
CON 5381 Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling Syllabus
Online Fall 2025

Counselor Education Program
Department of Counseling and Higher Education
School of Education, North Carolina Central University

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COUNSELOR EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT



The Counselor Education Program at North Carolina Central University prepares counselors to work with children and adults in a variety of settings. The primary focus of the program is to prepare professional counselors who can promote human growth and development in rural and urban settings. To this end, the program emphasizes increasing awareness, knowledge, and skills in interacting with economically, socially, and culturally diverse populations. The program makes an intentional effort to serve a diverse group of students (diverse across race, gender, age, and ethnicity). A major emphasis of the training is on clinical experiences in partnership with local agencies. These partnerships foster an understanding of multicultural and diverse populations and mastering counseling techniques that promote their empowerment in rural and urban settings. The program aims to develop professional counselors who are agency leaders and advocates for systemic change. Faculty is expected to teach, mentor, provide service to the community, present at local and national conferences and conduct program relevant research.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of the history of mental health counseling and current topics impacting the profession. The emerging identity of the clinical mental health counselor is explored in terms of theoretical influences, diverse roles and tasks of counselors within various community settings, and professional ethics. There will be an emphasis on multicultural and social justice perspectives shaping the field of clinical mental health counseling with regards to best practice, research, and program development. Attention is also focused on clinical mental health counselors' advocacy efforts, case management, and consultation in interdisciplinary environments.

II. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

This course will be delivered online and makes use of a variety of instructional methods, including but not limited to: recorded lectures, informational slides, class readings, discussion boards, multimedia

presentations. In Canvas, you will be able to access each week's learning materials asynchronously. **You are expected to complete all weekly tasks (e.g., weekly exercises, video lectures, discussion boards) by the conclusion of the week (Monday night at 11:59PM) that they are assigned. For example, Week 1 is due 8/25/24 at 11:59pm.** Each week's materials is treated as equal to an in-class experience. If you miss the access to the week, it is as if missing a class on campus. You will need to check with a classmate to see what was missed and the participation policy (described below) applies. If you are experiencing challenges, please let your instructor know, as there may be opportunities to submit assignments late.

If you have questions about your Canvas account, please call the IT department at 919-530-7676. Please note that if you are experiencing challenges or life stressors and are unable to complete a module on time, you are encouraged to contact your instructor to discuss possible and appropriate next steps to ensure you are able to get the information and benefit from the learning exercises in each module.

III. COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

The program develops counselors who:

- Develop a theoretically solid philosophy of practice.
- Apply knowledge, skills, and dispositions consistent with the ACA Code of Ethics.
- Formulate a professional identity that responds to the needs of their client populations.
- Utilize cultural competence in practice.
- Act with expertise in individual, group, and family counseling with diverse clients on personal, social, emotional, career, and educational issues that impact development across their lifespan.
- Develop leadership ability and advocate to meet client needs and to remove individual and systemic barriers to development.
- Build and sustain collaborative partnerships with stakeholders for promoting social justice, equity, and access.
- Utilize appropriate assessment tools and procedures.
- Consult with others concerning the developmental needs of culturally diverse clients.
- Integrate research data into evidence-based practice.

Additionally, students are expected to 1) demonstrate effective leadership skills; 2) actively engage in class activities and contribute positively to group interactions, 3) demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills, and 4) interact with faculty, staff, and others in a way that demonstrates inclusivity, ethical awareness, and cultural awareness while promoting well-being, healthy relationships, academic success, and career mastery as a professional counselor.

Please review the NCCU Counseling Website: www.nccucounseling.com. You are responsible for all material included in the student handbook. You are expected to demonstrate dispositions that align with expectations of behavior for professional counselors.

| <p><i>Con 5381 Student Learning Outcomes</i> <i>The corresponding CACREP 2024 standards met in this class are listed here. At the completion of this course the candidate will be able to:</i></p> | <p><i>Method for Obtaining Outcome</i></p> | <p><i>Method for Evaluation of Outcome (Evidence)</i></p> |
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| <p>Understand the history, philosophy, and trends in clinical mental health counseling (CACREP Section 3.A.1.)</p> | <p>Lectures, readings</p> | <p>Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, discussion posts</p> |
| <p>Understand ethical and legal considerations specifically related to the practice of clinical mental health counseling, as well as legislation, government policy, and regulatory processes relevant to clinical mental health counseling (CACREP 3.A.10.; 3.E.6.; 5.C.3.)</p> | <p>Lectures, readings</p> | <p>Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, PDS, Counselor Interview</p> |
| <p>Understand the roles and functions of clinical mental health counselors in various practice settings and the importance of relationships between counselors and other professionals, including interdisciplinary treatment teams; mental health service delivery modalities and networks within the continuum of care (CACREP 3.A.2.,3; 5.C.2.)</p> | <p>Lectures, readings, interview and research for program proposal</p> | <p>Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, Counselor Interview, Program Proposal</p> |
| <p>Knows the professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling. (CACREP 3.A.6.,7.,8; 5.C.3.).</p> | <p>Lectures, readings, research for professional plan</p> | <p>Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, Professional Plan, and PDS</p> |
| <p>Knows techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues. (CACREP 5.C.5.)</p> | <p>Lectures, readings, and research for Power to the People</p> | <p>Power to the People: Mental Health Education and Care, Professional Plan, and PDS</p> |
| <p>Acquire awareness of third-party reimbursement and other practice and management issues in clinical mental health counseling (CACREP 5.C.9.)</p> | <p>Lectures, readings, online resources</p> | <p>Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, Professional Plan, discussion posts</p> |
| <p>Describe the principles of mental health, including prevention, intervention, consultation, education, and advocacy, as well as the operation of programs and networks that promote mental health in a multicultural society (CACREP 3.B.1.; 3.E.15.; 5.C.1.)</p> | <p>Lectures, readings discussions, conducting counselor interview</p> | <p>Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, Counselor Interview, discussion posts, Program Proposal</p> |

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| Promote optimal human development, wellness, and mental health through prevention, education, and advocacy activities. (CACREP 3.C.7.; 3.E.17.) | Lectures, class readings | Discussion posts, Professional Plan and PDS, Power to the People, Program Proposal |
| Know public policies on the local, state, and national levels that affect the quality and accessibility of mental health services (CACREP 3.B.6.). | Lectures, readings, discussions, research for professional plan | Reflection and knowledge gaining exercises, Program Proposal |

ASK STREAM STATEMENT (*note, this software is not yet available to students):

Task Stream is a way the School of Education and the Counselor Education program collects artifacts and evaluates student progress toward meeting educational requirements. Maintaining an electronic portfolio (i.e., “Task Stream”) is a REQUIREMENT for continued enrollment as a degree-seeking student in the School of Education at North Carolina Central University. You must maintain a Task Stream account while enrolled in school, and you will be required to upload a majority of your assignments to the system. The university will use the information to track data and verify that you have met competencies of your program of study - but more importantly - this system will serve as your own professional e-portfolio and file storage. You will receive notice if an assignment needs to be uploaded to Task Stream. Please note that some of the assignment names may be different than what appears in Task Stream. Task Stream has replaced Foliotek. Students will be notified when Task Stream becomes available. **AT THIS TIME, PLEASE SAVE ALL ASSIGNMENTS FROM THIS CLASS, AS THEY MAY BE NEEDED FOR YOUR PORTFOLIO WHEN IT IS IMPLEMENTED.**

VI. TEXTS AND OTHER RESOURCES*Required textbook*

Gerig, M.S. (2018). Foundations for clinical mental health counseling: An introduction to the profession. (3rd ed). Pearson.

Additional required readings and other learning materials will be made available on Canvas throughout the semester.

Online resources

<http://www.nccuCounseling.com>: Counselor Education at NCCU.

<http://www.apastyle.org/>: American Psychological Association APA Writing Style home page

<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog>: Writing experts comment on the APA writing style.

<http://www.counseling.org/>: American Counseling Association.

<http://www.amhca.org/> - American Mental Health Counselors Association.

<http://ncblcmhc.org>: North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (Information regarding licensure.)

https://www.csi-net.org/page/About_CSI: Chi Sigma Iota, Counseling Honor Society

VII. CANVAS

The syllabus, assignments, grading rubrics, readings, and all other materials related to the course can be found on Canvas. **Please ensure that you have complete access to the course on Canvas by the end of the first week of class.** If you have questions about your account, please contact the campus Helpdesk at <https://nccu.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1852/Portal/Home/> or contact the Eagle Technical Assistance Center (ETAC) at 919-530-7676. Not knowing how to use various functions of Canvas is not an acceptable reason for not completing assignments.

VIII. COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

Class attendance is expected of students at North Carolina Central University and represents a foundational component of the learning process in both traditional on-campus and online courses. Students should attend all sessions of courses for which they are registered for the entire scheduled period and are responsible for completing all class assignments. Instructors will keep attendance records in all classes.

Attendance Verification Policy:

Before Financial Aid is disbursed each semester, NCCU must confirm that each student has begun attendance in each course. Instructors must validate each student's attendance for each course.

Students who do not attend classes during the first two (2) weeks of class will be dropped due to non-attendance. Students must attend at least **one** day to confirm attendance in the course. Students who do not attend before the census date will be dropped. After the census date (the 10th day of class), any student who misses the equivalent of two (2) weeks of class meetings or 13.3% of total instructional time (as set forth below) prior to the determined drop date for the university (as noted in the Academic Calendar) will receive an automatic grade of WA (withdrawal due to lack of attendance) at the point of the withdrawal date. This will be the final grade for the grading period. This grade will automatically be entered by the faculty member teaching the course.

Two Weeks of Instruction equates to the following:

M/W/F Classes: 6 total absences

M/W or T/R Classes: 4 total absences

Classes that meet once a week: 2 total absences

*Special consideration must be granted if a student has accommodations as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act based on a documented disability or another documented need. Special consideration may be granted if a student is absent or late due to the student's participation in a University-sponsored program or event.

After the University's established withdrawal date, as noted in the Academic Calendar, a student will earn the letter grade commensurate with his/her/their course performance. The student's final grade will be based on the student's performance and participation, to include attendance as noted in the instructor's syllabus. A faculty member may incorporate points for class participation or online synchronous or asynchronous class participation (i.e., Canvas, WebEx, Zoom) as they deem appropriate based on the nature of the course content and delivery.

Recording Class Attendance

If a student misses three (3) consecutive class meetings and the faculty member deems advisable, the faculty member is required to enter that information into Navigate or any other academic system used to track student attendance, and to also report the information to the student's academic dean for appropriate follow-up.

Students who miss class to participate in university-sponsored activities can request documentation from the appropriate office (Athletics, Honors, etc.) to note that they have an excused absence for the missed class time. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to inform the faculty member of such activities at least one (1) week before the authorized absence, and to make up all work as determined by the faculty member.

This class is an asynchronous class and logging into Canvas and completing the work for each week is how students “attend” an online class. In all interactions on Canvas, students are evaluated on their engagement and dispositions. Students are expected to demonstrate attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions consistent with behaviors expected of professional counselors.

Dispositions and Participation in Class (at least 10% of Student grade)

As a part of your attendance and participation evaluation, students are encouraged to practice professional behaviors. This practice of professional behaviors includes the following:

- 1) Demonstration of attitudes, behaviors, and dispositions consistent with appropriate responses to critical feedback from the instructor, appropriate interactions and relationships with other students, and adherence to the ACA Code of Ethics.
- 2) Demonstration of dispositions consistent with an inclusive, multicultural, and ethical counseling role in promoting well-being, healthy relationships, academic success, and career mastery.
- 3) Demonstration of effective leadership skills.
- 4) Active engagement in class activities and participate as a group member.
- 5) Contributions to class discussion displaying critical and creative thinking skills

As your instructor, I do not foresee there being any concerns about professional behaviors; each of you have demonstrated these behaviors, as evidenced by acceptance into the program. If there is a reason for me to have any concern about a student’s dispositions and there is a potential for the student to receive a less than ideal evaluation in this area, I will be in contact with that student immediately to address the concern.

**See the most recent version of the ACA code of ethics and the NCCU Counseling Student Handbook for more on Expected Student Dispositions and Behaviors (excerpted below).

Counselor-in-Training Disposition and Behaviors

Counselor professional values provide a conceptual basis for ethical principles. These principles are the foundation for ethical behavior and decision making of counselors and counselors-in-training. The fundamental principles of professional ethical behavior are

- **autonomy**, or fostering the right to control the direction of one’s life.
- **nonmaleficence**, or avoiding actions that cause harm.
- **beneficence**, or working for the good of the individual and society by promoting mental health and well-being.

- **justice**, or treating individuals equitably and fostering fairness and equality.
- **fidelity**, or honoring commitments and keeping promises, including fulfilling one's responsibilities of trust in professional relationships.
- **veracity** or dealing truthfully with individuals with whom counselors come into professional contact.

Students are encouraged to reach out to the instructor with any concerns and to inform her of any potential issues in regards to attendance/participation. Additionally, students who miss class to participate in university-authorized activities are given excused absences for the missed class time. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of such activities at least a week before the authorized absence, and to make up all work as determined by the instructor.

Assignments

- All assignments must be completed and turned in on time. Assignments must be turned in via Canvas by 11:59 PM on the day that they are due (unless otherwise specified). Late assignments are subject to grade penalties. Students are encouraged to communicate with their instructor ahead of the due date to ask for an extension to avoid point reductions. If no contact is made with the instructor to discuss an extension, five points will be deducted for each day the assignment is late. For example, if 15 points are possible for an assignment, only 10 are possible for an assignment turned in one day late, 5 points are possible for an assignment turned in two days late, etc. You are encouraged to get in touch with your instructor ahead of the due date if you are experiencing difficulties with getting an assignment completed on time. **If you do turn in an assignment late, please email the instructor and let her know.**
- **All written assignments are to be typed in Times New Roman, 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1" margins and a cover page. All sources used must be referenced in APA 7 style. Cover pages and reference pages are not counted toward the required page length. An APA style guide is available on Canvas. *Note: An abstract is not needed for course papers and section headings will be determined by how you organize your paper rather than following a typical research article format). ***

Emails

I will do my best to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on the weekends. Emails with questions about assignments due that week should be sent to me at least 48 hours prior to the due date.

Class Norms

- I will engage in good faith with you and would appreciate the same courtesy for how you engage with me. If you have questions or concerns, I am always happy to address them and discuss further as long as we engage in a tone and manner of mutual respect.
- Students are expected to assist in creating and maintaining an environment that is conducive to learning. All members of the learning community will demonstrate such respect by refraining from distracting, discourteous, or harmful behavior.

- Students are expected to practice classroom confidentiality: in other words, whatever is discussed in the classroom is expected to remain in the classroom, or in our case, the virtual classroom. Failure to practice classroom confidentiality may result in grade deductions.
- **Disrespecting another's racial, religious, gender, sexual, or other identity will not be tolerated. Engage in bad faith, i.e., attaching another student's point of view will not be tolerated.**

Academic Honesty Policy

North Carolina Central University views academic honesty as a critical value protecting the transmission of knowledge. Academic dishonesty is a serious violation and includes providing/receiving unauthorized assistance with papers, projects, and exams; presenting, as one's own, another's words/ideas without acknowledgement; presenting the same papers/projects for credit in two classes without explicit professor permission; and using undocumented internet information. Academic dishonesty will result in a grade of "F" in the course.

Students are not permitted to generate writing of papers or intellectual property from AI programs such as ChatGPT and are required to write their own material. Please do not use AI to generate content that you submit for this class, as you are expected to submit your own work for this and all of your graduate school classes.

Statement of Inclusion/Non-Discrimination

North Carolina Central University is committed to the principles of affirmative action and non-discrimination. The University welcomes diversity in its student body, its staff, its faculty, and its administration. The University admits, hires, evaluates, promotes, and rewards on the basis of the needs and relevant performance criteria without regard to race, color, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran's status, or religion. It actively promotes diversity and respectfulness of each individual.

Student Accessibility Services

Students in need of support for personal conditions (i.e. neurodiversity, psychosocial & physical diagnosis, and/or medical conditions) can request reasonable accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act through the Office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in Suite 120 in the Student Services Building. Students who are new to SAS or who are requesting new accommodations should contact SAS at (919) 530-6325 or sas@ncu.edu to discuss available programs and services. Students who are already registered with SAS and who would like to maintain their accommodations must renew previously granted accommodations by logging into the Eagle Accommodate Student Portal here: <https://ncu-accommodate.symlicity.com> Students can also find the Eagle Accommodate System in the MyEOL portal.

Students are expected to renew previously granted accommodations prior to the beginning of each semester (Fall, Spring & Summer sessions). Reasonable accommodations may be requested at any time during the semester for all students; however, accommodations are not retroactive. Returning semester requests for returning students are expected to be done within the first two weeks of the semester. Students are advised to contact their professors to discuss the testing and academic accommodations that they anticipate needing for each class.

Students who are pregnant or have pregnancy-related conditions who would like to request reasonable accommodations and services must register with SAS.

Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

All forms of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking offenses, are prohibited under NCCU's Sexual Harassment Policy (NCCU POL 01.04.4). NCCU faculty and instructors are considered to be mandatory reporters and are required to promptly report information regarding sexual harassment to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The Sexual Harassment Policy can be accessed through NCCU's Policies, Regulations and Rules website at www.nccu.edu/policies. Any individual may report a violation of the Sexual Harassment Policy (including a third-party or anonymous report) by contacting the Title IX Coordinator at (919) 530-7944 or TitleIX@nccu.edu, or submitting the online form through the Title IX Reporting Form, located at www.nccu.edu/titleix.

Other Campus Programs, Services, Activities, and Resources to Support NCCU Students:

- Student Advocacy Coordinator. The Student Advocacy Coordinator is available to assist students in navigating unexpected life events that impact their academic progression (e.g., homelessness, food insecurity, personal hardship) and guide them to the appropriate University or community resources. Contact Information: Student Services Building, Room G19, (919) 530-7492, studentadvocacy@nccu.edu.
- Counseling Center. The NCCU Counseling Center is staffed by licensed mental health professionals who provide individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, substance abuse prevention and intervention, anger management, and other services. The Counseling Center also provides confidential resources for students reporting a violation of NCCU's Sexual Misconduct Policy. Contact Information: Student Health Building, 2nd Floor, (919) 530-7646, counseling@nccu.edu.
- University Police Department. The University Police Department ensures that students, faculty and staff have a safe and secure environment in which they can live, learn, and work. The Department provides a full range of police services, including investigating all crimes committed in and around its jurisdiction, making arrests, providing crime prevention/community programs, enforcing parking regulations and traffic laws, and maintaining crowd control for campus special events. Contact Information: 2010 Fayetteville Street, (919) 530-6106, nccupdinfo@nccu.edu.

To create and preserve a classroom atmosphere, whether in-person or online, that optimizes teaching and learning, all participants share a responsibility in creating a civil and non-disruptive forum. At all times, students are expected to continuously conduct themselves in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning. Your responsibilities as a member of the North Carolina Central University community are outlined in the NCCU Student Code of Conduct (Code). The Code outlines disciplinary procedures, behaviors that are subject to disciplinary action, hearing procedures and the consequences that result from violating the Code.

Any action by a student that interferes with the education of another student or interferes with the operations of the University in carrying out its responsibility to provide a safe and conducive educational environment will be considered a violation of the NCCU Student Code of Conduct.

VII. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

A. Participation, Dispositions, and Preparedness (70 points)

Each weekly module will open on Tuesdays at 12am and will close the following Monday at 11:59PM. Participation in class will include reading and viewing all learning materials in the weekly content module on Canvas for that week. In addition to reading and reviewing the learning materials, students are asked to participate in the discussion forum each week by replying to the prompt posted by the instructor. Each discussion post is worth 4 points. Full credit for the discussion post includes demonstrating that you have engaged with the readings and learning materials for the week and responding to at least two classmates' posts.

Responding to peers requires that students regularly read what others are writing in the virtual conversation. Please try to contribute to discussion boards earlier in the week so that you can have an active exchange with your classmates. All discussion posts and responses are due by Monday night at 11:59PM. 15 discussion boards x 4 points = 60 total.

You will receive up to 10 additional points for your overall participation and demonstration of dispositions (professional behaviors, see page 3 of the syllabus) based on instructor discretion.

The following parameters guide the instructor's grading of participation and dispositions.

- *Student always contributes to the in-class discussion and class activities in a timely manner. The following constitute participation: raising thoughtful questions, contributing to class discussion by building on other's ideas, communicating understanding of the readings, participating fully in activities. Student demonstrates counseling dispositions, as evidenced by behaviors and attitudes in the class. (10 points).*
- *Student provides minimal reflection or thoughtfulness in the discussions ways or has been inconsistent in responding to peers or has demonstrated some concerns in their dispositions in the class, but it working to improve on those disposition. (5 points).*
- *Student rarely or never contributes to the discussion in the aforementioned ways or has shown concerning behaviors or dispositional concerns throughout the semester. (0 points)*

B. Weekly Reflection and Knowledge Gaining Exercises (100 total points)

Gaining knowledge about mental health care systems is an important component of becoming a clinical mental health counselor. Just as important as gaining knowledge is the ability to be reflective about one's experiences as a counselor. Most weeks (**10 weeks**) throughout the semester you will be asked to complete an exercise that will be accessible from the module folder for that week. Each week, you will either be asked a reflection question about the week's reading or to seek the answer to a practical information question that is relevant to the week's reading. These practical questions include such tasks as finding out what emergency mental health services exist in your community and how to access them if needed; what materials are needed for an application for clinical mental health licensure in your state; and what mental health resources exist in your community for the uninsured. **Each week's exercise will be worth 10 points.**

C. On the Front Lines: Counselor Interview (85 points)

Reach out to a licensed clinical mental health counselor (LCMHC or an LCMHCA or LCMHCS in NC) to solicit an interview. The interview must be conducted with a licensed counselor and not a professional from a different discipline, as professional identity as a counselor is very important. You can interview a licensed counselor in another state.

The interview might run somewhere from 30 minutes to an hour. **You must ask at least 8 of the questions below (they are bolded) and can choose additional questions from the list.** You are welcome to add additional questions or respond with spontaneous follow-up questions. The important thing is that you have had a conversation with enough depth that you can reflect on the interviewee's experiences of being a mental health counselor. If you are having trouble finding an LCMHC to interview, please contact me.

You will create a 7-10 minute presentation (PowerPoint or other alternative formats) about what you learned in the interview and record yourself in a video presenting the presentation.

Be sure to include some description about who your interviewee is, where they work, and your experience of the video call as well. It is recommended that you send a thank you note or email to your interviewee following your interview as a courtesy for their time.

Questions to ask the counselor being interviewed (you must ask the bolded questions and you can choose from among the others to ask):

- 1. Which client populations do you generally see?**
- 2. What does being a licensed clinical mental health counselor mean to you and does professional identity play a role in your work?**
- 3. What is an ethical issue that you have encountered in your work as a counselor and how did you handle the issue?**
- 4. What does having a strengths-based perspective look like in practice?**
- 5. Which therapeutic frameworks and/or counseling theories are important to the counseling you provide?**
- 6. Can you talk about how you approach continuing education and additional clinical training in your work as a counselor?**
- 7. How do you see the impact of trauma in your work as a counselor?**
- 8. What advice would you like to share with a future clinical mental health counselor?**

9. What does a typical workday in your job look like?
10. What is the full range of services that are provided at your office?
11. How do you practice self-care and protect yourself against burnout?
12. Are there common referrals or additional services that you recommend for clients?
13. What other types of helping professionals do you interact with in your work as a clinical mental health counselor?
14. What does it mean to be developmental and wellness-oriented with the clients you see?
15. How do you practice multicultural and/or social justice counseling?
16. How has your education in counseling impacted your work?
17. Are you aware of any gaps in your training now that you are working as a counselor?
18. How is your work as a counselor different than what you expected it to be when you were in graduate school?
19. Are there any advocacy practices that you are involved in as a counselor?
20. In what ways do you or does your practice seek to decolonize counseling or make counseling more responsive to the communities you work with?

D. Professional Disclosure Statement (PDS) (75 points)

According to the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (NCBLCMHC), counselors in North Carolina are mandated to provide a Professional Disclosure Statement (PDS) to each client prior to beginning clinical mental health counseling services. The Board's requirement aligns with the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014) which requires counselors to "review in writing and verbally with clients the rights and responsibilities of both the counselor and the client" (A.2.a. Informed Consent). The goal of this requirement is to ensure that both parties (the client and the counselor) understand the nature of the relationship and the types of services that can be expected. The PDS is also a great way to share with your clients a little bit more about who you are, as a counselor.

Refer to the links in Canvas to access "PDS Instructions" and a "PDS Template" for you to model your own after. These are both located in Canvas under the Class Resources tab. If you are interested in pursuing licensure in a state other than NC, please refer to that state's board requirements for a PDS. There is also an example in the Gerig text on page 131-132, although it does not contain all of the components that the NC Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors requires.

Be sure that your final version lines up with what is required in the state you will pursue licensure! And please remember, this document is just your first draft of your PDS. You will add on to this document, editing and amending it, as you go on in the program and in your career. This is the foundation you are creating in this class.

***Please note that this assignment is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI), which means that you will need to score a B or better or will be asked to complete it again.**

E. Charting Your Course: Professional Plan (70 points)

Please complete a *detailed* outline, using section headers and bullet points with full sentences that provide sufficient context and explanation of your current plan for your career.

Please include the following five sections in your outline:

- (1) Description of your professional goals as they are right now.
- (2) The steps you will take to secure the licensure you will need to achieve those goals.
- (3) Any additional credentials (e.g., certifications or trainings) that will support your goals.
- (4) Any professional organizations you would like to join.
- (5) Information about pertinent advocacy issues (impacting the counseling profession, e.g., Gerig, p. 300-311, or a specific client population) in which you wish to involve yourself, as you pursue your professional goals.

To begin this assignment, you will need to consider what type of mental health professional you are hoping to be (e.g., clinical mental health counselor, addictions specialist, counselor educator), what you would like to specialize in (e.g., children, couples, families, geriatric populations; also, could be specific to conditions or presenting concerns such as trauma, eating disorders), and the necessary steps that you need to take from this point forward to reach that goal. This includes considering what you need to do during training in your preparation for this role (e.g., specific coursework, clinical experiences, number of credit hours), the licensure requirements for the state you will ultimately pursue licensure in, as well as different counseling organizations that you should consider being a member of and why (check out counseling.org and your particular state's counseling organization).

***Please note that this assignment is a Key Performance Indicator (KPI), which means that you will need to score a B or better or will be asked to complete it again.**

F. Power to the People: Mental Health Education and Care (Group project- 100 points)

With the rise of mental health content on social media (e.g., Mental Health Tik Tok), it is increasingly important to provide accurate and supportive information about mental health and wellness to communities. In general, across society, there is a significant lack of knowledge about mental health and what constitutes good care. Add to that stigma and a well-deserved mistrust (due to the history of exploitation of many communities by mental health providers) that keeps many individuals away from seeking professional care. For all of these reasons, we find that many individuals and families are not accessing services that they would otherwise like to receive. The profession of counseling involves advocacy that includes educating the community about the importance of wellness and mental health and the procedures to obtain such services when needed. Additionally, we as clinical mental health counselors need to know and use evidence-based therapeutic approaches for mental health conditions, so that we can provide our clients with the best possible care.

For this assignment, your goal is to work with your partner to develop an informational presentation that is understandable for a community audience and an audience of other mental health professionals. You are to select a specific mental health issue from a list below.

To receive full credit for this assignment, the following tasks will need to be completed. Please record a video of you and your partner presenting a PowerPoint (or similar program) presentation detailing the following information in 10-12 minutes max.

- (1) **Describe and provide education on the mental health issue.** Tell us about the mental health condition that you chose, including (a) what symptoms present with this condition; (b) what are the risk factors for this condition (e.g., family history of the condition, experience of trauma); (c) what, if any, are some of the co-occurring mental health conditions (or physical health conditions) that sometimes accompany it; (d) in what ways might this condition impact an individual's daily life (if untreated); (e) any other interesting or useful information you want us to know about this condition, including prevalence, history, or common misconceptions? Use at least 1 scholarly journal article to find this information.

- (2) **Identify *what* type of therapeutic approach or counseling theory works well for this condition** (for example, if you chose borderline personality disorder as your mental health issue, you could discuss the use of dialectical behavioral therapy (DBT) for this condition, as it is considered an evidence-based therapy for borderline personality disorder). Tell the audience about the approach that your group has chosen to highlight. If medication is one option for this condition, be sure to highlight a counseling or psychotherapy option as well. If a client goes for this kind of counseling, what might they expect to experience with the approach? What would you tell your friend if they were going to receive this kind of counseling? Use at least 2 additional scholarly journal articles to find this information.

- (3) **Find a practice or agency in your area that offers the type of counseling approach you highlight in your presentation.** Tell the audience (a) the name and contact information of the agency, (b) what insurances are accepted (and do they offer any counseling for folks without insurance), (c) is telehealth counseling an option at the practice, and (d) is there a waitlist to receive services? [You can search Google, Psychology Today, and other sites for this information. This is also good introductory work for those of you who are starting to think about sites where you may want to do

Practicum and Internship later in the program!]

(4) Share with the audience what kinds of support (peer, professional, community, or otherwise) exists for individuals dealing with this condition. Are there any support groups, or online communities, or services catering to individuals experiencing this condition? Think here about organizations like National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)- North Carolina to support individuals with mental illness; or Children and Adults with ADD/ADHD (CHADD). There are national groups, state groups, local communities for many needs. Get creative in finding supports to share with the audience.

List of mental health conditions from which to choose for this project:

- Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Acute Stress Disorder
- Anorexia Nervosa
- Binge Eating Disorder
- Bulimia Nervosa
- Schizophrenia
- Borderline Personality Disorder
- Postpartum Depression Disorder
- Major Depressive Disorder
- Persistent Depressive Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder (Bipolar I and II)
- Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Postpartum Anxiety Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Panic Disorder

G. Let's Build It!: Program Proposal and Presentation (120 total points)

Proposal (100 points)

Think of what your community does not have enough of and let's build it!

Identify a specific mental health service that you are interested in delivering. It could be preventative (e.g., sexual assault and dating violence prevention program, parenting skills training, stress-management workshop, workshop on healthy relationships) or could be focused on healing or assisting those experiencing a problem or mental illness (e.g., counseling services for adolescents with depression, support for caregivers of children with special needs or learning differences, grief counseling for children who have lost caregivers to Covid-19). You may want to continue developing your understanding of the mental health condition that you discussed in your Power to the People assignment (but not required). **This program should meet the needs of a specific client population and be accessible.**

For this assignment you will apply the model of mental health delivery systems (Gerig, p. 284) and

create a detailed proposal for your intended program. **You can work alone or in pairs for this project-your choice!** **This proposal will be a total of 5-7 pages. Include the following section headers:**

1. **Needs assessment** – First, build a case based on scholarly literature and any local/national news articles for a particular mental health service need. **Describe *why* it is important to provide this service.** Second, include your ideas about how to assess what these needs look like more specifically in your local community. As an example- if the service need is around grief counseling for children, address why this service is needed and how could you determine what specific gaps exist in your community and what support the children clients need in your community. To assess specific gaps, you might want to discuss how other services like this exist and how you would survey/what you would ask local people encountering this issue or people involved in supporting individuals belonging to this population. **This section of your proposal should be 1-2 pages in length.**
2. **Mission statement**– Craft a clear, concise vision for your program. **3 sentences or less!**
3. **Goals** – Detail the areas your program is attempting to show improvement (e.g., symptoms of depression, relationship satisfaction). Include a description of aspects of your program that would lead to this improvement. These can be **listed in an outline format. You should have at least 3 goals.**
4. **Program** – In a narrative format (i.e., not an outline) describe how your program would run. What are all of the various components and what is the timeline? How do counseling theories we have discussed in class influence decisions you made about your program? **This section of your proposal should be 2 pages in length.**
5. **Leaders and Funding** – Discuss in narrative format your qualifications/what you contribute to this program as well as the skills/certifications/training you could seek out to enhance your contribution. Identify one funding source or grant you could apply for to secure the financial resources you need to deliver the program. Additionally, what other professionals or community organizations you want to involve in the program? Why? **Minimum of 1 page.**
6. **Environmental supports** – Describe the kinds of equipment and space you will need to run the program. Where will it be held? Is it accessible? **Minimum ½ page.**
7. **Program evaluation** – How will you evaluate the success of your program? What will you want to ask participants about the quality? How will you measure your outcomes/goals? **Minimum ½ page.**

Presentation (20 points)

You will create a **narrated PowerPoint (or alternative format) presentation** using just a **single slide**. Your presentation of this slide should go as close to a **full 2 minutes** as possible- no more, no less. Hit the highlights of your proposal. Think of it as a quick “elevator pitch” for your program! This presentation will be shared on Canvas and viewable by your classmates. During the last week of the semester, you will view the compilation of presentations and vote on which proposal should get our ***imaginary* funding.**

H. Extra Credit Opportunities (20 points per extra credit option; these are optional)

- **Attend** the free, **virtual 2025 Suicide Prevention Summit**, organized by the American Counseling Association (ACA), Mental Health Academy, and other organizations **8/23/25 – 8/24/25**. Register here to attend: <https://www.mentalhealthacademy.net/suicideprevention/aca>. Following the event, write a 3-page reflection paper on (1) the sessions that you attended at the virtual summit and what you learned; (2) whether the information shared or discussions generated changed any assumptions or understandings you had about suicide prevention before you attended; (3) the emotions that came up for you, as you attended such an intense event. **Please be sure to practice extra self-care and seek out support during and after this event, as the topic of suicide is an emotional and upsetting topic for many of us.**
- **Read** *What Happened to You?: Conversations on Trauma, Resilience, and Healing* by Oprah Winfrey and Bruce Perry, MD, PhD (2021) and write a 3-page reflection paper on (1) your reactions to what you read and (2) the ways in which this conceptualization of how trauma impacts an individual and what healing can look like integrates into clinical mental health counseling work.
NC has worked with dedicated community volunteer leaders to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy, and support so people affected by mental illness can build better lives.

VIII. COURSE EVALUATION

| Assignment | Due Date | Points |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Participation and Dispositions | Ongoing | 70 (Discussion board (15) x 4= 60 points; 10 pts instructor evaluation of student's participation and dispositions at end of semester) |
| Weekly Reflection and Knowledge Gaining Exercises | Monday nights by 11:59PM | 100 (10 exercises, 10 points each) |
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| On the Front Lines: Counselor Interview | 9/22 by 11:59PM | 85 |

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|---|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Professional Disclosure Statement (PDS) | 9/29 by 11:59PM | 75 |
| Charting Your Course: Professional Plan | 10/20 by 11:59PM | 70 |
| Power to the People: Mental Health Education and Care | 11/10 by 11:59PM | 100 |
| Let's Build It!: Program Proposal & Presentation | 11/24 by 11:59PM | 120 |
| Extra Credit Opportunities | 12/8 by 11:59PM | 20 points each |
| Total | | 620 |

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|----------|---------|
| A | 558-620 |
| B | 496-557 |
| C | 434-495 |
| F | < 434 |

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

| Date | Focus | Readings due |
|--|--|---|
| Week 1 August 18-25 | Module 1 Introductions The role of the mental health counselor History of the field (CACREP 3. A. 1., 2.,3.,4.,5.) No weekly exercise | Gerig Ch. 1-2 Moorhead, Duncan, & Fernandez (2023) Kiselica & Robinson (2001) |
| Week 2 August 26- September 1 | Module 3 Foundations and overarching theories (CACREP 3. A. 1.; B. 1.; E. 1.) (CACREP 5. C. 5.) Weekly exercise in Canvas | Gerig Ch. 3 Gamby et al. (2021) Shallcross (2013) Erickson's Model |
| Week 3 September 2-8 | Module 4 Culturally responsive counseling (CACREP 3. B. 1., 10.) Weekly exercise in Canvas | Gerig Ch. 10 Ratts et al. (2016) Singh, Appling, & Trepal (2020) Optional: Babu (2017) |
| Week 4 Sept. 9-15 | Module 5 Overview of commonly used counseling theories (CACREP 3. E. 1., 7., 8.; 3. G. 14) (CACREP 5. C. 5) Weekly exercise in Canvas | Gerig Ch. 4 TED talk with Dr. Burke Harris ACEs Screening Tools Choose 1 video on theories Optional: Hoy et al. (2016), Fisher (2011) |
| Week 5 Sept.16-22 | Module 6 The road to becoming a mental health counselor (CACREP 3. A. 7) (CACREP 5. C. 3.) No weekly exercise in Canvas | Gerig Ch. 5 Materials in Canvas Assignment due 9/22 by 11:59PM: On the Front Lines: Counselor Interview |

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| <p>Week 6 September 23-29</p> | <p>Module 7 Ethical and legal considerations for the mental health counselor (CACREP 3. A. 10.; 3. E. 6.)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 6 Forester-Miller & Davis (2016) Morris, Linley, & Galupo (2020)</p> <p>Optional: <i>Thoughtful Counselor Podcast</i> ep. with Dr. Birrell</p> <p>Assignment due 9/29 by 11:59pm: Professional Disclosure Statement</p> |
| <p>Week 7 September 30-October 6</p> | <p>Module 8 What we do (CACREP 3. A. 2.; 5. C. 1., 4.)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 7 Bray (2021) <i>Be Antiracist</i> Podcast ep. w/Coakley Comprehensive Clinical Assessment</p> <p>Optional: 2 <i>Thoughtful Counselor Podcast</i> episodes</p> |
| <p>Week 8-9 October 7-20</p> <p>Deadlines are extended due to Fall Break (Oct. 13-14)</p> | <p>Module 9 Where we work (CACREP 3. A. 2.; 5. C. 2.)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 8 Draft NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services Strategic Plan for 2024–2029</p> <p>Choose 2 of selected podcasts in Canvas</p> <p>Assignment due 10/20 by 11:59pm: Charting Your Course: Professional Plan</p> |
| | | <p>During Week 9, extra time to complete Week 8 and enjoy some time off during the break!</p> |

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| <p>Week 10 October 21-27</p> | <p>Module 10 Assessments and research in counseling (CACREP 3. G. 1; 3. H. 1.; 5. C. 4.)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 9 Keith et al. (2023) West-Olatunji & Wolfgang (2017)</p> |
| <p>Week 11 October 28- November 3</p> | <p>Module 11 Realities of managed care and third-party reimbursement and Suicide prevention and assessment (CACREP 5. C. 9.) (CACREP 3. E. 19.; 3. G. 13)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 11</p> <p>CDC's suicide statistics</p> <p>Strengths-Based Suicide Assessment by Sommers-Flanagan (video on Canvas)</p> |
| <p>Week 12 November 4-10</p> | <p>Module 12 Lifecycle of community mental health programs (CACREP 3. A. 3b; H. 8.; 5. C. 2.)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> <p>Election Day is 11/4. Check out your municipal elections!</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 12</p> <p>Assignment due 11/10 by 11:59pm: Power to the People: Mental Health Education and Care</p> |
| <p>Week 13 November 11-17</p> | <p>Module 13 Future of Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CACREP 3. E. 10; 5. C. 7., 8.)</p> <p>Weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Gerig Ch. 13</p> <p><i>Thoughtful Counselor Podcast</i> episode on social justice advocacy in counseling</p> <p>Choose from a list of relevant podcast Episodes.</p> |

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| <p>Week 14 November 18-24</p> | <p>Module 14 Importance of self-care (CACREP 3. A. 11)</p> <p>No weekly exercise in Canvas</p> | <p>Bradley et al. (2013) Nelson et al. (2018)</p> <p>Optional: Tulshyan & Burey (2021)</p> <p>Assignment due 11/24 by 11:59pm: Let's Build It!: Program Proposal and Presentation</p> |
| <p>Week 15-16 November 25-December 8</p> | <p>Module 15 Program Development Presentations!</p> | <p>View classmates' Program Proposal Presentations and vote for your favorite.</p> <p>Extra Credit Assignment (OPTIONAL) due 12/8</p> <p>12/8 is the LAST DAY to submit for this class</p> |

**Schedule is tentative and subject to change*