**Introduction to Counseling and Psychotherapy**  
**Fall 2025**  
**SYLLABUS**

**Course Number:** COUN 4000-DO1  
**Prerequisites:** COUN 2000 or COUN 2007  
**Credit Hours:** 3 Semester hour credits  
**Class Meeting Times:**  Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 am -12:15 pm  
**Class Location:** Online, Synchronous  
**Instructor:** Trenton Singletary, LPC, NCC, M.S.Ed  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 10:00 am –11: 00 am, virtual or by appointment  
**E-mail:** TLS0020@auburn.edu

*The syllabus (revised in August 2025) outlines the course plan but may be adjusted as needed, with any changes communicated promptly.*

**Course Description:** This course provides an overview of the theories, research, and practices that shape the counseling profession. Key topics include the process of change, the history of psychotherapy, theoretical frameworks, ethical considerations, recent research developments, empirically supported treatments, and the practical challenges and opportunities in the profession. While this is not a practicum course, it aims to deepen your understanding of the counseling process and help you define your interests within the field.

**Course Objectives:**  
By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the foundational theories and concepts in counseling and psychotherapy.
2. Analyze the historical evolution of psychotherapy and its impact on contemporary practices.
3. Explore the process of change and the therapeutic techniques that facilitate it.
4. Identify ethical principles and issues relevant to counseling and psychotherapy.
5. Critically evaluate recent research and its application to clinical practice.
6. Recognize the characteristics of empirically supported treatments and their implementation.
7. Reflect on personal interests and values to inform future engagement with counseling and psychotherapy.

**Required Textbook**

Gladding, S.T. (2018). Counseling: A comprehensive profession, 8th edition. Columbus, OH: Pearson.

**Optional Textbook**

Luhrmann, T.M. (2000). Of two minds: The growing disorder in American Psychiatry. New York: Alfred Knopf.

I aim to create a learning environment that values and respects each student's unique perspectives. Your input is welcomed to improve the course for you and your peers.

Our classroom should be a space for open and respectful dialogue. Some topics may evoke strong emotions—please be mindful of your reactions and considerate of others. If anything said or done during the course causes discomfort, you can:

1. **Speak with me privately**: I’m here to listen and address concerns collaboratively.
2. **Bring it up with the class**: Sharing your experience may help others understand the material and foster collective growth.
3. **Seek support elsewhere**: You may discuss the issue with your advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer who can help address it on your behalf.

The intention is to create an inclusive and supportive space while acknowledging and addressing the impact of classroom experiences.

*Statement Adapted from Lynn Hernandez, Behavioral and Social Sciences, School of Public Health, Brown University*

**Assignments/Projects:**

**Attendance** *(20 points)*

Regular attendance and active participation are essential for your success in this course. Attendance will be recorded within the first 2 minutes of class, and late arrivals will result in point deductions. Points may also be deducted for behaviors that disrupt engagement, such as phone usage, turning off your camera, or demonstrating a lack of preparation or participation. Students are expected to contribute thoughtfully to discussions, actively engage in class activities, and collaborate effectively during group tasks to enhance their learning experience and create a dynamic and supportive classroom environment.

**Exams** *(40 points; 20 points each)*

Two exams will assess your understanding of the material through multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. Questions will be based on required readings, class lectures, role-plays, guest lectures, documentaries, and discussions. The exams are not cumulative.

* **Preparation**: Performing well will require a thorough understanding of both in-class and assigned reading materials.
* **Make-up Exams**: Written documentation of an excused absence is required no later than one week after the absence to schedule a make-up exam. Excused absences include severe emergencies and/or serious illness with a doctor’s note (dated the day of absence).

**Journals** *(40 points; 10 points each)*

You will submit four critical reflection journals, each consisting of **500 words**, in response to classroom discussions and course materials. These journals provide an opportunity to critically analyze, question, and connect with the material, rather than simply summarizing it. They encourage deeper engagement by reflecting on personal insights and applying theoretical concepts.

**General Guidelines:**

* **Content:** Reflect on key ideas that resonated with you, challenges you encountered, lessons learned, and their significance to your academic, personal, or professional growth.
* **Format:**
  + Single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins.
  + Submit as a Word document or PDF via Canvas.
  + No title page required; include your name, journal number, and submission date at the top.
* **Evaluation Criteria:**
  + Depth of reflection (thoughtful, meaningful engagement with the material).
  + Clarity of writing (organized, coherent, and free of grammatical errors).
  + Connection to course content (explicit references to readings, classroom discussions, and/or case vignettes).

**Journal Prompts**

**Journal 1: Initial Reflections on Learning**

* Due: Sunday, August 31st
* Reflect on your learning experience in this class so far.
* What activities, discussions, or concepts have stood out to you and why?
* What are you most excited to learn about as the course progresses?
* How might the knowledge and skills from this class be useful to you in your future academic, professional, or personal life?

**Journal 2: Reflections on Case Vignettes**

* Due: Sunday, September 14th
* Review the case vignette provided on Canvas and reflect on it using insights from classroom discussions and assigned readings.
* What stood out to you about the cases, and why?
* How did the classroom discussion and readings shape your understanding of the cases?
* What would you do as a counselor in a similar scenario?
* What challenges might you encounter, and how could you address them?

**Journal 3: Humanistic theories in counseling**

* Due: Sunday, September 28th
* Choose one theory that we have studied so far and reflect on it.
* What about this theory resonated with you, and why?
* How could a counselor effectively use this theory in practice? Provide a specific example.
* When might it not be appropriate to use this theory?
* Are there aspects of the theory that you disagree with or find problematic?

**Journal 4: Cognitive/Behavioral theories in counseling**

* Due: Sunday, October 26th
* Which cognitive or behavioral theory (or combination of theories) do you find most relevant or useful in your future practice?
* What aspects of these theories resonate with you, and why?
* How might different client needs, cultural backgrounds, or presenting concerns influence your choice of theory?
* What potential challenges might you face when applying cognitive or behavioral theories in counseling practice?

**Group Presentation** *(50 points)*

Working in groups of 3-4, you will research and present on a mental health-related topic. Your presentation should explore how counselors approach this issue.

* **Topics**: A list of acceptable topics will be posted on Canvas. Your topic must be approved by the instructor.
* **Expectations**: Presentations should be well-organized, research-driven, and include insights from both academic literature and practical applications. Presentations should meet criteria outlined in the rubric.
* **Due**: Week of November 10th

**Formal Research Paper** *(50 points)*

You will write a research paper focused on an aspect of the counseling process discussed in Gladding (2018).

* **Sources**: Use at least five academic references (e.g., textbooks or peer-reviewed journal articles). Mental health websites are not acceptable.
* **Structure**: Your paper should follow APA formatting, including a title page, in-text citations, and a reference list. Papers should include:
  + A clear organization and focus on the selected topic.
  + A comprehensive review of Gladding’s discussion of the topic, supplemented by additional scholarly sources.
  + A critical analysis of how the topic aligns with counseling and psychotherapy practices. 3 specific subtopics related to the topic are discussed.
  + Speculation on the topic for the future of the field.
  + Your paper will be 1,000-1,500 words, excluding the title page and references.
* **Academic Integrity**: Avoid plagiarism; any violation will result in a grade of zero points. Limit direct quotations to 50 words total, and ensure they are properly cited.
* **Due date**: Friday, December 5th

**Extra Credit Opportunities: SONA Participation**

The College of Education offers extra credit opportunities through the SONA subject pool. Students can participate in research studies, either in person or online, to earn bonus points. If you experience access issues, contact **sona@auburn.edu** for assistance.

* **1 SONA credit = 2 bonus points.**
* You can earn up to **6 extra credit points** through SONA participation. The extra credit points will be added to an assignment grade (not including the attendance grade). Extra credit points will not be added to the final cumulative grade. Extra credit points will not be added to the attendance grade.

A maximum of 6 extra credit points will be awarded for the class. Extra credit can be earned either through SONA, class activities created by the instructor, or a combination of both. Extra credit points will be added to an assignment grade. Extra credit points will not be added to the attendance grade.

Take advantage of this opportunity to boost your grade while contributing to valuable research!

The class schedule is tentative and may be adjusted as needed. Students will be notified by the instructor in advance of any changes.

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| **Week** | **Course content** | **Reading** | **Assignments** |
| 1 | Introductions, syllabus and overview  What is counseling? Personal and Professional Aspects of Counseling | Gladding, Chapter 1 |  |
| Aug. 18th – Aug. 22nd |
|  |
| 2 |  | Gladding, Chapter 5 | **Journal 1**: Sunday, August 31st at 11:59 pm in Canvas |
| Aug. 25th – Aug. 29th | Building Counseling Relationships |
|  |
| 3 | Holiday: Labor Day  Ethics and Cultural Competence | Gladding, Chapter 3 |  |
| Sept. 1st – Sept. 5th |
|  |
| 4 |  |  | **Journal 2**: Sunday, September 14th at 11:59 pm in Canvas |
| Sept. 8th – Sept. 12th |
|  |
| 5 | Humanistic theories of counseling | Gladding, Chapter 7 |  |
| Sep. 15th – Sept. 19th |
|  |
| 6 | Creative Arts Therapies |  | **Journal 3**: Sunday, September 28th at 11:59 pm in Canvas |
| Sept. 22nd – Sept. 26th |
|  |
| 7 | Testing, Assessment, & Diagnosis in Counseling | Gladding, Chapter 12 | **Exam 1**: Thursday, Oct 2nd at 11:59 pm in Canvas |
| Sept. 29th – Oct. 3rd |
| 8 | Cognitive and Behavioral Theories of Counseling | Gladding, Chapter 8 |  |
| Oct. 6th – Oct. 10th |
|  |
| Fall Break: Oct. 9th – 10th  No Class on Thursday, Oct. 9th | | | |
| 9 | Counseling Specialties | Gladding, TBA |  |
| Oct. 13th -17th |
|  |
| 10 | Abuse and Addiction | Gladding, Chapter 17 | **Journal 4**: Sunday, October 26th at 11: 59 pm in Canvas |
| Oct. 20th – 24th |
|  |
| 11 | Consultation, Supervision, and Ethics | Gladding, Chapter 10 |  |
| Oct. 27th – Oct. 31st |
|  |
| 12 | Group Work |  | **Group Presentations**: Submit into Canvas by Sunday, Nov. 9th at 11:59 pm |
| Nov. 3rd – Nov. 7th |
|  |
| 13  Nov. 10th – Nov. 14th | **Group Presentations:**  Tuesday, Nov. 11th and Thursday, Nov. 13th | | |
| 14 |  |  | **Exam 2**: Thursday, Nov. 20th at 11:59 pm in Canvas |
| Nov. 17 – Nov. 21st |
|  |
| 15  Nov. 24th – Nov. 28th | Thanksgiving Break  (No Class) | | |
|  |
| 16  Dec 1st- Dec. 5th | Class Summary, Group Presentation make-up week  Research paper |  | **Research Paper**: Friday, Dec. 5th at 11:59 pm in Canvas |
| **No Final Exam** | | | |

**Submission Policy:**

* Assignments are due by 11:59 PM on assigned due date as specified in the syllabus and on Canvas
* Canvas will serve as the official time stamp for all submissions
* Assignments submitted after the indicated time on Canvas will be given a zero, unless student has contacted instructor 24 hours prior to the assignment due date, an excuse has been provided, or emergency has taken place. It is the student’s responsibility to communicate with the instructor regarding late assignment submissions.

### **Grade Allocation**

1. **Attendance (20 points)**
   * **10%** of the total grade.
2. **Exams (40 points)**
   * **20%** of the total grade.
3. **Journals (40 points)**
   * **20%** of the total grade.
4. **Group Presentation (50 points)**
   * **25%** of the total grade.
5. **Research Paper (50 points)**
   * **25%** of the total grade.

**Grading Scale Breakdown (Out of 200 Points)**

* **A**: 180 – 200 points (90–100%)
* **B**: 160 – 178 points (80–89%)
* **C**: 140 – 158 points (70–79%)
* **D**: 120 – 138 points (60–69%)
* **F**: Below 120 points (Below 60%)

**Class Policy Statements**

**Attendance:** Attendance is expected and essential. You are responsible for all material covered during any absences. While emergencies are understandable, they should not be recurring. Cell phone use is disruptive and prohibited during class. It is expected for students to attend all online class meetings with their video camera turned on for the full duration of the class. Unless instructed, attending class with the camera turned off at any point during the class meeting will result in an unexcused absence. This will result in a reduction of points on attendance grade.

**Excused Absences:** Whenever possible, notify me in advance of any excused absences. In all cases, notification should **occur no later than one week after the absence**. Proper documentation is required. Refer to university policies for further details.

**Personal Technology:** All devices must be silenced, and cell phones should be stored away unless required for a specific activity. If you need your phone for emergencies, please notify me in advance.

**Email Communication:** I will primarily communicate through university email. Please check your university email inbox and Canvas announcements regularly. For questions, email me using your official Auburn email. Feel free to follow up if I do not respond within 48 hours.

**Recording Policy:** Recording class sessions—whether audio or video—is strictly prohibited.

**AI Policy:** In this course, students can use Generative AI Tools such as ChatGPT for formatting (e.g., APA style, grammar, sentence structure, etc.), study assistance, and specific instances designated by the instructor. Students **are not** allowed to use Generative AI Tools for content generation. As always, students must properly use attributions, including in-text citations, quotations, and references. **To maintain academic integrity, students must disclose any use of AI-generated material.** A student should include the following statement in assignments to indicate use of a Generative AI Tool: “The author(s) would like to acknowledge the use of [Generative AI Tool Name], a language model developed by [Generative AI Tool Provider], in the preparation of this assignment. The [Generative AI Tool Name] was used in the following way(s) in this assignment: [e.g., brainstorming, grammatical correction, citation, which portion of the assignment].”

**Class Cancellation:** In the event of a class cancellation or university closure, I will post all planned class activities on Canvas. Students are responsible for completing any assigned tasks.

**Make-Up Policy:** Students must initiate arrangements to make up missed in-class activities or presentations due to properly authorized excused absences within one week of the end of the excused absence period.

**Late Assignment Policy**: Late assignments are not acceptable. It is expected that you have completed all assignments by 11:59 pm on the due date. All assignments will be turned in via Canvas. If you run into technology difficulties on Canvas, it is your responsibility to make sure the assignment is still completed and received on time. Contingency plans include an email with the assignment attached or a link to the assignment in a university box folder. Failure to turn an assignment in on time OR failure for the instructor to access the electronic version of an assignment will result in unsatisfactory completion of that course requirement, and in many instances, would mean an inability to pass the class. It is therefore imperative that students complete all course requirements on time. I reserve the right to allow exceptions to this policy, for example, in the event of an emergency.

**Academic Honesty**: The University Honesty Code and related policies on cheating and plagiarism apply to this course. Details are available at [Auburn University Policies](https://www.auburn.edu/academic/provost/academic-honesty/). Many instances of plagiarism result from poor note-taking, citation errors, procrastination, or panic. To avoid issues, practice careful reading, timely work, and clear communication. Always cite sources you consult or borrow from directly.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students requiring accommodations should arrange a meeting with me during office hours within the first week of classes or as soon as possible. If you haven’t yet registered with the Office of Accessibility but require accommodations, please contact them at 1228 Haley Center, (334) 844-2096.

**Student Mental Health and Well-Being:** If you or someone you know feels overwhelmed, depressed, or in need of support, help is available. Contact Student Counseling and Psychological Services (SCPS) at (334) 844-5123 or visit [SCPS](http://wp.auburn.edu/scs). For emergencies, the East Alabama Mental Health Center offers a toll-free, 24/7 helpline at 800-815-0630.

**Auburn Cares:** If you or someone you know needs support, you are encouraged to contact [Auburn Cares](https://studentaffairs.auburn.edu/acsc/) at 334-844-1305. Auburn Cares will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

**Basic Needs:** Any student experiencing food insecurity, or an unexpected financial crisis is encouraged to contact [Auburn Cares](https://studentaffairs.auburn.edu/acsc/) at 334-844-1305 for resources and support.

**Sexual Misconduct Resources:** If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, [Safe Harbor](https://studentaffairs.auburn.edu/safe-harbor/) (334-844-7233) and Student Counseling & Psychological Services (334-844-5123) are both confidential resources. Safe Harbor provides support to students who have experienced sexual or relationship violence by connecting them with academic, medical, mental health, and safety resources.

# SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER:

# The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as needed. In the event that changes are deemed necessary, the instructor will inform students at the earliest date possible in class or via university email.