COUN 6365 Syllabus

Practicum

Term: 2018 Fall
Meeting Times: Tuesdays 4:40 – 7:10 pm
Class Location: Music, Science & Learning Ctr 1.111

Instructor Name: Selma Yznaga, PhD
Telephone Number: 956-882-7855
Cell Phone Number: 956-533-5762
Email: selma.yznaga@utrgv.edu
Office Location: Main 2.200Q
Office Hours: By Appointment *

*Do not hesitate to send me an email or SMS text if we need to talk so we can agree on a convenient time for a phone call, connect session, or a meeting.

Textbook and/or Resource Material

Required Text:

Recommended Text:

Course Description and Prerequisites

Course Catalog Description
A study of selected counseling theories and supervised experience in individual counseling. Required client contact hours are completed at the URTGV Community Counseling Clinic. Cases assigned off campus in schools and community agencies will be considered for contact hours in addition to required hours. This course must be taken within last nine hours of program.

Service Learning Designation
This course has been identified by the UTRGV Center for Teaching Excellence and the Office of Engaged Scholarship and Learning as a “Service Learning” course, and as such, will have a designation on the graduate’s transcript. Service Learning is a thoughtfully organized service experience that addresses a need in the community in a reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationship, and integrates a reflective component that relates the service experience to academic course objectives and the student’s learning.

Prerequisites:
COUN 6301, 6310, 6311, 6313, 6314, 6327, 6328, 6340, 6345, 6364, 6368, EPSY 6304, and program approval.

Rationale
This course is designed to provide a supportive, structured learning environment for acquiring clinical experience and on-the-job training. The field experience is the time to build a framework of new professional counseling skills on a foundation of the material learned in the program courses, life experiences, and personal values. It is a time to develop and enhance professional competencies.

Course Topics
Course topics include but are not limited to counseling skills; record keeping; legal and ethical issues; collaboration techniques; suicide assessment and intervention; and designing, implementing, and evaluating courses/programs for clients/students.

This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.

Revised 08-21-18 SdY
Instructional Methods and Activities
Most didactic material in the course will be covered by traditional experiences, which include lecture, class discussion, demonstration, and experiential activities. Student self-exploration, self-disclosure, and collaboration with peers will be integral for this course.

This course includes delivery of instruction via Blackboard. Students can find support and tutorials for using the Blackboard platform at https://en-us.help.blackboard.com/User_Filter/Student/No_Mobile/Higher_Education

Field experience and other web-based tools will be utilized. For a full description of web tools used in this course, please review the Course Resources section of our Blackboard home page.

Teaching Philosophy
I have been an educator for over 30 years. In that time, I have continued my mission to teach and train all of my students to reach their potential in whichever endeavor they seek. It is my strong belief that students learn best in an environment that brings out the best in them. To this end, I value and respect your background, history and experience, and professional goals. These may differ from my own, and I look forward to learning as much from you as you will from me. I will never overtly or covertly humiliate you, threaten you, or scare you into learning. If you feel that I am not providing a safe, nurturing, and respectful learning space, I ask that you bring it to my attention to help me improve.

I am a professional counselor who believes that the clients that we serve deserve the very best. It is why we pursued CACREP accreditation and why our standards are high. I expect you to work hard to meet these expectations, and in addition to nurturing and mentoring you, I will also push you to do better. In return, I make the following pledges:

- I will always treat you with respect and dignity.
- I will listen to your concerns and do everything I can to help you resolve them.
- I will study the latest trends in professional counseling and ensure that you are aware of and up-to-date with the profession that you have chosen to join.
- I guarantee my honesty, integrity, and highest professional and personal ethics.

Student Learning Outcomes
Student learning outcomes are directly related to the standards for accreditation and certification, including those set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA).

CACREP Common Core Area Standards
This course is designed to meet CACREP 2016 Standards and enable students to demonstrate knowledge and application of the following:

Section 2: Professional Counseling Identity (SC and CMHC)

F. Common Core Areas
   1. Orientation and Ethics
      a. Professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues
      i. Ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling
      k. Strategies for personal and professional self-evaluation and implications for practice
      l. Self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role
      m. The role of counseling supervision in the profession
   5. Helping Relations
      d. Ethical and culturally relevant strategies for establishing and maintaining in-person and technology-assisted relationships
      f. Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process
g. Essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills
h. Developmentally relevant counseling treatment or intervention plans
i. Development of measurable outcomes for clients
j. Evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention
k. Strategies to promote client understanding of and access to a variety of community-based resources
l. Suicide prevention models and strategies
m. Processes for aiding students in developing a personal model of counseling

7. Assessment
c. Procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide
d. Procedures for identifying trauma and abuse and for reporting abuse
e. Use of assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes

8. Research and Program Evaluation
e. Evaluation of counseling interventions and programs

Section 5.C Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)

1. Foundations
c. Principles, models, and documentation formats of biopsychosocial case conceptualization and treatment planning

2. Contextual Dimensions
d. Diagnostic process, including differential diagnosis and the use of current diagnostic classification systems, including the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD)
k. Professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling
l. Legal and ethical considerations specific to clinical mental health counseling
m. Record keeping, third party reimbursement, and other practice and management issues in clinical mental health counseling

3. Practice
a. Intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management
b. Techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues

Section 5.G School Counseling (SC)

2. Contextual Dimensions
f. Professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of school counseling
n. Legal and ethical considerations specific to school counseling

3. Practice
d. Interventions to promote academic development
e. Techniques of personal/social counseling in school settings

TEXES Competencies
This course is designed to meet TExES competencies and enable students in the school counseling specialization to demonstrate the following competencies:

Competency 001 (Human Development)
The school counselor understands processes of human development and applies this knowledge to provide a developmental guidance program, including counseling services that meets the needs of all students.

Competency 006 (Counseling)
The school counselor understands how to provide effective counseling services to individuals and small groups.

Competency 008 (Collaboration with Families)
The school counselor knows how to communicate effectively with families and establish collaborative relationships that enhance work with students.

This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.
Competency 009 (Collaboration with Others in the School and Community)
The school counselor understands how to work collaboratively with other professionals and with community members to promote positive change and to facilitate student learning.

Competency 010 (Professionalism)
The school counselor understands and complies with ethical, legal, and professional standards relevant to the profession.

Texas Education Agency (TEA) Standards

Standard II. Learner-Centered Skills: The certified school counselor applies the knowledge base to promote the educational, personal, social, and career development of the learner. The certified school counselor must:
3. counsel individuals and small groups using appropriate counseling theories and techniques in response to students' needs;
4. consult with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and other individuals as appropriate to enhance their work with students;
5. coordinate resources for students within the school and community;
6. demonstrate proficiency in teaching small and large groups by actively engaging students in the learning process;
7. use counseling-related research techniques and practices to address student needs; and

Standard III. Learner-Centered Process: The certified school counselor participates in the development, monitoring, and evaluation of a developmental school guidance and counseling program that promotes learners' knowledge, skills, motivation, and personal growth. The certified school counselor must:
3. use both preventive and intervening strategies to address the concerns of learners and to help them clarify problems and situations, set goals, explore options, and implement change;
5. act as a consultant and/or coordinator to help learners achieve success inside and outside of school.

Standard V. Learner-Centered Communications: The certified school counselor, an advocate for all students and the school, demonstrates effective professional and interpersonal communication skills. The certified school counselor must:
1. demonstrate effective communication through oral, written, and nonverbal expression;
2. use knowledge of group dynamics and productive group interaction;
3. support responsive interventions by effectively communicating with parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and community members;
4. facilitate learners' access to community resources;
5. develop and implement strategies for effective internal and external communications;

Standard VI. Learner-Centered Professional Development: The certified school counselor continues professional development, demonstrating a commitment to learn, to improve the profession, and to model professional ethics and personal integrity. The certified school counselor must:
1. use reflection, self-assessment, and interactions with colleagues to promote personal professional development;
2. strive toward the highest level of professionalism by adhering to and modeling professional, ethical, and legal standards

UTRGV Counseling Program Objectives

5. Counseling graduate students demonstrate knowledge and skills of theories and techniques necessary to engage in an effective and therapeutic helping relationship.
7. Students demonstrate the ability to identify effective assessment strategies in order to facilitate treatment planning.

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Major Requirements, Demonstration of Mastery and Evaluation

The Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies endorsed by ACA in 2015 include four developmental domains: (1) counselor self-awareness, (2) client worldview, (3) counseling relationship, and (4) counseling and advocacy interventions, which are reflected in the required course activities:

1. **100 Hours of Counseling Practicum**
   A. Forty (40) hours of direct counseling must be completed at the UTRGV Counselor Training Clinic (CTC).
      1) Clinical Mental Health Counseling students can complete 15 direct hours at an external field site after midterm week, with the remaining 25 being under supervision in the clinic.
      2) School Counseling students can complete 25 direct hours in a school setting, with the remaining being 15 in the clinic (this exceeds the TEA requirement of 50% in a school setting).
   B. Sixty (60) hours of indirect counseling services must be completed. Indirect services include preparation for counseling sessions, writing case notes and documentation, and attending workshops or webinars.

   The grade for this requirement is based on midterm and final evaluations by the Counseling and Training Clinical Supervisor.

   Prior to participating in any direct counseling hours, students must obtain professional liability insurance. Students will not be allowed to see clients until liability insurance had been secured.

2. **Counseling Tapes**
   Each student will submit two (2) counseling audio or video tapes which demonstrate skills of individual counseling related to (a) intake/psychosocial history, (b) goal setting, (c) research-based intervention strategies addressing clients’ needs/issues, and/or (d) termination. Informed consent forms must be completed before taping. In addition to the audio/videotape, relevant written materials (case summary, tape transcript, etc., as specified by the instructor) should be included and will be evaluated. Videos may be selected to be reviewed for instructional purposes during group supervision.

3. **Site Visit Observation**
   The Texas Education Agency (TEA) requires students in educator preparation programs to be observed by their field experiences faculty. UTRGV School Counseling specialization students will be observed in each field experience course. Per TEA guidelines, the site observation must be conducted on a TEA-accredited campus within six weeks of the first day of UTRGV classes.

4. **Supervision**
   Students must attend weekly individual/triadic supervision sessions with program faculty. Supervision guidelines, roles, and responsibilities will be reviewed in the first supervision session and meeting times will be set the first week of class. Students will present cases for supervision on a bi-weekly schedule or on an as-needed basis. (See format on Blackboard.)

5. **Self-Assessment**
   Students will complete three (3) self-assessments (pre-, mid-, and post-practicum) using the self-assessment rubric. The purpose of this assessment is to maintain a continued self-evaluation for professional growth; rubrics will be discussed in individual and group supervision.

6. **Clinical Portfolio**
   Students are responsible for maintaining a comprehensive clinical portfolio with the following sections. Portfolios are subject to review at any time by the course instructor. The portfolio will become part of the student’s TEA/CACREP file and will not be returned to the student. **Students must make copies of all supervision logs and documentation for future licensing and/or credentialing applications.**

   The full-credit portfolio will be formatted using an 11” x 8 1/2” pressboard binder with fastener, side bound. In addition, an index tab with a typed label should mark each section below.

   1) Title Page
   2) Semester Summary Form (Completed & Signed)

This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.
3) Documentation of professional liability insurance
4) Practicum/Internship Contracts and Agreements
5) Logs
   a. Excel Weekly Logs Weeks 1-14
   b. Direct Weekly Logs School/Agency
   c. Indirect Weekly Logs School/Agency
   d. Direct Weekly Logs UTRGV Clinic
   e. Indirect Weekly Logs UTRGV Clinic
6) Supervision Logs
7) School/Agency
8) URTGV Clinic
9) Group (Class)
10) Pre & Post Self-Assessments
11) Mid-term and Final Evaluations by Site Supervisors
12) Evaluation of Site Supervisor
13) Instructor Site Visit Observation/Evaluation with Pre/Post Conference
14) Counseling Skills Scale (CSS) for Videos
15) LPC documentation forms

7. Attendance and Participation
   Students are expected to attend, participate, and engage in ALL classes. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, participating in in-class assignments, group discussions, peer observations, and group exercises. It should be noted that attendance and punctuality is expected and will be excused only under special circumstances as determined by the instructor. Given that meaningful learning often takes place in discussion and interaction with others where students express and articulate their ideas, participation is a crucial aspect of this course.
   A. Students are allowed two absences total in class and individual/triad supervision. Each additional absence in class or supervision will result in five (5) points off of final grade.

8. Program Requirements
   Students in the Counseling master’s program are required to attend a faculty seminar each semester and write a 1-2 page reflection paper on how they might incorporate their learning into their personal or professional future. Faculty seminars are announced each semester with multiple offerings to accommodate student schedules.

   All students in the program are also required to read one book from the department reading list (see below) and write a 1-2 page reflection paper.

EVALUATION & GRADING

Means of Assessment The grade earned will be based on the following weight distribution with a possible total of 100%:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course SLOs</th>
<th>Program SLOs</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CACREP</td>
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<td>40 Hours of Direct Counseling (Based on Midterm and Final Review with Clinical Supervisor)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Course SLOs</th>
<th>Program SLOs</th>
<th>CACREp</th>
<th>TEA Standards</th>
<th>TExES Competency</th>
<th>Course Weight</th>
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<td>CMCH</td>
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<td>60 Hours of Indirect Counseling</td>
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<td>Weekly Ind/Triadic Supervision</td>
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<td>2.F.1.m</td>
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<td>&amp; Case Conceptualization</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counseling Tapes/Transcription</td>
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<td>On-Site Observation</td>
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<td>5.C.m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Requirements/Professionalism/</td>
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<td>Engagement</td>
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**TOTAL 100.00%**

**UTRGV GRADING SCALE**

The grade for this course will be determined by the successful completion of the course requirements and the above criteria. UTRGV uses straight letter grades (A, B, C, F).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100%-90%</td>
<td>Student exceeds instructor’s requirements for the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>89%-80%</td>
<td>Student has met requirements for the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>79%-70%</td>
<td>Any course in the Counseling Program for which a grade of C is earned must be repeated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>70%-70%</td>
<td>The UTRGV Graduate College does not permit the grade of “D.”</td>
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**COURSE TECHNOLOGY**

**Tools**
- E-mail
- Blackboard/WebCT
- Quizlet
- Kahoot
- Poll Everywhere
- Zoom
- Wheel Decide
- Random Lists

**System Requirements**
- Internet Browser
  - Mozilla’s Firefox (latest version; Macintosh or Windows)
  - Microsoft Explorer
  - Google Chrome (latest version; Macintosh or Windows)
- Adobe’s Flash Player & Reader plug-in (latest version).
- Apple’s QuickTime plug-in (latest version). A free download is available at
- Virus protection UTRGV Software link
- Microsoft Office UTRGV Software link

**Technical Knowledge Requirements**
- Students are expected to be proficient with installing and using basic computer applications and have the ability to send and receive email attachments.
- Ability to use different presentation tools (e.g., Animoto, Historypin, Prezi, etc.)

**Technical Assistance**
If technical assistance is needed at any time during the course or to report a problem with Blackboard students can:
- Visit the Blackboard Student Help Site
- Submit a Blackboard Help Ticket
- Help Contact Information (UTRGV’s Blackboard Support):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brownsville Campus</th>
<th>Edinburg Campus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location: Rusteberg Hall Room 108</td>
<td>Location: Education Building Room 2.202</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone: 956-882-6697 or 956-882-6792</td>
<td>Phone: 956-665-5327</td>
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<td>Monday – Thursday 7:30AM – 7:00PM</td>
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<td>Friday: 7:30 AM – 6:00PM</td>
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**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance Policy and Class Participation**
Students are expected to attend, participate and engage in all classes and supervision. This includes, but is not limited to, participating in class activities, group discussions, peer observations, and group exercises. Attendance and assignments of the Counseling Faculty Seminar Series and reading list will be included in the participation grade (only applies to Fall and Spring courses). It should be noted that attendance and punctuality is expected and will be excused only under special circumstances as determined by the instructor.

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This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.

**Revised 08-21-18 SdY**
Given that true learning takes place in discussion and interaction with others where students express and articulate their ideas, participation is a crucial aspect of this course.

Class begins at 4:40 pm and ends at 7:10 pm. Students not in attendance during these times without prior notification to the instructor will lose class participation points. It is the student’s responsibility to inquire about class notes, handouts, and/or exercises.

Tech Breaks: A 15-minute breaks is scheduled during each class meeting for students to attend to personal matters, including going to the restroom, buying snacks, and checking texts/social media. Students who refrain from using their cell phones during class can expect higher grades for participation.

Make-up Policy
All assignments are expected to be completed and submitted on time in accordance with the due dates. Late papers/projects will not receive full credit. All late assignments will result in point deductions: 1 day late = -10 points, 2 days late = -20 points, 3+ days late = will not be accepted. An assignment is considered late if it is not turned in on the due date prior to class time.

No incomplete (“I”) grades will be given, except in cases that involve specific, emergency, professionally documented circumstances. “I” grades will not be given in lieu of a failing or poor grade.

Written Assignments
All written assignments must follow APA guidelines. The APA Publication Manual (6th ed.) is a recommended textbook for this class. All work must be typed. Work should be double-spaced, with a 12-point Times New Roman or Calibri font. Graduate-level written expression is expected, and grammatical errors and misspellings are subject to a decrease in grade. For student who struggle with writing, I strongly encourage the use of the writing center on campus. Grades will reflect writing proficiency.

Student Responsibility
The student is ultimately responsible for becoming familiar with all graduate and program requirements and general information listed in the catalog for the M.Ed. Degree in Counseling. The student is also responsible for becoming familiar with any certification and licensure requirements, application processes, and deadlines that apply to him/her.

Student Professionalism
Professionalism can best be described as the ability to manage one’s emotions and handle relationships. In other words, a professional is a socially skilled or emotionally intelligent person. Goleman (1995) best describes this concept: “emotional intelligence - abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one’s mood and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope” (p. 34). Students are expected to exercise professionalism at all times.

Evaluation of students’ coursework may be affected by unprofessional behavior (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, breaking confidentiality, unwillingness to work with peers, consistently not being prepared for class, excessive tardies/absences, and/or other related behaviors). The consequences of these behaviors may range from (but are not limited to) a verbal reprimand to dismissal from the Counseling Program.

Professional Ethics
Students are expected to abide by all relevant ethical codes, including but not limited to those set forth by the American Counseling Association, the American School Counselor Association, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapists, the Association for Specialists in Group Work, the Texas State Board of Examiners for Licensed Professional Counselors, as well as any others associated with the type of counseling intervention being provided. Confidentiality also applies to all issues or comments made in the classroom. Failure to comply with ethical standards will result in consequences deemed appropriate by the Counseling program faculty, including dismissal from the program. TEA Standards: I. 8; VI 3.
Confidentiality
Confidentiality will strictly be enforced. Students will be expected to observe this ethical standard by not sharing any information of a personal nature shared in class with anyone outside of class. Breach of this ethical standard will constitute basis for dismissal from the UTRGV Counseling Program with a grade of F in the course.

Program Requirements

TExES Representative
School Counseling Specialization Only: The TExES Representative is required to be taken prior to the TExES Certification Exam and during COUN 6365 Counseling Practicum; however, it is not required to pass the exam. Failure to take the TExES Representative prior to COUN 6369-Counseling Internship I could result in being dropped from the Practicum II course.

Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)
The Counseling Program schedules its Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) throughout the year. The purpose of the exam is to evaluate the student's mastery of graduation requirements of the Counseling & Guidance Program. Student's first opportunity to take the exam will be during enrollment in practicum (COUN 6365). Effective January 2018 the testing dates will be the same at both campuses.

• The CPCE is schedule for both campuses the last Saturday in October, the last Saturday in March, and the second Saturday in July.
• Students must take the CPCE at their home campus, unless graduation is dependent on the third and final attempt and permission is granted by the department. (Exceptions must be made through the Program Coordinator to test at the different campus.)
• Additional information will be given in the COUN 6365: Practicum.
• The passing score will be based on the National Mean of first attempt for each student.
• Students who do not show mastery after three (3) attempts will be reviewed by the Goodness of Fit committee. Additional coursework and/or remediation maybe required before retesting.

The result of the exam is one of the following:
a) Pass with the recommendation that the student be cleared for graduation upon the completion of all course and program requirements.
b) Fail stipulating the conditions that must be met before the students is eligible to retake the exam. If a student has completed all course work, he or she must be enrolled in the semester of graduation. A student may enroll in UNIV 6100, a one-hour course, to meet this requirement.

Although there is no "one way" to prepare for Comprehensive Exams, students are encouraged throughout the program to keep textbooks, class papers and projects as possible resources. Additionally, forming study groups the semester before the comprehensive exam is scheduled to take place can be a valuable process. In addition, the following study materials are recommended:


This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.
Additional Considerations

Syllabus Disclaimer
While the provisions of this syllabus are as accurate and complete as possible, the instructor reserves the right to change any provisions herein, not covered by the UTRGV or UT Regent Rules, with notice if circumstances so warrant. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes and information about such changes will be available at all times from the instructor. It is the responsibility of each student to know what changes, if any, have been made to the provisions of this syllabus and to successfully complete the requirements of this course. Questions regarding information on the syllabus and course requirements may be addressed by students.

General Tips for Success
- Listen to the lecturer or classmates during the discussion/lecture.
- Be ready to discuss material from previous classes (e.g. methods and techniques of counseling, human social/emotional/personal development, theories, etc.)
- Allow plenty of time to work on assignments in order to ensure timely submission.
- Proof-read and check written assignments for accuracy prior to submitting.
- Bring materials to class (i.e. books, assignments, projects).
- Exchange phone numbers and e-mail addresses with classmates to clarify any information or attain help, if needed.
- Remember there have been MANY individuals that have been asked to do this. They succeeded in completing the course and we expect that all future students can too.

CEP-16 Program Policy

ASSESSMENT
Be advised that the UTRGV College of Education and P-16 Integration conducts ongoing research regarding the effectiveness of its programs. Students will receive one survey in the final semester prior to graduation regarding their program during their time here. A second survey will occur within one year following graduation from or completion of a program, and will be sent to the student’s employer. This survey will focus on the preparation received at UTB. Please remember that responses to these surveys are critical to UTRGV excellence.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
All students must have adequate writing skills to communicate content in a professional and concise manner. Students must be proficient in their written presentations including strategies for developing ideas, citing scholarly references, writing style, wording, phrasing, and using language conventions. Students must follow APA guidelines, use non-racist and non-sexist language, and include sufficient references to support their thesis and ideas in the paper.

Netiquette
Netiquette describes the code of conduct for a face to face or online environment. It ensures respect for others and prevents misunderstandings or unintentional offenses to others. The netiquette described here is amended to ensure your success in this course.
- When you are typing or submitting a response, do not use all capital letters (caps). Caps is equal to SHOUTING YOUR MESSAGE.
- Although it is customary to use acronyms (ex. ROFL - rolling on floor laughing, BTW - by the way, or FYI - for your information) when chatting online, try to avoid using these. There may be those in this course who are not as experienced as you and may miss out on understanding.

Although you are encouraged to participate and ask questions, it is asked that you do not spam other users (SPAM refers to unwanted or excessive email). Before sending mass emails, consider using the discussion board to post general inquiries or requesting assistance from your instructor.

This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.
UTRGV University Policies

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

Brownsville Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in Cortez Hall Room 129 and can be contacted by phone at (956) 882-7374 (Voice) or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

Edinburg Campus: Student Accessibility Services is located in 108 University Center and can be contacted by phone at (956) 665-7005 (Voice), (956) 665-3840 (Fax), or via email at ability@utrgv.edu.

MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD
Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available:
Module 1                                      October 4-10
Module 2                                      November 29-December 5
Full fall semester                            November 15-December 5

ATTENDANCE
Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and may be dropped from the course for excessive absences. UTRGV’s attendance policy excuses students from attending class if they are participating in officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence and arrange to make up missed work or examinations.

SCHOLASTIC INTEGRITY
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Definitions
“Plagiarism is a form of cheating. At UTRGV, “plagiarism is the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own academic work offered for credit.”

Important Note: Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the Office of Student Affairs.

Course policies are subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to check Blackboard for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be posted in Blackboard.

This syllabus subject to change in order to better meet course objectives per discretion of instructor.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE
In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student's time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination.

COURSE DROPS
According to UTRGV policy, students may drop any class without penalty earning a grade of DR until the official drop date. Following that date, students must be assigned a letter grade and can no longer drop the class. Students considering dropping the class should be aware of the “3-peat rule” and the “6-drop” rule so they can recognize how dropped classes may affect their academic success. The 6-drop rule refers to Texas law that dictates that undergraduate students may not drop more than six courses during their undergraduate career. Courses dropped at other Texas public higher education institutions will count toward the six-course drop limit. The 3-peat rule refers to additional fees charged to students who take the same class for the third time.

STUDENT SERVICES
Students who demonstrate financial need have a variety of options when it comes to paying for college costs, such as scholarships, grants, loans and work-study. Students should visit the Students Services Center (U Central) for additional information. U Central is located in BMAIN 1.100 (Brownsville) or ESSBL 1.145 (Edinburg) or can be reached by email (ucentral@utrgv.edu) or telephone: (888) 882-4026. In addition to financial aid, U Central can assist students with registration and admissions.

Students seeking academic help in their studies can use university resources in addition to an instructor’s office hours. University Resources include the Learning Center, Writing Center, Advising Center and Career Center. The centers provide services such as tutoring, writing help, critical thinking, study skills, degree planning, and student employment. Locations are:

Learning center:  BMSLC 2.118 (Brownsville) 882-8208 or ELCTR 100 (Edinburg) 665-2585
Writing center:   BLIBR 3.206 (Brownsville) 882-7065 or ESTAC 3.119 (Edinburg) 665-2538
Advising center:  BMAIN 1.400 (Brownsville) 882-7362 or ESWKH 101 (Edinburg) 665-7120
Career center:    BCRTZ 129 (Brownsville) 882-5627 or ESSBL 2.101 (Edinburg) 665-2243
Required Reading List for Graduate Students in Counseling and Guidance Program

This is a reading list for graduate students in the Counseling & Guidance Program. This list contains works which we consider classic readings in the profession and which provide a basic theoretical orientation to the field of psychotherapy and counseling. Familiarity with them will strengthen your own understanding of the graduate studies in which you are embarking and begin to form a basis for your own library of professional materials. We recommend that you read one or two books each semester, as they will help you better prepare for the comprehensive program exams. These readings can also support your ability to successfully prepare a portfolio and to complete licensure examinations. You will be required to read 10 books out of this list.

As you progress through your program of study, you may be required to read additional textbooks and other resource materials specific to the various classes in which you are enrolled such as Marriage & Family, Group Counseling, Substance Abuse, and Career Counseling to name a few.

Enjoy your readings,

Counseling Faculty


