



Counseling 510: Counseling Theories & Techniques

Course Syllabus: Fall 2025

Thursday, 7:20 to 10:10 pm,

Dallas: TBA

AI use policy as of May 25, 2023

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Karl Vonzell Mitchell, PhD, NCC, LCDC, LPCA, CWC, IOM

University Email Address: Karl.Mitchell@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: E-mail **Response Time:** 24 hours Monday - Friday

Main Office Location: Commerce, Binnion 219

Office Hours: By appointment

Monday (Mesquite) 1:00-5:00pm, Tuesday (Commerce) 1:00-5:00pm,

Thursday (Dallas) 1:00-5:00pm, Friday (Zoom) 1:00-5:00pm



COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required:

Corey, G. (2024). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy* (11th edition). Cengage.

Optional Texts and/or Materials:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*. (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Course Description

510. *Counseling Theories and Techniques*. Three semester hours.

A study of the philosophical and theoretical bases of the helping process. Includes study of major counseling theories, basic helping skills, and applications to diverse populations. Also includes professional issues related specifically to the counseling process.

General Course Information

This course, along with COUN 501, serves as one of the basic introductory courses in the Counseling Department. It is a requirement for all degree options and should be taken early in the student's preparation. A grade of "B" or higher must be earned in COUN 501, 510, 528, and 516 (or its equivalent for those seeking school counselor certification only), which is required before practicum (COUN 551).

Student Learning Outcomes

2016 CACREP Standards Addressed in COUN 510

Masters Standard	Learning Activity	Assignment	Assessment Rubric	Benchmark
2.F.3.c. theories of normal and abnormal personality development	- Reading (Corey, 2024) - Additional resources related to nature of the human, normal and abnormal behavior according to specific theory	Chapter reviews (1-4)	Covering all 5 questions asked by the instructor on the theory chapter review	≥ 80% of average rubric scores will either meet (2) or exceed (3) expectation

2.F.5.a. theories and models of counseling	• Reading (Corey, 2024) • Discussion post questions • Additional resources related to specific theory	Chapter reviews (5-8)	Covering all 5 questions asked by the instructor on the theory chapter review	≥ 80% of average rubric scores will either meet (2) or exceed (3) expectation
2.F.5.b. a systems approach to conceptualizing clients	• Reading (Corey, 2024) • Additional resources related to the role of the counselor	Chapter reviews (9-14)	Covering all 5 questions asked by the instructor on the theory chapter review	≥ 80% of average rubric scores will either meet (2) or exceed (3) expectation
2.F.5.n. processes for aiding students in developing a personal model of counseling	• Reading (Corey, 2024) • Discussion post questions • Additional resources related to personal values and worldview	Chapter reviews (9-14) Theory comparison paper	Covering all 5 questions asked by the instructor on the theory chapter review Compare and contrast two counseling theories	≥ 80% of average rubric scores will either meet (2) or exceed (3) expectation ≥ 80% of average rubric scores will either meet (2) or exceed (3) expectation

TEXES COMPETENCIES

Competency 004 (Program Management)

Course Objectives include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The student will identify, explain, and/or describe generally accepted characteristics of effective helpers.
2. Students will differentiate counseling from traditional interpretations of guidance, psychotherapy, and consultation via explanation, description, or the identification of descriptive statements.
3. Students will distinguish between the outcome and process goals of counseling and consultation via explanation, description, or the identification of descriptive statements.



4. Students will identify, generate responses, and/or demonstrate appropriate behaviors which are consistent with the Ethical Standards and Standards of Practice of the American Counseling Association, including differentiating between ethical and legal issues.
5. Students will identify, explain, and/or describe characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes, including, but not limited to age, gender, ethnicity, culture, race, lifestyle, verbal and nonverbal communication styles, personal characteristics, traits, capabilities and life circumstances.
6. Students will identify, describe, and/or apply appropriate counseling skills to client/consultees who are different from the counselor in terms of race, cultural background, gender, age, physical abilities, lifestyle, and/or other criteria.
7. Students will identify, describe, and/or apply appropriate counseling skills to clients who are reluctant or resistant.
8. Students will identify, describe, and/or apply appropriate counseling skills to clients who are suicidal.
9. Students will identify and/or list and describe the typical stages of counseling initial interview through termination.
10. Students will identify, explain, apply, and/or evaluate hypothetical examples of basic listening, empathy, genuineness, unconditional positive regard, concreteness, immediacy, confrontation, self-disclosure, structuring, use of silence, nonverbal communication, and communication leads such as interpretation, probes, reassurances, questions, and restatements and reflections.
11. Students will identify, explain, or demonstrate behaviors congruent with currently accepted, psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral and affective counseling theories, techniques, and practices, including, but not limited to Psychoanalytic, Adlerian, Existential, Person-centered, Gestalt, Behavioral, Cognitive-behavioral, Reality, Family systems, and Solution-focused.

The school counselor understands how to plan, implement and evaluate a developmental guidance program, including counseling services, that promotes all students' success **Competency 006 (Counseling)**

The school counselor understands how to provide effective counseling services to individuals and small groups.

Competency 010 (Professionalism)

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



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

In this class, you will utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) entitled D2L for portions of instructional and learning methods, submitting assignments, participating in online discussions, and completing quizzes. You will also need to download the Zoom application to your personal computer or smart phone in order to access office hours and other virtual meetings. To complete assignments, you will need to utilize other technologies such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, etc. If you have issues with this system, it is your responsibility to contact the help desk immediately.

Instructional Methods

This course consists of lecture and didactic learning methods, small group discussions, and in-class assignments, coupled with experiential learning and practical application. When we are not meeting face-to-face, you will be expected to participate and complete all online tasks via D2L. In addition to this, small lecture, discussion, activities, and workshops may be utilized during this course.

Student Responsibilities and Tips for Success in the Course

As a student in this course, you are responsible for being active in your learning process. Expectations of this course include the following:

1. You are expected to display professionalism at all times. Be respectful of your professor and peers. Be open to feedback, as you will receive this throughout the program.
2. Prepare for classes. Complete any and all readings prior to class time.
3. Complete all assignments by the deadline.
4. Adhere to the university's Student Code of Conduct.
5. Participate. During face-to-face classes, you are expected to actively participate in all activities and discussion. In the online format, you are expected to participate in all online discussions/activities. This is crucial to your learning.
6. All writing assignments must be done according to APA 7th edition.
7. Regularly check your University email. My suggestion is to check this at least once a day as your instructors and others from the department and University may contact you.
8. Begin your readings ASAP. Sometimes it may take more than one attempt to digest the material.
9. Deadlines are the last possible moment something is due—not the first moment to start. Work ahead. I realize this may not always be possible; however, when you can, do so.
10. Be open to the process. This degree takes time, work, effort, and growth.



COURSE ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS

- 1. D2L Discussion Boards (10 points for each discussion; 30 points total).** You are expected to give a thorough and thoughtful response to each prompt. These discussions are geared towards helping you begin the process of finding the theory that fits you best, and they will help you on your comparison paper. As a future professional and counselor-in-training, engagement in these threaded discussions will enhance your knowledge and understanding of various counseling theories and support the formation of your professional counselor identity.

In addition to the initial discussion, you will also respond to one of your classmates' discussion posts. The rubrics for the discussions are below. For the weeks with discussion posts, they will open on Monday and close the following Sunday night. **Your initial post is due by Thursday at midnight, and your peer responses are due by Sunday at midnight.** However, feel free to post earlier than Thursday. Please note that **late postings will not be accepted.**

Discussion Board Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation (0-7.9 points)	2 – Meets Expectation (8.0-8.9 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectations (9-10 points)
Discussion (10 points)	Post is not complete, not written in a clear manner OR post is missing critical components of the question. Responses to classmates are not complete, missing critical components OR feedback is not thoughtful. Initial post is not completed prior to Thursday at 11:59PM.	Post presents most elements of the question OR all elements discussed in a brief manner. Responses to classmates present most elements in a brief manner. Initial post is completed prior to Thursday at 11:59PM.	Post presents all elements of the question(s) discussed thoroughly and clearly. Responses present all elements required thoroughly and clearly. Provided thoughtful feedback to peer. Initial post is completed prior to Thursday at 11:59PM.

- 2. Theory/Chapter Summary Reviews (4 points each; 40 points total):** Using the structure in Appendix A, you will complete a summative review on each theory at the end of the week we are scheduled to cover the theory. ***The review needs to be submitted to the appropriate drop box for the week in D2L by midnight on the due date in order to receive the four-point credit.*** These will also serve as guides for you throughout the counseling program. Please see the Course Calendar for specific due dates. Please note that theory reviews which are uploaded after the due date will not receive credit.

You will complete 11 theory reviews for a total of 40 points, and I will drop the lowest grade on one theory. This means that you may choose to drop the lowest grade or skip a theory review and still receive full credit. All of your reviews must be uploaded in



Microsoft Word format. If you do not have the software on your computer, you need to obtain a copy of it.

Theory/Chapter Reviews Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation (0-3.1 points)	2 – Meets Expectation (3.2-3.5 points)	3 – Exceeds Expectation (3.6-4.0 points)
Theory Overview Appendix A (4 points)	Did not select theories from the list of those that we studied in this class; missed basic concepts; writing is shallow and lacks in-depth exploration of theories; no evidence of synthesization across multiple sources; not representative of graduate level work	Theories were selected from the one that was discussed in class, most basic concepts are covered, evidence of possessing knowledge about the theories but missing one or two key points: representative of graduate level work	All basic concepts are covered. In depth review of related concepts. evidence of possessing knowledge about topic without missing key information; representative of graduate level work

3. Comparison Research Paper (30 points): Using the structure in Appendix B, complete a theory comparison paper. The first section of this paper will include answering three questions about your own personal world view:

- 1) What do you believe about human nature? (Are people basically good or bad? How much free will do people have? What kinds of inherent capacities do people possess?)
- 2) How do people become maladjusted?
- 3) How do people change?

Next, choose two theories of most interest to you from the list of theories studied during this class. Using your textbook and **four original sources** for each theory, write a compare/contrast paper. Topics to compare and contrast should include the following (see Appendix A):

- Nature of person
- Personality development
- Emotional maladjustment
- Counselor/client relationship
- Techniques
- Therapeutic goals
- Multicultural considerations
- Treatment outcomes

Either as the closure for the paper or throughout the comparison, discuss how the theories and their parts align with your own personal views.



This paper must follow American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines and should not exceed 12 pages (including cover and reference page; no abstract is necessary). You will be graded according to APA style, writing and organization, content, and references.

An original source is defined as a journal article or book authored or co-authored by a major contributor of that particular theory. ***This research paper needs to be submitted to the appropriate drop box in D2L by midnight on the due date in order to receive credit.*** The due date is before the end of the semester to give the instructor time to provide feedback. This paper must be submitted in Microsoft Word format.

Comparison Research Paper Rubric

	1 – Does Not Meet Expectation	2 – Meets Expectation	3 – Exceeds Expectation
Answer the three theory questions about yourself. (10 points)	Did not answer the three theory questions, or only answered some of the questions. Writing is shallow and lacks in-depth exploration of self. Not representative of graduate level work (0-7.9 points)	Three theory questions are discussed at a basic level. Self-exploration present, missing one or two key points; representative of graduate level work (8-8.9 points)	Three theory questions are covered at an in-depth level. Self-awareness is demonstrated; representative of graduate level work (9-10 points)
Compare and contrast two original theories from the ones studied in this class; describe	Did not select theories from the list of those that we studied in this class. Missed basic concepts. Writing is shallow and lacks in-depth exploration of theories. No evidence of synthesis across	Theories were selected from the ones that were discussed in class, most basic concepts are covered, evidence of possessing knowledge about the theories but missing one or two key points; minimally	All basic concepts are covered. In-depth review of related concepts, evidence of possessing knowledge about topic without missing key information; increased self-awareness included
fit for you at this point. (15 points)	multiple sources; did not address fit; not representative of graduate level work (0-11.9 points)	reflected as to personal fit; representative of graduate level work (12-13.4 points)	in personal fit; representative of graduate level work (13.5-15 points)



APA Format Reference Page (5 points)	Did not follow APA format in cover page, body of the paper and the reference page. Did not use four original sources for each theory selected. Sources are not related to the topic of paper (0-3.9 points)	APA format was followed with one or two minor errors. Mostly original sources were used. Sources are related to the selected theories (4-4.4 points)	APA format was followed with no errors on cover page, in body of the paper or reference page. All four original sources were used (4.5-5 points)

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Assignment/Assessment	Point Value
Threaded Discussions (10 points each)	30
Theory/Chapter Reviews (4 points each)	40
Comparison Research Paper	30
Total	100

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Communication with your professors is key to your professional growth. I am here to support and guide you along your academic journey. With that being said, I cannot help you if you do not communicate with me. Please reach out if you have any concerns or questions. Because I teach in different locations, email is the best way to reach me. I strive to answer all emails within 24 hours, Monday-Friday. When emailing, please use your university email. Also, I will be more than happy to meet with you if needed. Please reach out to me so we can set up a convenient time to get together via Zoom.



TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection 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, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>



System Maintenance

Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

University-Specific Procedures

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, [click here](#).

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

Students with Disabilities - ADA Statement

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

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>



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Nondiscrimination Notice

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.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M- Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Week 1: Aug 25-31	Course Overview/Syllabus Introductions/Wellness Check-in	Corey Ch. 1	Discussion Post
Week 2: Sept 1-7	The Counselor: Person and Professional	Corey Ch. 2	Discussion Post
Week 3: Sept 8-14	ACA Code of Ethics	Corey Ch. 3 ACA website: www.counseling.org	Discussion Post



Week 4: Sept 15-21	Psychoanalytic Therapy	Corey Ch. 4	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 5: Sept 22-28	Adlerian Therapy	Corey Ch. 5	Theory/Chapter Review

Week 6: Sept 29 - Oct 5	Existential Therapy	Corey Ch. 6	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 7: Oct 6-12	Person-Centered Therapy	Corey Ch. 7	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 8: Oct 13-19	Gestalt Therapy	Corey Ch. 8	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 9: Oct 20-26	Behavior Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy	Corey Ch. 9	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 10: Oct 27-Nov 2	Reality Therapy	Corey Ch. 11	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 11: Nov 3-9	Feminist Therapy	Corey Ch. 12	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 12: Nov 10-16	Postmodern Approaches	Corey Ch. 13	Theory/Chapter Review
Week 13: Nov 17-23	Family Systems Therapy	Corey Ch. 14	Theory/Chapter Review



Week 14: Nov 24-30	Thanksgiving Break		Thanksgiving Break
Week 15: Dec 1-7	Comparison Research Paper		Comparison Research Paper
Week 16: Dec 8-14	Summary of Learnings		Discussion Post

Appendix A: THEORY REVIEW AND COMPARISON PAPER WRITE-UP

Points to cover in the theory review write-ups (the following points need to be included as a minimum in your weekly theory reviews *and* in your final comparison paper).

1. Founder(s) of the theory.
2. Nature of the person including innate capacities and/or capabilities, if any, and motivational constructs according to the theory.
3. Nature of maladjustment (how do people develop mental illness?) according to the theory.
4. Goals of counseling therapy according to the theory.
5. Role and activity of the counselor, including:
 - a. major techniques used in the therapy
 - b. diagnosis and appraisal devices (if applicable)
 - c. evaluation of client progress in therapy
6. Is this a theory you would want to utilize as a future clinician based on what we have discussed and what you have reviewed so far? How might this approach resonate with you for personal fit in working with your future clients?

Additionally, for the final comparison paper: Reflect from the theories presented this semester, select two, include the above and also describe how at the end of the semester and review of theories presented, the one(s) you selected fit best at this time for you personally.



Appendix B: THEORY REVIEW AND COMPARISON PAPER WRITE-UP

Section I: Your Personal Worldview

1. **What do you believe about human nature?** Are people basically good or bad? How much free will do people have? What kinds of inherent capacities do people possess? These are a few questions that address the inherent nature people have at birth. What do you believe?
2. **How do people become maladjusted?** Why do they develop problems? How does it happen?
3. **How do people change?** What needs to happen for change to occur?

Section II: Comparison of Two Theories

Choose two theories of most interest to you from the list of theories studied during this class.

Using your textbook and 4 original sources for each theory, write a compare/contrast paper. Topics to compare and contrast should include the following:

1. Founder(s) of the theory.
2. Nature of the person including innate capacities and/or capabilities, if any, and motivational constructs according to the theory.
3. Nature of maladjustment (how do people develop problems/mental illness) according to the theory.
4. Goals of counseling therapy according to the theory.
5. Role and activity of the counselor, including:
 - a. major techniques used in the therapy
 - b. diagnosis and appraisal devices
 - c. evaluation of client progress in therapy
6. Is this a theory you would want to utilize as a future clinician based on what we have discussed and what you have reviewed so far? How might this approach resonate with you for personal fit in working with your future clients?

Section III: Closure

Either as the closure for the paper or throughout the comparison, discuss how the theories and their parts align with your own personal views.

Research paper must follow American Psychological Association (APA) guidelines and should not exceed 12 pages (including cover and reference page; no abstract is necessary). You will be graded according to APA style, writing and organization, content, and references. Original source is defined as a journal article or book authored or co-authored by a major contributor of that particular theory. This research paper needs to be submitted to the appropriate drop box in D2L by midnight on the due date in order to receive credit. This paper must be submitted in Microsoft Word format.