

COUN 501: Introduction to the Counseling Profession Spring 2015

Instructor Contact Information

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For Students Needing Special Accommodations

Students requesting accommodations for disabilities initially should discuss such accommodations with the instructor. I can arrange for certain accommodations (e.g., extra testing time; quiet testing environment). Other accommodations (e.g., reader, scribe, interpreter, communication assistance) must be provided for through the Academic Support Committee. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources and Services, Halladay Student Services Building, Room 303D, (903) 886-5835.

Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedure A12.08.10

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Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)

Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedure A12.08.11

Course Descriptions

Catalog Description

501. Introduction to the Counseling Profession 3 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, and preparation standards for counselors; and essential interviewing and counseling skills, characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes are explored.

General Description

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 relationship. A grade of "B" or higher must be earned in this course and all other core courses (COUN 510, 528, and 516) before the student is allowed to continue with the degree program in counseling.

Course Content

- I. Introduction to helping skills (a primary emphasis of this course)
 - A. Essential interviewing and helping skills
 - B. Counselor and consultant characteristics and behaviors that influence the helping process
 - C. Importance of self-awareness in maintaining a therapeutic relationship and appropriate professional boundaries.
- II. History and philosophy of the counseling profession
- III. Master's-level programs at A&M-Commerce
- IV. 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
 6. Educational settings
 7. Non-educational settings
- V. Relationships with other human service providers
- VI. Technology and the counseling profession
- VII. Professional organizations for counselors
- VIII. Professional credentialing
 - A. Certification (School Counselor Certification and NCC)
 - B. Licensure
 - C. Accreditation
- IX. Public and private policy processes and advocacy on behalf of the profession
- X. Ethical standards and legal considerations in the counseling profession

Course Objectives

Students will demonstrate understanding of:

- essential interviewing and counseling skills so that the student is able to develop a therapeutic relationship;
- counselor and consultant characteristics and behaviors that influence helping processes including verbal and nonverbal behaviors and personal characteristics, orientations, and skills;
- self-awareness so that the counselor-client relationship is therapeutic and the counselor maintains appropriate professional boundaries;
- history and philosophy of the counseling profession, including significant factors and events;
- requirements for entry into, progress through, and completion of the Texas A&M University–Commerce counselor preparation program;
- professional roles, functions, and relationships with other human service providers;
- integration of technological strategies and applications within counseling and consultation processes;
- professional organizations, primarily ACA, its divisions, branches, and affiliates, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current emphases;
- professional credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues;
- public and private policy processes, including the role of the professional counselor in advocating on behalf of the profession;

- advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients;
- a general framework for understanding and practicing consultation, including an examination of the historical development of consultation;
- ethical standards of ACA and related entities, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling

Texts

Required

Gladding, S. L. (2014). *Counseling: A comprehensive profession* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

American Counseling Association (2014). 2014 ACA Code of Ethics. Alexandria, VA: Author.

Recommended

American Psychological Association (2012). *APA style guide to electronic references* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

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

Course Requirements

Prerequisites

Students are expected to be able to: 1) Navigate the World Wide Web using a web browser (e.g., Google Chrome, Explorer, Firefox, Opera) and a search engine (e.g., Google, Bing); 2) Communicate electronically via email; 3) Send attachments via email; and, 4) Use MS Word, including its “Track Changes” features.

Active Attendance – 25%

Students are expected to punctually attend class, be attentive, participate in course activities, and contribute intelligently to in-class discussions.

Tests/Quizzes – 75%

Three (3) tests will be administered, either in class paper-and-pencil, online, or take-home paper-and-pencil. Tests may include multiple choice items, short-response items, and/or essay items. Students are expected to work independently. Thus, you are permitted to utilize ANY RESOURCE at your disposal EXCEPT another individual, including non-students.

Grading

A	≥ 90	Defined as consistently excellent performance which distinguishes the individual as being hard-working and highly motivated to succeed
B	80 - 89	Defined as above average performance, occasionally submitting work of superior quality distinguishing the individual as being of high caliber
C	70 - 79	Defined as average performance with little or no distinction.
D	60 - 69	Defined as below average performance. Considered to be a failing grade for graduate students.
F	< 60	Defined as unacceptable performance in relation to standards.