

COUN 501
INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNSELING PROFESSION

Fall 2013

3 semester hours

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OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday 2:00pm to 4:20pm (CHEC)

Wednesday 5:30 to 7:10pm (CHEC)

Monday, Thursday, & Friday by appointment (Binnion)

COURSE MEETINGS

Tuesday, 4:30pm to 7:10pm – CHEC

CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF COURSE

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

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

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 and consultant characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes including verbal and nonverbal behaviors and personal characteristics, orientations, and skills;
2. Self-awareness so that the counselor-client relationship is therapeutic and the counselor maintains appropriate professional boundaries;
3. History and philosophy of the counseling profession, including significant factors and events;
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;

6. Integration of technological strategies and applications within counseling and consultation processes;
7. Professional organizations, primarily ACA, its divisions, branches, and affiliates, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current emphases;
8. Professional credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues;
9. Public and private policy processes, including the role of the professional counselor in advocating on behalf of the profession;
10. Advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients;
11. A general framework for understanding and practicing consultation, including an examination of the historical development of consultation;
12. Ethical standards of ACA and related entities, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.

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

- I. History and philosophy of the counseling profession
- II. Master's-level programs at A&M-Commerce
- III. Professional roles
 - A. Introduction to counselor roles common across settings including, but not limited to
 1. Counseling
 2. Assessment
 3. Consultation and its history
 4. Deferral
 5. Program evaluation
 - B. Educational settings
 - C. Non-educational settings
- IV. Relationships with other human service providers
- V. Technology and the counseling profession
- VI. Professional organizations for counselors
- VII. Professional credentialing
 - A. Certification (School Counselor Certification and NCC)
 - B. Licensure
 - C. Accreditation
- VIII. Public and private policy processes and advocacy on behalf of the profession
- IX. Ethical standards and legal considerations in the counseling profession

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Lecture, discussion, and experiential.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Attendance and active participation are a necessary and vital part of the course. Active participation includes attending each class session, completing reading assignments prior to class, and participating in class discussions. The student is expected to attend class regularly.

Absence from class and/or nonparticipation will result in grade reduction. Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time.

In order to earn full credit for attending, students must be present at both the beginning and ending of class meetings. For those weeks with online assignments, missing assignments (discussion board included) or turning in assignments late will result in an automatic 20% grade deduction per day late. With regards to the discussion board, **each student is expected to contribute to the online learning experience as if they were in class.** To participate in the discussion, take time to think about what you write and how it relates to the topic and the specific discussion. You are expected to make a minimum of three (3) entries per discussion. Please respond to the discussion question in your first entry and feedback to the comment(s) of your classmates. A guide for participating in online discussions will be provided on the first day of class. This guide is to be adhered to in order to maximize points earned for online participation.

More than two absences (or 5 class hours) will result in your final grade being reduced by 10 points. More than three absences will require you to repeat this course for credit. Being late to class or leaving class early will result in grade reduction. Participation includes the ability of the student to interact with the professor and peers in a professional and respectful manner.

Please note: email is the best and often the quickest method of communication. Monday through Friday I will normally respond to emails within 24hours. A response to emails sent on Friday after 5:00pm will be returned on the following Monday.

EMAIL GUIDELINES

In an attempt to provide a framework for professional communication, emails must contain the following:

- Subject Line: Course (e.g., COUN 501); additional information if desired (e.g., Study Guide – Chapter 1)
- Address the reader: Open with Dr. Wilson
- Adhere to writing mechanics rules; use correct punctuation, capitalization, spelling, and grammar
- If asking for assistance with an issue, please list **at least 3 things** you have done to try and remediate the issue prior to contacting me (these should probably include looking at the syllabus/course rubrics/eCollege, contacting a friend and checking your text, etc.).
- While I do expect an email or phone call when you will be missing class, please **do not** send me an email when you have missed class asking what you missed or what you need to do. Please take the initiative to read your syllabus and contact two peers to find out what occurred during class.
- Close with your name
- Please send emails from your University accounts. I will not discuss grades over email. If you would like to discuss your grade, please make an appointment during office hours.

AUDIO/VISUAL RECORDING OF CLASS CONTENT

Students who wish to tape record lectures or class content must request permission from the instructor prior to doing so. The nature of counseling courses is such that students may sometimes share personal information. Therefore, students must secure permission from the instructor prior to taping. If permission to tape is granted, students must cease taping when fellow students share personal or confidential information during class.

APA FORMATTED PAPER

The student will be required to develop a 5-page (the title page, abstract, and reference page are not included in the 5 required pages), APA formatted paper (with appropriate headers). In this paper, the student will describe a facet of the counseling profession. The subject may be an area that is currently well researched and practiced (i.e., working with clients dealing with substance abuse, working with grieving clients, etc.) or an area of the profession that is not as well researched or practiced (i.e., working with adult clients managing Asperger's Syndrome, working with clients dealing with traumatic brain injury, etc.). An APA template will be provided for you. It is recommended that you use APA resources to assist with formatting.

Resource: <http://www.psywww.com/resource/apacrib.htm>. This website is offered as a companion to the APA style manual. However, it should not be considered a substitute for directly consulting the APA manual, 6th edition for standard of procedures for applying APA style.

The paper must include:

- A title page
- An abstract
- An introduction of the issue (a rationale for why this issue is important)
- Difficulties in working with the issue
- Examples of how the issue may be managed, treated, or cured
- A conclusion
- A reference page (At least 8 references must be used in completing this paper. At least 5 of those references must be refereed journal articles. The remaining references may be subject related books or book chapters.)

The paper will be graded based on content, writing style, & APA format. A template and sample paper will be provided for students.

MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAMS

The student will complete two exams. These exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Both exams are worth 20 points.

INTERVIEW WITH A PROFESSIONAL

Students will interview in person (face-to-face) two mental health professionals about the role of professionals and changes and important issues within the field. (See attached Interview Schedule). The professionals must have received their training and education as counselors. Students are required to interview two professionals who work in different settings (i.e. school counselor and a counselor working in private practice). That means they must have a degree in counseling, or if they are in student affairs, a degree similar to that of counseling or in student affairs. If you have any doubt about the training of the individuals you plan to interview, please ask them about their training **PRIOR** to your interview or contact me to verify that they are appropriate for this assignment. Also, you may not interview a family member or close friend for this assignment. Any deviation from using an appropriate professional will result in a loss of 5 points for the assignment.

You are to write a reaction paper to the interviews, indicating issues that raised salience for you about the counseling profession, training, the role of the counselor, and current issues within the field. The paper should reflect your awareness of the profession and role as a counselor as

opposed to a summary of the interview. I cannot stress enough how important it is not to offer a summary of the interview but your REACTION to it. I am looking for your “inner dialogue” of the interviews. You may discuss the interviews but mostly in context of your reaction to the responses. A running account of what was said is not important though it is important to include the items in the Interview Schedule available in this syllabus. This paper should be 3-5 pages in length (no longer), and must be submitted in APA format (an abstract is not needed for this assignment).

You must obtain informed consent of the professionals you are interviewing and submit the signed forms with your assignment. Any papers submitted without the consent forms will receive a failing grade. A contract is included in the syllabus for your use.

PHILOSOPHY OF HELPING STATEMENT

You are expected to write a narrative statement about your ideas for how persons benefit from the helping process. For counselors and counselors in training this will serve as a vital part of your professional portfolio. As we address various ideas it is recommended that you record your thoughts and feelings regarding the beliefs of different perspectives. Your job is to keep the perspectives we review clear and distinct in your mind. When we cover material that is a good fit with your beliefs about how people are helped you should record it. I recommend having separate pages in your notebook for this purpose. As we conclude the semester you are asked to write a statement about how you personally approach helping others. This statement should be no longer than one page in length. It should be well written without spelling or grammatical errors. You will also be asked to share your beliefs with the class in a brief presentation with handouts.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION

Requirement	Point Value	Points Received	Due Date
Attendance & Participation	15		Attend and participate in all class meetings, supervision sessions, & complete all assigned readings
Interview with a Professional	10		
Midterm Evaluation	20		
APA Paper	15		
Philosophy of Helping Statement	10		
Final Exam	20		
Discussion Boards and/or Quizzes	10 (2 @ 5pts each)		
<u>Total</u>	100		

A = 100 – 90, B = 89 – 80, C = 79 – 70, D = 69 – 60, F = 60 – below

ASSUMPTIONS

I am operating on the “assumption” that you want to gain the most you can from the class and will therefore come to every class prepared to engage fully. I trust you will work to balance effectively your personal, academic, and professional commitment.

I assume the following:

- You will take responsibility for your own learning
- You will contribute to others' learning
- You will ask for help when you need it

You can assume the following:

- I care deeply about your success---personally, academically, and professionally
- I want you to gain the most possible from this experience
- I am committed to my role in this venture
- I want to hear your experiences, ideas, and feedback
- I will hold you accountable to high (and reasonable) academic standards

REQUIRED TEXT(S) AND/OR READING(S):

Gladding, S. T. (2013). *Counseling: A comprehensive profession* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. ISBN: 013265797X | ISBN-13: 9780132657976

**Additional assigned readings are integral to your understanding of this course. These handouts will be made available during the semester.

RECOMMENDED TEXT:

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

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

Competency 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.

ASSIGNMENT POLICY

Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due date designated in the syllabus.

Assignments that are not turned in **at the start of class** on the day of which they are due will receive an automatic deduction of 20% (per day) the assignment is late.

All assignments will be submitted via eCollege as a Microsoft Word document NOT a PDF and in a hard copy at the start of class. Emailed copies of assignments will not be accepted unless prior permission from the instructor is received.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

If you have a cell phone or any other type of electronic communication device with you, please disarm it before entering the classroom and keep it off for the duration of class.

In addition, neither texting nor phone calls are allowed in class. You will be asked to leave if you text or talk on your phone during class. Should you be asked to leave due to the above referenced reasons your attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

ACCOMMODATIONS 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

CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

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

UNIVERSITY CLOSING DUE TO WEATHER

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

TENTATIVE SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Note: Changes may have to be made. If so, they will be announced in class. You are responsible for knowing of any changes even if they are absent when changes are announced.

Class/Date	Topic of Discussion	Assignment
1/Aug 27	Introductions and Course Overview Master's Handbook Discussion of Paper & APA Style	Read: Master's Handbook
2/Sept 3	History and Trends in Counseling Personal and Professional Aspects of Counseling	Read: Ch 1 & 2
3/Sept 10	Ethical and Legal Aspects in Counseling	Read: Ch 3, ACA Code of Ethics, ASCA Code of Ethics
4/Sept 17	<u>Online Learning Week – No Class</u> Class Time to Conduct Interviews	eCollege assignment
5/Sept 24	Multiculturalism and Working with Diverse Populations	Read: Ch 4 & 5, Interview With a Professional
6/Oct 1	Psychoanalytic, Adlerian, and Humanistic Theories of Counseling & Exam Review	Read: Chapter 9
7/Oct 8	<u>MIDTERM EVALUATION</u>	
8/Oct 15	Behavioral, Cognitive, Systemic, Brief, and Crisis Theories of Counseling	Read: Chapter 10
9/Oct 22	Groups in Counseling & Consultation	Read: Ch 11 & 12
10/Oct 29	Evaluation and Research Testing, Assessment, and Diagnosis	Read: Ch 13 & 14, Paper Due
11/Nov 5	Professional School Counseling	Read: Ch 17
12/Nov 12	Clinical Mental Health and Private Practice	Read: Chapter 20
13/ Nov 19	<u>Online Learning Week – NO CLASS</u> Texas Counseling Association Professional Growth Conference	eCollege Assignment
14/ Nov 26	Exam Review	Philosophy of Helping Statement & Presentation
15/ Dec 3	<u>FINAL EVALUATION</u>	
16/Dec 10	Individual Conferences	

Contract with Professional

I am a graduate student in the Counseling Program at Texas A&M University – Commerce. As an assignment for the course COUN 501, Introduction to the Counseling Profession, in which I am enrolled, I am required to interview a professional counselor about his/her work. As such, I am requesting your permission to conduct an interview with you.

This interview will include questions about your position, the responsibilities you have, the clients you work with and the kinds of interventions you provide in your work setting. I will use this information to help me better understand the nature of the work in your agency, the roles of a professional counselor, how theory and skills are applied in a clinical/school setting and how you interact with the populations you serve.

In addition, this interview will be summarized into a written report. It will then be submitted to my instructor to fulfill the requirement of this assignment. The information you provide will not be used in any ways not stated in this contract.

Before beginning the interview, I will need you to sign this contract stating that you agree to this interview and understand how the information you provided will be used.

I agree to be interviewed.

Printed Name & Credentials: _____

Signature: _____

Educational Background: _____

Job Title: _____

Job Description: _____

Contact information: _____

Date: _____

Interviewer's (Student) Name: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Time of Starting Interview: _____

Time of Ending Interview: _____

Interview Information

Please include some of these questions in your paper:

1. How long has the person been a mental health professional?
2. Does the mental health professional have a specialization or clinical focus, if so, what is it?
3. What led him or her to choose a career in the mental health field?
4. What theory(ies) guide(s) the mental health professionals' practice?
5. What is his/her personal theory of how clients change?
6. What therapeutic techniques/counseling skills does he/she use with clients?
7. In what ways does the mental health professional utilize multicultural counseling competencies in his/her work?
8. How does the mental health professional see him/herself as an advocate in the counseling profession?
9. What does he/she see as current issues that the profession is facing?
10. What s/he likes most (and least) about their work?
11. How did his/her training best and least prepare them for the realities of being a mental health professional?
12. What advice would they offer you as a beginning counselor-in-training?
13. For the mental health professional that is not a counselor, how does his/her job differ from other the other mental health professionals you interviewed? How is it alike?

Please also include a discussion of the impressions you had of the office/environment in which you interviewed the professionals. What was it like? How would it feel to be a client?

The following questions are guides for your own reflection. Please include that reflection in your paper. Your reflections are to be the majority content for this paper

- What did you learn about the counseling profession from your interview?
- What thoughts and feelings do you have about your future career as a counselor?