



COUN 501: INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNSELING PROFESSION COURSE SYLLABUS: Fall 2015

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Office Location: Binnion 229B
Office Hours: Monday 2:00pm-4:30pm; by appointment (McKinney)
Tuesday 4:30pm-7pm; by appointment (MPLX)
University Email Address: Kevin.Snow@tamuc.edu
Course Meeting Day/Time: M 4:30p-7:00p Location: McKinney

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

Neukrug, E. (2015). *The world of the counselor: An introduction to the counseling profession. 5th edition.* Brooks/Cole: Pacific Grove, CA.

**Supplemental articles will be placed online.

Optional

American Psychological Association (2011). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th Ed.)*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.

Course Description

501. *Introduction to the Counseling Profession*. Three semester hours. Recommended as the 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. counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence helping; (5b)
2. history and philosophy of the counseling profession, including significant factors and events; (1a)
3. counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of an interdisciplinary emergency management response team during a local, regional, or national crisis, disaster, or other trauma-causing event; (1c)
4. requirements for entry into, progress through, and completion of the Texas A&M University-Commerce counselor preparation program.
5. professional roles, functions, and relationships with other human service providers, including strategies for interagency/inter-organization collaborations and communications; (1b)
6. professional organizations, especially TCA and ACA and their branches and divisions, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues; (1f)
7. professional credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues; (1g)
8. public and private policy processes, including the role of the professional counselor in advocating on behalf of the profession; (1h)
9. advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients; (1i)
10. a general framework for understanding and practicing consultation; (5f)
11. ethical standards of professional organizations and licensing boards, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling; (1j)

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

- I. Counselor characteristics and behaviors
- II. Importance of self-awareness in maintaining a therapeutic relationship and appropriate professional boundaries.

- III. History and philosophy of the counseling profession
- IV. Master's-level programs at A&M-Commerce
- V. Professional roles
 - A. Introduction to counselor roles common across settings
 - 1. Counseling
 - 2. Consulting
 - 3. Supervising (clinical)
 - 4. Evaluating programs
 - B. Educational settings
 - C. Non-educational settings
- VI. Relationships with other human service providers
- VII. Professional organizations for counselors
- VIII. Professional credentialing
 - A. Certification (School Counselor Certification and NCC)
 - B. Licensure
 - C. Registration
 - D. Accreditation
- IX. Public and private policy processes and advocacy on behalf of the profession
- X. Ethical standards and legal considerations in the counseling profession
- XI. Overview of counselor functions, skills, and knowledge
 - A. Theories
 - B. Group work
 - C. Career development/education/counseling
 - D. Assessment, evaluation, and research
 - E. Diversity awareness and multicultural competencies

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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional/Methods/Activities Assessments

Lecture, discussion, and experiential activities- course is web enhanced

All written assignments are to be uploaded to eCollege by the due date/times in appropriate Drop Box

1. **Attendance, Readings, Homework Assignments, In-Class Activities, Participation.** Absences and lateness to class are strongly discouraged, although life happens and I understand that, so please

keep me informed when it does. If you know you will miss more than 1 class, I recommend dropping this course and taking it another time. We only have 12 meetings to discuss lots of material. Any absence beyond one class will be penalized at a loss of 10 points towards your final grade (regardless of the reason), on the assumption that you need to be present to learn and practice the concepts introduced in the course. Points are also impacted by participation. A person who clearly does not participate in class may lose participation points. All readings MUST be done prior to class. You must be familiar with the material to engage in class discussions and activities. Do not expect/rely on class lecture as a replacement- class will be mostly discussion. My approach is that you are responsible for your own learning, but I am responsible for the learning environment. (25 points for participation; absent classes deducted from overall grade total regardless of participation).

2. **Autobiographical Statement and Career Interest Paper (25 points).** Write a **4-5 page paper** (minimum) in which you discuss your reasons for wanting to become a counselor. In your paper, tell me about when and how you made the decision to pursue counseling as a profession. Describe what you think it takes to be an effective counselor, which of these attributes you possess, and which ones you think you may need to acquire as a student in the counselor education program. Also, describe what area of counseling you think you may be interested in, and any other ways in which you think you could contribute to the counseling profession. The paper should be typed, double-spaced, and demonstrate exceptional writing skills. References are not needed but the paper must follow general APA style. The paper must include a cover page and **4-5 pages** of text (minimum)- must use headings to organize paper. Points will be deducted for poor grammar, spelling errors, and poor quality of writing. No outside research is required for this paper- you will be graded on self-reflection/self-awareness and based on your ability to effectively communicate and organize your ideas.
3. **Interview Project (25 + 25 = 50 points).** You will be asked to locate, visit, observe, and conduct an informational **30-45 minute** interview with a counselor at an elementary, middle or secondary school, mental health facility, private practice, community agency, or college counseling center. Your interviewee must be preapproved by the instructor and you must locate them and secure their permission first (signed consent form). Suggested questions for the informational

interview are included at the end of the syllabus and guidelines for the observation will be discussed in class. The grade assigned for this project reflects an oral component. Based on this interview, you will submit two assignments each worth 25 points.

Part 1: will be a **4-5 page** paper (APA style, with a cover page- same guidelines as paper above) detailing the interview, who you interviewed, what you learned, what surprised you, etc. Be very thorough in your discussion and include self-reflections. Take detailed notes.

Part 2: You will also prepare a **10 minute** (minimum) presentation to share with the class (using Power Point or Prezi). Please be creative, feel free to use graphics to illustrate, etc. The presentation should summarize the responses and address what you learned from this interview. This should also include an overview of who you interviewed, what you learned from the interview and your reaction to the interview, and potentially how it was locating them, etc. A calendar for presentations will be developed in class. ****You will submit a signed consent form (that I will provide) and turn it into me prior to completing the interview****

Presentation time may be adjusted, depending on size of class.

4. **Mid-term Exam.** 100 question exam worth 50 points (.5 points per question).
5. **Final Exam.** 100 question exam worth 50 points (.5 points per question).
6. **Pop Quizzes (optional, as needed):** If I sense that you aren't reading or engaging with material appropriately for graduate students, I reserve the right to conduct pop quizzes throughout the semester. If given, these quizzes will be part of your daily participation grades.

Final Grade = 200 points

Attendance, readings, participation	25 points
Autobiographical paper	25 points
Interview Project & Presentation	50 points
Mid-Term Exam	50 points
Final Exam	50 points

GRADING

Grading Scale

90-100 = A

80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
59 > = F

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Good communication is essential to the counseling profession and to getting the most out of your education. If you have any special needs, questions, concerns, or personal issues that impact the class and/or your attendance in class, please let me know. I cannot help unless I am aware. Therefore, if you need to reach me the best way to do so is via email using your official university email (or through eCollege). I teach in various locations- calls to my office may not be immediately returned, but I make every effort to return emails within 24-48 hours, M-F. I check email many times a day. Please be respectful of my free time on weekends, and understand any email sent after Fridays at 5pm may not be answered until the following Monday (but I'll try to reply sooner, if I am free).

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES & POLICIES

Confidentiality Policy: Confidentiality is extremely important to the integrity of this course. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in any situation but we are collectively accountable to maintain a safe, trusting environment throughout the course including the experiential groups, activities and conversations. While it can be compelling to share personal information about class members with others, all students are bound by the ACA ethical code of confidentiality with respect to any material shared by other members of the class. The disclosure of personal information to anyone outside this class would be considered unethical. Please explore any concerns you have about confidentiality during class time, after class, or via private communication with the instructor.

Special Considerations with Course Format: The class will be a platform
ADA Statement 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@tamuc.edu

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*). Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Professional Conduct

Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association. Any behavior, which is deemed unethical, will be grounds for review of the student by the program faculty.

UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER

Check <http://www.tamu-commerce.edu>/<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).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Class #	Date	Topic	Readings/Assignments Due
1	8/31/15	Introduction/, Review of Syllabus, Counseling identity, what counseling means to you? Discussion of Ch.1	Read Ch. 1
2	9/7/15	Labor Day-No Class	University Closed
3	9/14/15	Counseling past, present, future	Read Ch. 2

4	9/21/15	Ethics, Standards, Credentialing, Competencies	Read Ch. 3 and ACA ethics code (online)
5	9/28/15	Individual Approaches to Counseling	Read Ch. 4
6	10/5/15	Counseling Skills	Read Ch. 5 Autobiographical Statement and Career Interest Paper
7	10/12/15	Couples and family counseling; Group Work	Read Ch. 6 and Ch. 7
8	10/19/15	Consultation and supervision; Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Read Ch. 8 and Ch. 17
9	10/26/15	Lifespan development; Abnormal development, diagnosis, psychopharmacology	Read Ch. 9 and Ch. 10 Mid-Term (9 chapters)
10	11/2/15	Career development; School counseling	Read Ch. 11 and Ch. 16 **Submit signed interviewee consent form no later than 4:30pm!!!**
11	11/9/15	Theory and concepts of multicultural counseling; LGBTQQIA issues in counseling	Read Ch. 14 and Read ALGBTIC Competencies (2 competencies; online)
12	11/16/15	Knowledge and skills of multicultural counseling	Read Ch. 15 and Advocacy Competencies (online)
13	11/23/15	Student affairs and college counseling	Read Ch. 18
14	11/30/15	Teaching and assessment; Research and evaluation	Read Ch. 12 and Ch. 13 Interview Project Paper Due- begin presentations
15	12/7/15	Spirituality in counseling; Closure/discussion/reflection activities	Read ASERVIC Competencies (online) Complete presentations, if needed. Final Exam (follows exam schedule; 9 chapters)

The instructor reserves the right to amend this document as necessary.

Potential Questions for Informational Interview with a Counselor

- 1) What is the interviewee's name, title, and place of employment?
- 2) What is the agency's or school's address?

- 3) What is the number of total staff at the agency or school?
- 4) What are the number and type of administrative staff?
- 5) What are the approximate salaries of administrative staff?
- 6) What is the number of "direct service" personnel (mental health professionals who work with clients)?
- 7) What are the types of direct service personnel (e.g., mental health aids, therapists, supervisors, program coordinators, group leaders, family counselors, etc.)?
- 8) What are the degrees held by direct service personnel?
- 9) What are the approximate salaries of direct service personnel?
- 10) What are the number and type of support staff (e.g., secretaries, clerical staff, etc.)?
- 11) Is this a private or public agency?
- 12) Where does the agency or school get its funding?
- 13) Does the agency or school have a policy and practices statement (a written statement that explains the functions of the agency or school and the roles of the staff)? To what degree does the policy and practices statement of the agency or school reflect what is actually going on?
- 14) Who are the clients of this agency or school? How does the agency or school obtain its clients?
- 15) What happens when a client initially makes contact or requests an appointment?
- 16) What is the process for assigning clients, diagnosing clients' problems, establishing goals, making referrals, and following up with clients? If referrals are necessary, how and where are clients typically referred?
- 17) If fees are charged, how do clients pay? How much is charged for each session?
- 18) What type of counseling and/or assistance takes place at this agency or school (e.g., individual, group, family, etc.)? What types of typical client issues are addressed? How do you address your clients' spiritual issues?
- 19) How long are normal counseling/interviewing sessions?
- 20) How many hours, days, weeks, months or years would a client spend at this agency or school? How many counseling sessions would he or she be able to have?
- 21) How is the average client terminated?
- 22) What kinds of paperwork (e.g., case notes, reports, correspondence) must be completed?

- 23) How are counselors evaluated? How does the agency or school evaluate itself?
- 24) Is there a staff development effort that takes place at the agency or school (in-house workshops, guest speakers, monetary support for conferences, education, etc.)?
- 25) To which professional organizations do you belong?
- 26) What are the major responsibilities, duties, and/or functions of this position? What percentage of time is spent doing each?
- 27) What kinds of hours are usually worked? How about overtime, weekends, etc.? Is it necessary to take work home? If so, how much and how often?
- 28) What is a typical day like?
- 29) How does the agency or school deal with ethical and legal concerns related to issues such as confidentiality, child abuse, and clients threatening to harm themselves or others?
- 30) What are some of the most challenging situations you've encountered? How were they resolved?
- 31) How stressful is this work? What are some of the greatest stressors? How do you avoid burnout and maintain your own wellness?
- 32) What constraints, such as time and funding, make your job more difficult?
- 33) What are some of the most significant benefits or rewards of your work?
- 34) What projects have you worked on that have been particularly interesting or fulfilling?
- 35) What skills or personal characteristics does a person need to be successful in this setting?
- 36) What sacrifices does one have to make to succeed in this field, and are the sacrifices worth it?
- 37) How high is the turnover rate for counselors at this school or agency? When counselors leave, what are the usual reasons?
- 38) What is the job market like in this area for counselors in your field?
- 39) What recent trends have affected the ways in you do your work? What future trends do you foresee?
- 40) What advice would you offer about going into this field? Other comments?

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- To fully participate in online courses, you will need to use a current, Flash enabled browser. For PC users, the suggested browser is Internet Explorer 9.0 or 10. For Mac users, the most current update of Firefox is suggested.
- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
 - sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - speakers or headphones.
- Depending on your course, you might also need a:
 - webcam
 - microphone

For courses where interactive tools are used, like VoiceThread or ClassLive Pro, headphones are suggested for use with recording and playback. We recommend a webcam with an integrated microphone, such as the Microsoft LifeCam Cinema. All devices should be installed and configured before class begins.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. Java can be downloaded at: <http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.
- You will need some additional free software for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
 - Adobe Reader
 - Adobe Flash Player
- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software.

Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

- For additional information about system requirements, please see: <https://secure.ecollege.com/tamuc/index.learn?action=technical>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

Pearson LearningStudio (eCollege) Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using Pearson LearningStudio, the learning management system used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <http://www.tamuc.edu/myleo.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a "Browser Test" prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login to Pearson LearningStudio, click on the 'myCourses' tab, and then select the "Browser Test" link under Support Services.

Pearson LearningStudio Student Technical Support

Texas A&M University-Commerce provides students technical support in the use of Pearson LearningStudio.

Technical assistance is available 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.

If at any time you experience technical problems (e.g., you can't log in to the course, you can't see certain material, etc.) please contact the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The student help desk may be reached by the following means 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **Chat Support:** Click on '*Live Support*' on the tool bar within your course to chat with a Pearson LearningStudio Representative.

- **Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.
- **Email:** helpdesk@online.tamuc.org to initiate a support request with Pearson LearningStudio Technical Support Representative.

Accessing Help from within Your Course: Click on the *'Tech Support'* icon on the upper left side of the screen inside the course. You will then be able to get assistance via online chat, email or by phone by calling the Help Desk number noted below.

Note: Personal computer problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, an Internet cafe, or a bookstore, such as Barnes & Noble, etc.

Policy for Reporting Problems with Pearson LearningStudio

Should students encounter Pearson LearningStudio based problems while submitting assignments/discussions/comments/exams, the following procedure **MUST** be followed?

1. Students must report the problem to the help desk. You may reach the helpdesk at helpdesk@online.tamuc.org or 1-866-656-5511
2. Students **MUST** file their problem with the helpdesk and obtain a helpdesk ticket number
3. Once a helpdesk ticket number is in your possession, students should email me to advise me of the problem and to provide me with the helpdesk ticket number
4. At that time, I will call the helpdesk to confirm your problem and follow up with you

PLEASE NOTE: Your personal computer/access problems are not a legitimate excuse for filing a ticket with the Pearson LearningStudio Help Desk. You are strongly encouraged to check for compatibility of your browser **BEFORE** the course begins and to take the Pearson LearningStudio tutorial offered for students who may require some extra assistance in navigating the Pearson LearningStudio platform. **ONLY** Pearson LearningStudio based problems are legitimate.

Internet Access

An Internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your professor. View the requirements as outlined in Technology Requirements above for more information.

myLeo Support

Your myLeo email address is required to send and receive all student correspondence. Please email helpdesk@tamuc.edu or call us at 903-468-6000 with any questions about setting up your myLeo email account. You may also access information at <https://leo.tamuc.edu>.

Learner Support

Go to the following link [One Stop Shop](#)- created to serve you by attempting to provide as many resources as possible in one location.

Go to the following link [Academic Success Center](#)- focused on providing academic resources to help you achieve academic success.