



SWK 597, Suicidology: Practice Principles & Treatment

COURSE SYLLABUS: SUMMER 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: **Dawn Nelson, LCSW-S, ACSW, SAP, CART**
Office Location: **Dallas Campus**
Office Hours: **Wednesdays & Thursdays 8:00-11:00 a.m. and by appointment**
Office Phone: **972-989-2799**
Office Fax: **903-468-3227**
University Email Address: **dawn.nelson@tamuc.edu**
Preferred Form of Communication: **email**
Communication Response Time: **2 business days**

COURSE INFORMATION

MATERIALS – TEXTBOOKS, READINGS, SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

Textbook(s) Required

American Psychological Association. (2019). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.).
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Software Required

- D2L (in MyLeo)
- Microsoft Office Access at: [Student Instructions to Sign Up Free for Microsoft Office](#)

Optional Texts and/or Materials

All MSW students must purchase the following study materials to prepare for the Graduate Comprehensive Exam they will take in their final semester. You must pass the exam to receive your degree. It is never too early to begin studying for the exam.

[Comprehensive Study Guide](#) (Masters, Clinical, Adv. Generalist) Version 9.0. Social Work Examination Services. To purchase access:
<https://swes.net/all-products/#:~:text=Masters%2C%20Clinical%2C%20Adv.%20Generalist>

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is (1) to provide a knowledge base for enhancing social workers' understanding of suicide and (2) to expand social workers' ability to assess, diagnose, and treat at-risk populations across diverse settings. Community prevention efforts will also be highlighted.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) requires a competency-based approach to identify and assess what students demonstrate in practice. In social work, this approach involves assessing students; ability to demonstrate the competencies identified in the educational policy. Listed below are the competencies and associated knowledge, skills, values and cognitive and affective processes that comprise the expected outcomes for this course.

Competencies	Assessment/Assignment	Dimension
Competency 6: Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
A. Apply knowledge of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as interprofessional conceptual frameworks, to engage with clients and constituencies	At-risk Assignment & Prevention Project	Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive and Affective
B. Use empathy, reflection, and interpersonal skills to engage in culturally responsive practice with clients and constituencies	At-risk Assignment & Prevention Project	Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive and Affective
Competency 7: Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
A. Apply theories of human behavior and person-in-environment, as well as other Culturally responsive and interprofessional Conceptual frameworks, when assessing clients and constituencies in both urban and rural settings and at the intersection of both.	At-risk Assignment & Prevention Project and Exams	Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive and Affective

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Demonstrate respect for client self-determination during the assessment process by collaborating with clients and constituencies in developing a mutually agreed-upon plan reflective of their environment whether rural, urban, or at the intersection of both.	At-risk Assignment & Prevention Project and Exams	Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive and Affective
Competency 8: Intervene with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities		
Engage with clients and constituencies to critically choose and implement culturally responsive, evidence-informed interventions to achieve client and constituency goals in both urban and rural settings and at the intersection of the two.	At-risk Assignment & Prevention Project and Exams	Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive and Affective
Incorporate culturally responsive methods to negotiate, mediate, and advocate with and on behalf of clients and constituencies in urban and rural settings.	At-risk Assignment & Prevention Project and Exams	Knowledge, Skills, and Cognitive and Affective

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

In this course, you will utilize the Learning Management Systems (LMS) D2L for instructional and learning opportunities, submitting assignments, participating in online synchronous and asynchronous discussions, accessing resources, and completing quizzes/tests. Additionally, you will need the knowledge and skills to use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook Email. If you have any issues with using the various systems or software, you must contact support services and notify the instructor of the technical issue.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

This course will be delivered via synchronous and asynchronous sessions via D2L. It will consist of pre-recorded lectures, group engagement activities, and various assignments, including experiential learning and practical application of the content areas. In addition, small lectures, discussion activities, and workshops may provide instruction during this course.

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STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES OR TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE COURSE

As a student in this course, you are responsible for engaging in active learning and reaching out to the instructor if problems or challenges interfere with optimal learning. Communication is vital when engaged in a fully online, virtual environment.

Expectations for success include:

1. Always demonstrate professional behavior, including respect for the instructor and peers; being open to feedback and guidance throughout this class and the program.
2. Adhered to the School of Social Work and University student code of conduct and NASW Code of Ethics.
3. Begin reading the assigned text and supplemental readings as soon as possible, focusing on completing all readings prior to engagement with the instructor or peers.
4. Prepare to engage in live class sessions, discussions, and other activities so you can be a contributor as well as a receiver of knowledge and skills.
5. Actively participate in engagement activities, including live virtual class sessions, online discussions, and interactive learning opportunities -as this is vital for learning and success in both this course and the program.
6. Work ahead when possible. Completing assignments ahead of the due date so you are prepared to submit on the due date.
7. Sign in to the D2L course shell multiple times weekly to access updated announcements or posted resources.
8. Check your university email daily. This is the university, department, and Instructor's official method of communication.
9. Be open and focused on the "process" and not the "product," as earning this degree requires time, effort, work, growth in knowledge, skills, and abilities, along with personal and professional attributes.

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

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 451- 500 Points

B = 401- 450 Points

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C = 351- 400 Points

D = 301- 350 Points

F = 300 & > Points

Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Assignments 50%

Pre-test Exam 10%

Final Exam 40%

TOTAL 100%

ASSESSMENTS

Assessments

Assessments	Value
At-risk Assessment	125 pts
Prevention Project	125 pts
Pre-test Exam	25 pts
Final Exam	225 pts
Total	500 pts

SEE RUBRIC

1. **Appendix A At-Risk Assessment**

- Read the case study.
- List risk factors for self-harm and suicide
- Use the ACES test to analyze some of the risks.
- Create a suicide risk assessment for the person in the case study.
- Create three treatment goals.

2. **Appendix B Prevention Project**

- Use your community for your project.
- Interview three lay people about what they believe are the most important issues related to self-harm and suicide risk in the community.
- Interview three professionals who interact with suicidal people about what they believe are the most important issues related to self-harm and suicide risk in the community.
- Based upon what you learn, create an idea for a prevention program.
- Find and quote two scholarly articles that support your idea for a prevention program.

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- Describe and outline your prevention program....what population, how long or ongoing, resource needs, how will you let people know about it, etc.

1. Pre-test

This is a completion grade. It is simply to see what you know about suicidology at the beginning of the course.

2. Final exam

Exam is open book and open note.

Course Outline/Calendar

Schedule - Week of	Readings(s) (All readings are found in the online library)	Assignments/Activities
Week 1 – 6/1	Download & Review Syllabus See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	Review Syllabus PRE-TEST EXAM
Week 2 -- 6/8	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	
Week 3 – 6/15	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	
Week 4 – 6/22	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	AT-RISK ASSIGNMENT DUE
Week 5 – 6/29	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	
Week 6 – 7/6	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	
Week 7 – 7/13	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	
Week 8 – 7/20	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	PREVENTION PROJECT DUE
Week 9 – 7/27	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	
Week 10 – 8/02	See D2L Content/Week for assigned readings and lecture	FINAL EXAM

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

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

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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

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

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@etamu.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.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

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>

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID AND PASSWORD

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@etamu.edu.

TECHNOLOGY-RELATED ISSUES

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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS NEEDED

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS) – D2L

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

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

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 on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

INTERACTION WITH INSTRUCTOR STATEMENT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EMAILS WITH INSTRUCTOR:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
 - Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
 - Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
 - Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)
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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

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 online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU ATTENDANCE

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

East Texas A&M University 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).

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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

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

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

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

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

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

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 ETAMU 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.

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

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EAST TEXAS A&M SUPPORTS STUDENTS' MENTAL HEALTH – COUNSELING SERVICES

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code or go to https://studentsupport.telushealth.com/us/about#download_app to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



DEPARTMENT AND ACCREDITING AGENCY STATEMENT:

School of Social Work Mission Statement:

The School of Social Work at East Texas A&M University educates professional advanced practitioners to lead, innovate and transform.

Appendix A Grading Rubric: At-Risk Assessment

Criteria	Level 4 112.5 Points	Level 3 100 points	Level 2 87.5 points	Level 1 75 points	Criterion Score
Criterion 1 Risk Factors	All risk factors are identified	Missing 1 risk factor	Missing 2 risk factors	Missing more than 2 risk factors	/15

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Criterion 2 Assessment	Strong assessment for symptoms	Missing 1-2 parts of assessment	Assessment is inadequate	Assessment is missing	/50
Criterion 3 Treatment Goals	Strong, well-planned treatment goals	Adequate treatment goals but needs more details	Treatment goals are missing some items and/or details	Treatment goals are missing many details	/50
Criterion 4 Professional Writing	Professionally written with no grammar errors	Minor mistakes, but overall is professionally written	Professional writing needs improvement or proofreading	Lacks professionalism or major mistakes	/10

Appendix B Prevention Project

Criteria	Level 4 112.5 Points	Level 3 100 points	Level 2 87.5 points	Level 1 75 points	Criterion Score
Criterion 1 Interviews	3 layperson and 3 professional interviews completed	Missing one interview	Missing two interviews	Missing more than 2 interviews	/15
Criterion 2 Assessment and Idea	Strong assessment of community needs. Idea adequately meets the needs.	Missing 1-2 parts of assessment or idea is not complete	Assessment or idea is inadequate	Assessment or idea is missing	/25
Criterion 3 Prevention Program	Strong, well-planned program with two supporting scholarly articles	Adequate program with supporting articles but needs more details	Adequate program but supporting articles are inadequate or missing	Program is severely lacking and/or articles are missing	/75
Criterion 4 Professional Writing	Professionally written with no grammar errors	Minor mistakes, but overall is professionally written	Professional writing needs improvement or proofreading	Lacks professionalism or major mistakes	/10

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