENT AREAS include, but are not limited to, the following:**

- I. Introduction to helping skills (a primary emphasis of this course)
  - A. Essential interviewing and helping skills
  - B. Counselor and consultant characteristics and behaviors that influence the helping process
  - C. Importance of self-awareness in maintaining a therapeutic relationship and appropriate professional boundaries.
- II. History and philosophy of the counseling profession
- III. Master's-level programs at A&M-Commerce
- IV. Professional roles
  - A. Introduction to counselor roles common across settings including, but not limited to
    1. Counseling
    2. Assessment
    3. Consultation and its history
    4. Deferral
    5. Program evaluation
  - B. Educational settings
  - C. Non-educational settings
- V. Relationships with other human service providers
- VI. Technology and the counseling profession
- VII. Professional organizations for counselors
- VIII. Professional credentialing
  - A. Certification (School Counselor Certification and NCC)
  - B. Licensure
  - C. Accreditation
- IX. Public and private policy processes and advocacy on behalf of the profession
- X. Ethical standards and legal considerations in the counseling profession

**METHOD OF INSTRUCTION**

Lecture, discussion, and experiential.

**STUDENT PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND PROCEDURES**

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Point Value</i>
Attendance/Participation	10
Mid-Term Multiple Choice Exam	20
8-page APA formatted paper	20
Taped Listening Skills Assignment	25
Self Reflection Paper	5
<u>Multiple Choice Final Exam</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	100

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS****ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:**

Attendance and active participation are a necessary and vital part of the course. Active participation includes attending each class session, completing reading assignments prior to class sessions, and participating in class discussions. The student is expected to attend class regularly. Absence from class and/or nonparticipation will result in grade reduction. Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. In order to earn full credit for attending, students must be present at both the beginning and ending of class meetings.

**More than two absences (or more than 5 class hours missed) will result in your final grade being reduced one grade level. More than three absences will require you to repeat this course for credit. Being late to class or leaving class early will result in grade reduction. Participation includes the ability of the student to interact with the professor and peers in a professional and respectful manner.**

**APA FORMATTED PROFESSIONAL PAPER:**

The student will be required to develop a 8-page, APA formatted paper. In this paper, the student will describe a facet of the counseling profession. The subject may be an area that is currently well-researched and practiced (i.e., working with clients dealing with substance abuse, working with grieving clients, etc.) or an area of the profession that is not as well researched or practiced (i.e., working with adult clients managing Asperger's Syndrome, working with clients dealing with traumatic brain injury, etc.).

The paper must include:

- a title page;
- an introduction of the issue (a rationale for why this issue is important);
- difficulties in working with the issue;
- examples of how the issue may be managed, treated, or cured;
- a conclusion; and
- a reference page (At least 10 references must be used in completing this paper. At least 5 of those references must be peer reviewed journal articles. The remaining references may be subject-related books or book chapters.)
- no abstract is necessary for this paper

The paper will be graded based on content/writing (10pts), & APA format and references (10pts).

**TAPED LISTENING SKILLS ASSIGNMENTS:**

The student will be required to complete a recording of a listening skills session with a fellow classmate. The length of the session will be 20 minutes. In this time, the student will listen to content and facilitate the fellow classmate continuing to share content by participating in active listening skills (i.e., reflection of feeling, paraphrase, open-ended questions, minimal encouragers, reflection of meaning, etc.). The assignment will be described in greater detail as the assignment due date approaches.

The listening skills assignment will be graded based upon use of basic listening skills (20pts), and skill in completion of transcript of interaction (5pts).

**SELF INTROSPECTION PAPER:**

The student will be required to complete a paper outlining personal strengths and areas for growth as a counselor in training. The self introspection should serve as a self-critique of the taped listening skills assignment. (5pts)

**MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMS:**

The student will complete two exams. These exams will consist of multiple choice questions. The mid-term exam and the final exam is worth 20 points.

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Gladdings, S.T. (2013). *Counseling (7<sup>th</sup> ed.: A comprehensive profession.)*.  
Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Young, M. E. (2013). *Learning the art of helping: Building blocks and techniques* (5th ed.).  
Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

**RECOMMENDED TEXT:**

American Psychological Association (2009). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

**TEXES COMPETENCIES THAT RELATE TO THIS COURSE (TEXES is the state examination required for school counselor certification.)****Competency 010 (Professionalism)**

The school counselor understands and complies with ethical, legal, and professional standards relevant to the profession.

**ASSIGNMENT POLICY**

Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due date designated in the syllabus. Assignments that are not turned in at the beginning of class the day on which they are due will receive an automatic deduction of 10 points for each class the assignment is late.

**ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

If you have a cell phone or any other type of electronic communication device with you, please disarm it before entering the classroom and keep it off for the duration of class. In addition, neither texting nor phone calls are allowed in class. You will lose daily participation points if you text or talk on your phone during class.

**ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library**  
**Room 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**  
**StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu**

**CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY**

"All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct) "Graduate students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work." (See Section A13.12, Academic Honesty, A&M-Commerce Procedures.)

**UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER**

Check <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu/> regarding class cancellations. Also, KETR radio on 88.9 FM and television channels 4, 5, and 8 (channel 7 for Tyler & Longview Area).

**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
8/25	Introductions and Course Overview Master's Handbook Discussion of Paper & APA Style	<b>Read:</b> Master's Handbook
<b>9/1</b>	<b>LABOR DAY HOLIDAY/NO CLASS</b>	
9/8	History and Trends in Counseling Personal and Professional Aspects of Counseling	<b>Read:</b> Ch 1 & 2
9/15	Ethical and Legal Aspects in Counseling Multiculturalism and Working with Diverse Populations	<b>Read:</b> Ch 3, 4, & 5
9/22	Groups in Counseling Consultation	<b>Read:</b> Ch 11 & 12
9/29	Evaluation and Research Testing, Assessment, and Diagnosis	<b>Read:</b> Ch 13 & 14
10/6	Professional School Counseling College Counseling	<b>Read:</b> Ch 17 & 18 <b>PAPER DUE</b>
10/13	Career Counseling Mental Health and Community Counseling	<b>Read:</b> Ch 15 & 20
10/20	<b>Mid-Term Exam</b>	
10/27	The Therapeutic Relationship Building a Counseling Relationship Nonverbal Attending <i>Practice of Skills</i>	<b>Read:</b> Ch 3, & 5 (Young) Ch 6 (Gladding)
11/3	Reflecting Skills: Reflecting Feelings <i>Practice of Skills</i>	<b>Read:</b> Ch 6 (Young)
11/10	Reflecting Skills: Reflecting Meaning & Summarizing <i>Practice of Skills</i>	<b>Read:</b> <b>Ch 7(Young)</b>
11/17	Working in a Counseling Relationship Closing Counseling Relationships <i>Practice of Skills</i>	<b>Read:</b> Ch 7 & 8 (Gladding)
11/24	<b>TAPED LISTENING SKILLS /SELF REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT DUE</b>	
12/1	<b>Final Exam</b>	
12/8	<b>Individual Conferences</b>	

### **Taped Listening Skills Assignment**

- The student will be required to complete a video-recording of a listening skills session with a fellow classmate.
- The length of the session will be 20 minutes.
- Student will be responsible for transcribing 10 minutes of the session which he/she would prefer Instructor to evaluate.
  - Transcriptions should follow the format below
    - CO: = Counselor; CL: = Client
      - CO: "So what brings you in today?"
      - CL: "I'm having problems at work."
- Students will be evaluated on the following invitational and active listening skills
  - Eye Contact, Body Position, Voice Tone, Encouragers, Questions, Paraphrase, Reflection of feeling, and Reflection of meaning
- Students will be responsible for completing a self-introspection. The self-introspection should be a self-critique of the session.
- **DUE DATE: 11/24/2014**