



COUN 315: Philosophy of Helping Relationships
Course Syllabus, Fall 2026
(August 20 through December 11)

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

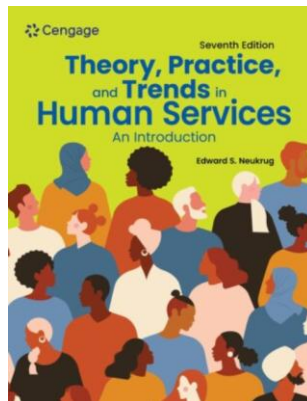
Instructor:	Rusty Fox, Ph.D.
Office Location:	Henderson 323C and Virtual by appointment
Office Hours:	Tuesdays and Thursdays from 130pm-3:30pm, and other dates by appointment virtually.
University Email Address:	Rusty.Fox@etamu.edu
Counseling Department Phone:	903.886.5637
Preferred Method of Communication:	email - Please <i>always</i> list course number in Subject Field. COUN 315
Communication Response Time:	24-36 hours, Monday-Friday; emails sent on Friday after 4:00pm Central Time will be answered the following workday

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required (Needed 1st day/week of class):

Neukrug, E. S. (2025) *Theory, practice, and trends in human services: An introduction*
7th Edition. Cengage.



The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalogue Description of the Course

COUN 315 - Phil of Helping Relationship

Hours: 3

Philosophy of the Helping Relationship. Three semester hours. (1, 2) This course is designed to create an understanding of helping relationships. Basic communication skills (such as active listening, responding, and interviewing skills) for building helping relationships are developed.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstration of understanding of key theory and concepts.
2. Evidence of ability to apply newly acquired skills.
3. Skillful and appropriate use of discipline-specific vocabulary.
4. Demonstration of professionalism, and understanding of ethics and legal components of this academic field.
5. Practice of college-level academic writing, and ability to integrate content learned of this professional field of study with general content knowledge of Human Services.



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

In addition to classroom work, in this class, you will utilize the Learning Management System (LMS) entitled D2L for Activities (portions of instructional and learning methods, submitting assignments, participating in online discussions, and completing quizzes). 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 in-class lecture and didactic learning methods, small group discussions, and assignments, coupled with experiential learning, practice/demonstration and practical application. Therefore active participation in lecture, discussion, activities, role-play, and workshops will be required to successfully pass 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 the active learning process. Expectations of this course include the following:

1. Come to class. And actively participate. During face-to-face classes, you are expected to actively participate in all activities and discussion. This is crucial to your learning, and central to your grade. It is NOT possible to pass this course, with multiple absences.
2. Understanding and being to apply that understanding is the goal of this course, a higher level of learning than memorizing and simply defining key terms.
3. Prepare for classes. Do a rough outline (10 minutes) of chapters first, and complete any and all readings prior to class time. Complete all assignments before their deadline.
4. Model professional behavior and adhere to the university student code of conduct.
5. All writing assignments must be done according to APA 7th edition.
6. Regularly check your university email. Check this daily as your instructors and others from the department and University may contact you.
7. Begin your readings ASAP. Sometimes it may take more than one attempt to understand and be able to apply the material.
8. Deadlines are the last possible moment something is due—not the first moment to start. Work ahead, every time it is possible.
9. Be open to the process. This degree takes time, work, effort, and growth. Some personal doubt and concern about progress and competence may be a necessary part of growth. Be CERTAIN to share thoughts and concerns with your instructor throughout the course.

Goals/Rationale of the Course for the Instructor

- Create an environment which models core components of the helping professions, and meaningful learning.
- Create an insight for you the student, to understand the inner workings of the counseling profession, and human services specifically, its history, development, and the role of the counselor in various settings.
- Develop an understanding of the relationship between counselors and other mental health professionals.
- Provide students with information to help them better determine how congruent the discipline of counseling and the major in Human Services is with their future academic and professional goals

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods

This course requires active attendance and participation. Lively discussion, interesting case studies, practical group discussions, real life application, and earnest exploration of content and informed opinions, are all part of the format for learning here. Outlining and reading the chapters before class discussions, as well as regular attendance, will be necessary and required. Please note: **Content, discussions, exams, and assignments missed cannot be made up, unless documented as a university-excused absence through the instructor.** Please be certain to read the university's policy regarding documentation required for excused absences. Again, attendance and participation, and completion of D2L Activities are required to pass this course.

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

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

Assignments	30%
Discussions	30%
Class Project	10%
Quiz 1	10%
Quiz 2	10%
Quiz 3 (Final)	10%
TOTAL	100%

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR (*Chapters subject to change, with notification*)

A DETAILED CALENDAR WITH SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENT DATES, WILL BE PRESENTED DURING FIRST WEEK OF CLASS.

Assignments and Discussions must contain two components to obtain full credit.

- The first being YOUR observations/understanding of the content,
 - and second, explained support and source of learning from the text which validates your opinion, and allows you to apply it to content.
- ✓ This means your answers may NOT be just a listing of facts or a verbatim definition. They **must** include your “understanding,” or rewording of the lists or definitions. **If you merely re-write the definition from the book as your answer, you will lose valuable points.**
- ✓ This also means, to show understanding you must be able to apply the content. You do this by **explaining and summarizing new learning from the text, and then support your opinion/thoughts through new content from that week’s chapters.** This will be essential to doing well in this class.

Class Activity Participation Rubric

Exceeds Expectations
(90-100 points)

Meets Expectations
(70 to 89 points)

Minimally Meets Expectations
(60 to 69 points)

Proactive participation: leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that **reflect in-depth study**, thought, and **analysis** of the topic under consideration. **Clear application of learning.** This does not mean dominating discussion or self-disclosure inappropriate to the circumstances. Full attendance in the class experience. No absence/no evident pattern of lateness.

Reactive participation: supportive, **follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value**, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or **reflect opinion/personal self-disclosure rather than study, contemplation, synthesis, and evaluation.** One absences/no evident pattern of lateness.

Passive participation: present, awake, alert, attentive, but **not actively involved or invested**; Or Uninvolved: absent, present but not attentive, sleeping, texting/surfing, **irrelevant contributions.**

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Below 60% is Failing to Meet Expectations

More than two absences/pattern of lateness evident.

**Reminder:* You must be in attendance, and meet the posted due dates in D2L in order to earn a passing grade in this course.

Attendance and Participation are Required

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 ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions, thoughts or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Rusty.Fox@etamu.edu Please know I am eager to brainstorm with you, consider solutions, and to meet with you to explore options.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT: The best way to communicate with me between classes is email. Please use "COUN 301" or "COUN (appropriate course number)" in the subject of your email. In the content portion of your email, be sure to include your first and last name and the best email and phone number to reach you (if necessary). I respond to my emails daily. 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 and location. Note my regular office hours posted above. Those are specifically designed for meetings with students.

NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS: We will follow university policy on attendance (links below). It will be essential that you are **present**, participating in classroom learning, and completing all assignments at the time they are due. Therefore, it is not really possible to turn in assignments late or make up for content/participation missed. Late assignments cannot be accepted. (If you have missed content, or assignment deadlines, you must either have prior approval of the instructor, or written documentation of an excused absence approved by the instructor, for any consideration or partial or optional credit). If you have any questions about missed work, it is your responsibility to obtain clarification from the instructor.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the university attendance policy, please visit the webpages below.

[Attendance:](https://inside.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx)
<https://inside.etamu.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

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>

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Class Projects for COUN 315

- ✓ Identify a group/class of individuals that need intervention/support
- ✓ Identify how YOU can make a difference, utilizing information you are learning in this class.
- ✓ Provide assurances of how you stay objective, avoid any trauma for those being helped, and stay within ethical guidelines with your proposal.

This project involves you **acting as consultants** to address a specific, identified need within a local community or non-profit agency. **Due: Tuesday, April 12th.**

Phase 1: Needs Assessment and Partnering

- **Identify a Need:** Imagine a team where you partner with a local non-profit, school, senior center, or public agency to identify a **specific, unmet need** or a gap in service delivery. Examples include:
 - *Lack of resources for single parents transitioning out of domestic violence shelters.*
 - *Need for mental health-focused programming for middle schoolers.*
 - *A non-profit struggling to recruit and retain volunteers.*
- **Research & Data Collection:** Students create a **mini-needs assessment**. This includes things like:
 - **Stakeholder Interviews:** Interviewing staff, current clients, and community leaders.
 - **Literature Review:** Researching evidence-based practices and existing programs that address the need.
 - **Resource Mapping:** Identifying existing community resources to avoid duplication and find partnership opportunities.

Phase 2: Program/Resource Design

- **The Creative Solution:** Based on their assessment, designs a **creative, practical, and low-cost solution** or resource. This could be a product like:
 - **Educational Workshop Series:** For the shelter residents (e.g., "Financial Literacy and Self-Advocacy").
 - **Digital Resource/App Prototype:** For the middle schoolers (e.g., a mental wellness check-in tool).
 - **Volunteer Onboarding/Retention System:** For the non-profit (e.g., a new training manual, a tiered recognition system, or a social media campaign)
- **Develop Materials:** Define all the necessary materials for their solution. Create an example of at least one part of those materials. If it's a workshop, then design the slides, handouts, and evaluation form. If it's a system, they create the written plan and sample documents (e.g., a volunteer handbook or social media graphics).

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Phase 3: Presentation and Reflection (presented only in D2L)

- **The "Pitch":** Each consultant “presents” their project in a video to D2L —the problem their research, and their proposed solution—to the course professor and an imaginary representative from the community partner agency (acting as the "client"). This helps students practice **professional presentation and advocacy skills**.
 - **Implementation Plan:** The team provides a detailed plan outlining **funding (if applicable), necessary personnel, and a measurable timeline** for the agency to potentially implement the solution.
 - **Final Reflection:** Each student completes an individual **reflective** essay (at least 3 pages) that ties their experiential learning back to human services theory, ethics, and professional boundaries learned in the classroom. This is where the academic rigor of the project is demonstrated.
- ✓ Contact me with any questions or feedback. Rusty.Fox@etamu.edu

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed Learning Management System (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

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 Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-Zoom-system-requirements-Windows-macOS-Linux>

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.

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Interaction with Instructor Statement
COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific 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 explained/reviewed in writing.**

University Specific Procedures

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](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

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>

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Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M are required to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. Improperly citing or failing to cite a quote or reference is academic dishonesty, and will result in disciplinary action up to and including failing the assignment, and in severe cases, failing the course. If you have questions about requirements or academic integrity, please, always contact your instructor first. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the procedures below: Do utilize our campus writing centers for support and instruction.

Generating papers or assignments from Artificial Intelligence (AI), and representing that work as your own, is **academic dishonesty**, and will result in a failing grade and disciplinary action up to and including failing this course. Be certain ALL of your assignments, discussions, and or paper are YOUR own work. East Texas A&M 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, incited, are not allowed, 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

Undergraduate Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form

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

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<https://inside.etamu.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

Graduate Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

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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 or have questions, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5930

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Website: <https://www.etamu.edu/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 East Texas A&M 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.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

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

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East Texas A&M University Supports Students' Mental Health

Counseling Center Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, 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.etamu.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 to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



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