**Introduction to Prevention and Mental Health Promotion**

**Fall 2025**

**SYLLABUS**

Course Number: COUN 4010-D01

Prerequisites: COUN 2000 or COUN 2007

Credit Hours: 3 Semester hours credits/Graded

Class Meeting Times: Online Asynchronous

Class Location: Haley Center, Room

Instructor: Charlotte Jones MSW, MACP

Office Hours: Virtually by appointment

E-mail: czj0057@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 explores prevention and health promotion in counseling psychology, focusing on topics such as play, stress, body image, meditation, social justice, and advocacy.

I aim to create a learning environment that values and respects the unique perspectives each student brings. 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*

**Student Learning Outcomes**:

1. Understand how prevention and promotion concepts apply to counseling psychology.
2. Identify scientifically supported practices for promoting well-being.
3. Recognize scientifically supported approaches for preventing harm.
4. Develop a cross-cultural understanding of health, growth, and community.
5. Explore the role of social justice and advocacy in fostering well-being.

**Required Reading (textbook and articles)**

***Textbook (REQUIRED)***

Pilgrim, D. (2019). *Key Concepts in Mental Health* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

***Assigned articles will be uploaded to Canvas. Please ensure you read them before class.***

Conroy, J., & Perryman, K. (2022). Treating trauma with child-centered play therapy through the SECURE lens of polyvagal theory. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, *31*(3), 143–152. https://doi-org.spot.lib.auburn.edu/10.1037/pla0000172

Davies, E., Read, J., & Shevlin, M. (2022). The impact of adverse childhood experiences and recent life events on anxiety and quality of life in university students. *Higher Education (00181560)*, *84*(1), 211–224. https://doi-org.spot.lib.auburn.edu/10.1007/s10734-021-00774-9

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| **COURSE CONTENT OUTLINE** |
| **Topic** | **Assignments and Readings** |
| **Week 1**  |
| 8/19 | Introductions; Review of Syllabus  |  |
| **8/21** | Mental health promotion and prevention | Pilgrim, Part 1, pages 3-18 |
| **Week 2**  |
| 8/26 | Neuroscience in ActionAutonomic Nervous System & Polyvagal Theory | Pilgrim, Part 1, pages 9-38 |
| 8/28 |
| **Week 3**  |
| 9/2 | The Benefits of Play | Pilgrim, Part 1, pages 39-45Conroy, 2022**SUBMIT: Journal 1** |
| 9/4 |
| **Week 4**  |
| 9/9 | Fostering Healthy AttachmentCoping Skills and mental health promotion | Pilgrim, Part 1, pages 55-62**SUBMIT: Journal 2** |
| 9/11 |
| **Week 5**  |
| 9/16 | The Impact of Stress and TraumaACES, PTSD, C-PTSD | Pilgrim, Part 1, pages 52-54Pilgrim, Part 2, pages 117-120Davies, 2022 |
| 9/18 |
| **Week 6**  |
| 9/23 | Lay views of mental disorders & social mediaSelf-harm | Pilgrim, Part 2, pages 72-81Pilgrim, Part 2, pages 102-105**SUBMIT: Journal 3** |
| 9/25 |
| **Week 7** |
| 9/30 | **NO LECTURE** | Note: Subject to change if changes to schedule. Use this as an opportunity to begin working on future assignments. For example, your group podcast assignment |
| 10/2 |
| **Week 8**  |
| 10/7 | An overview of mental health services | Pilgrim, Part 3, pages 131-145 |
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|  **FALL BREAK - NO CLASS OCTOBER 9th** |
| **Week 9** |
| 10/14 | Interviews & Podcast | Work at your own pace |
| 10/16 |
| **Week 10**  |
| 10/21 | Body image and eating disorders | **SUBMIT: Podcast****SUBMIT: Interview** |
| 10/23 |
| **Week 11**  |
| 10/28 | Mental health professionalsCarers, caregivers, families, and partners | Pilgrim, Part 3, pages 153-158**SUBMIT: Journal 4** |
| 10/30 |
| **Week 12** |
| 11/04 | Biological & psychological interventionsEvidence-based practice | Pilgrim, Part 3, pages 159-166Pilgrim, Part 3, pages 176-179 |
| 11/06 |
| **Week 13**  |
| 11/11 | Mental Health Policy: Race, sex, and social class | Pilgrim, Part 4, pages 199-206 |
| 11/13 |
| **Week 14**  |
| 11/18 | The role of mindfulness, spirituality, and faith | **SUBMIT**: **Analytical Paper** |
| 11/20 |
| **Week 15 THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO CLASS NOVEMBER 25TH & 27TH**  |
| **Week 16**  |
| 11/25 | Self-care and restorative well-being | **SUBMIT: Journal 5** |
| 11/27 |

**Assignment Guidelines**

**Submission Policy:**

* Assignments are due by 11:59 PM on Thursdays, 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 subject to a late penalty. A 10% deduction will be applied for every day the assignment is late.

**Formatting Guidelines for Journals:**All journal entries must meet the following formatting requirements:

1. Length: Journals must be between 500 and 1,000 words in length.
2. Formatting:
	* Typed, double-spaced.
	* 12-point Times New Roman font.
3. Exclusions:
	* Do not include information such as your name, title, date, instructor's name, etc.

**Journal 1 – Neuroscience and the Autonomic Nervous System** *(10 points)*

**Objective:** Reflect on the role of the autonomic nervous system in regulating emotional and physiological states, highlighting its impact on stress responses, relaxation, and social engagement. Additionally, explore how neurotransmitters, such as serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine, influence emotional experiences like sadness and fear. Integrate insights from class discussions, assigned readings, and your personal reflections to provide a comprehensive analysis.

**Instructions:** Write a journal entry addressing the following prompts in a cohesive narrative format, *not* bullet points. Your journal must demonstrate critical thinking and personal reflection while integrating relevant concepts discussed in class and included in the readings.

1. **Understanding Neurotransmitters and Emotions** *(5 points)*
	* Summarize what you learned about neurotransmitters and the autonomic nervous systems
	* Highlight new information that expanded or challenged your understanding of these biological mechanisms
2. **Personal Reflection** *(3 points)*
	* Reflect on how the material covered in class relates to your personal experiences or observations, such as moments of calm, connection, or stress.
	* Reflect on the role you played in our classroom activity
	* Discuss how understanding neurotransmitters has influenced the way you think about mental health and emotional regulation
3. **Applications and Insights** *(2 points)*
	* Give two examples of how this knowledge can be applied to mental health practices, self-care strategies, or supporting others

**Journal 2 – Exploring the Role of Play** *(10 points)*

**Objective:** Reflect on your understanding of the significance of play in human development and personal well-being, incorporating new insights, experiences, and theoretical frameworks.

**Instructions:** Write a journal entry addressing the following prompts in a cohesive narrative format. Your journal must demonstrate critical thinking and personal reflection while integrating relevant concepts or research discussed in class.

1. **Understanding Play** (*3 points)*
	* Summarize key insights you have learned about the importance of play
	* Highlight new information or perspectives that surprised you or challenged your understanding
2. **Personal Reflection** (*3 points)*
	* Identify areas where you agree or disagree with the ideas presented. Explain your reasoning and connect them to your personal experiences.
	* Discuss how your life circumstances (culture, upbringing, significant events, and identities) have influenced your opinions about play
3. **Play Personality** (*4 points)*
	* Explore your “play personality.” What activities or styles of play resonate most with you, and why?
	* Reflect on how your childhood play experiences shaped your play personality and discuss how your play preferences have evolved into adulthood

**Journal 3 - ACEs, PTSD, and C-PTSD** *(10 points)*

**Objective:** Reflect on the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their connection to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Complex PTSD (C-PTSD), incorporating class materials, research, and personal insights.

**Instructions:** Write a journal entry addressing the following prompts in a cohesive narrative format. Your journal must demonstrate critical thinking and personal reflection while integrating relevant concepts or research discussed in class.

1. **Understanding ACEs and Trauma** *(4 points)*
	* Summarize the key insights about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their long-term impact on mental health and well-being.
	* Highlight the distinctions between PTSD and C-PTSD, including their causes, symptoms, and effects on individuals.
2. **Personal Reflection** *(3 points)*
	* Reflect on how the material covered in class has influenced your understanding of trauma and resilience.
	* Consider how your personal experiences, observations, or cultural context shape your perspective on ACEs and their impact.
3. **Applications and Awareness** *(3 points)*
	* Explore how understanding ACEs, PTSD, and C-PTSD can inform therapeutic practices, prevention strategies, or support systems.
	* Connect these concepts to real-world examples or professional contexts, considering how this knowledge might be applied in promoting healing and resilience.

**Journal 4 – Exploring Body Image** *(10 points)*

**Objective:** Reflect on your understanding of body image and its connection to your relationship with food, movement, and your body, incorporating insights from class materials and personal experiences.

**Instructions:** Write a journal entry addressing the following prompts in a cohesive narrative format. Your journal must demonstrate critical thinking and personal reflection while integrating relevant concepts or research discussed in class.

1. **Understanding Body Image** *(3 points)*
	* Summarize key insights you have learned about body image.
	* Highlight any new perspectives that challenged or expanded your understanding.
2. **Personal Reflection** *(4 points)*
	* Discuss the life experiences that have shaped your opinions about body image, food, movement, and body politics.
	* Reflect on how the material covered in class has expanded your understanding.
3. **Body Respect** *(3 points)*
	* Explain your understanding of autonomy, body liberation, and body respect.
	* Connect these concepts to your personal experiences or broader societal observations.

**Journal 5 – Restorative Practices, Mental Wellness, and Self-Care** *(10 points)*

**Objective:** Reflect on the role of restorative practices in promoting mental wellness and self-care, incorporating class materials, personal experiences, and actionable strategies for maintaining balance and well-being.

**Instructions:** Write a journal entry addressing the following prompts in a cohesive narrative format. Your journal must demonstrate critical thinking and personal reflection while integrating relevant concepts or research discussed in class.

1. **Understanding Restorative Practices** *(3 points)*
	* Summarize the key concepts of restorative practices and their role in fostering mental wellness.
	* Highlight any new insights or perspectives you gained from class discussions or materials.
2. **Personal Reflection** *(4 points)*
	* Reflect on your current self-care practices and how they align with the principles of restorative practices.
	* Discuss how the material covered in class has influenced your understanding of maintaining mental wellness and addressing challenges.
3. **Applications and Growth** *(3 points)*
	* Explore strategies for incorporating restorative practices into your daily life or professional work.
	* Consider how these practices can be used to build resilience, foster connections, and support others in achieving mental wellness.

**Podcast – Reflecting on the Documentary** *(10 points)*

**Objective:** Collaborate in small groups to create a recording discussion reflecting on the documentary you watched, focusing on personal insights, applications, and critical thinking.

**Selection of Documentary:** You will have the opportunity to choose between two documentaries to view on your own time. The first option is Heroin(e), available on Netflix. The second option is Period. End of Sentence., available for free on YouTube. Both films connect to course material and assigned readings. It is advised that you use Week 7 to complete this assignment.

**Instructions:**
Work with your group to record a podcast-style video (audio with the camera on) addressing the following prompts. Your discussion should demonstrate a clear understanding of the documentary’s themes and their relevance to your life.

1. **Documentary Insights** *(4 points)*
	* Summarize 2 key takeaways from the documentary.
	* Discuss the most impactful moments or themes and explain why they stood out to you.
2. **Personal Application** *(3 points)*
	* Reflect on how you plan to apply the knowledge gained from the documentary to your own life.
	* Share plans, or actionable steps inspired by what you learned.
3. **Critical Thinking and Exploration** *(3 points)*
	* Discuss questions the documentary raised for you.
	* Explore areas where you agree and disagree with the documentary’s perspective and explain your reasoning.

**Submission Requirements:**

* Your video must be between **25 and 30 minutes** in length.
* Two points will be automatically deducted for videos shorter than 25 minutes or longer than 30 minutes.
* Ensure all group members actively participate and contribute to the discussion.
* Upload your video to the designated platform (Canvas, Google Drive, etc.) by the due date listed in the syllabus.

**Health Across Cultures: Interview***(15 points)*

**Objective:** Conduct an in-depth, respectful interview to explore the perspectives of someone with intersecting identities on health, mental health, and well-being.

**Instructions:**
You will conduct a **30–40-minute video-recorded interview** with an assigned individual.

This interview must meet the following guidelines:

1. **Preparation and Professionalism** *(9 points)*
	* Explain to your interviewee about the recording and the purpose of the interview
	* Establish rapport by introducing yourself and explaining the context of your class before starting the formal interview
	* Use of clear and concise open-ended questions
	* Use two reflections
2. **Engagement and Respect** *(4 points)*
	* Be engaged and present during the interview and avoid distractions
	* Respect the interviewee’s time and responses by creating a comfortable environment for sharing
3. **Adherence to Time & Video Requirement** *(2 points)*
	* The interview must be between 30–40 minutes in length
	* Your video must remain on throughout the interview

**Health Across Cultures: Analytical Paper***(15 points)*

**Objective:** Analyze and reflect on the interview you conducted, connecting insights from the conversation to academic literature and your personal experiences.

**Instructions:**

Write a **4–6-page paper** addressing the following prompts in a formal and cohesive format. Your paper should integrate at least **three peer-reviewed academic sources** to connect the interview insights with broader literature.

**Prompts:**

1. **Introduction of the Interviewee** *(3 points)*
	* Introduce your interviewee by highlighting their intersecting identities (e.g., gender, race, disability, employment status).
	* Share their story in a narrative format, focusing on personal context rather than listing data.
2. **Health Definitions and Community Access** *(4 points)*
	* Describe how your interviewee defines health and mental health.
	* Compare their definitions with perspectives from current academic literature.
3. **Perceptions of Healthcare** *(4 points)*
	* Summarize your interviewee’s views on improving healthcare in their community
	* Discuss who has access to healthcare and who does not, and relate these observations to current research
4. **Personal and Communal Practices** *(2 points)*
	* Explore the practices your interviewee engages in to promote health and well-being (e.g., prayer, meditation, exercise, therapy, rituals)
	* Analyze how these practices align with or differ from the current literature
5. **Reflection and Comparison** *(2 points)*
	* Reflect on how your interviewee’s perspectives compare to your own
	* Discuss how your identities shaped areas of agreement or tension during the interview

**Formatting Requirements:**

* Follow APA guidelines:
	+ Typed, double-spaced.
	+ 12-point Times New Roman font.
	+ 1.0-inch margins.
* Include references (this is not part of your final page count).

**Rubric:**

1. **Depth of Analysis and Insight**
	* Provide clear, detailed connections between the interview insights and broader academic research.
	* Highlight key themes with well-supported arguments and examples.
2. **Comparison and Reflection**
	* Offer thoughtful discussion of similarities and differences between your perspectives and your interviewee’s.
	* Reflect on how your own identities and experiences shaped your interpretation of the interview.
3. **Citation and Formatting**
	* Properly cite all sources using APA formatting.
	* Ensure consistent adherence to all formatting guidelines, including title page, references, and overall structure.

**Writing Support:**
For help with writing (e.g., APA style), contact the Miller Writing Center.
Website: [auburn.edu/academic/provost/university-writing/miller-writing-center](https://auburn.edu/academic/provost/university-writing/miller-writing-center/)
Email: universitywriting@auburn.edu

**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 = 1 bonus point.**
* You can earn up to **5 extra credit points** through SONA participation.

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

**Grading Scale:**

All assignments must be completed. Grades will be based on total point accumulation in the course:

Journal 1 10

Journal 2 10

Journal 3 10

Journal 4 10

Journal 5 10

Group project: Podcast 10

Interview 15

Health Promotion/Prevention Paper 15

Attendance 10

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Total Points 100

A 90-100%; B 80-89%; C 70-79%; D 60-69%; F <60%

**Class Policy Statements**

**Names and Pronouns:** Please inform me of your name and pronouns early in the semester, either in person or via email.

**Attendance:** Attendance is expected and required. You are responsible for all material covered during any absences. Cell phone use is disruptive and prohibited during class. While emergencies are understandable, they should not be recurring. It is also a requirement that your camera remain **on** and that you actively **participate** throughout class. Participation includes responding to prompts, engaging with your peers, and contributing to class activities.

You will be marked absent after:

* (a) the first warning in a session, or
* (b) if the behavior continues throughout the semester, I will request a meeting to discuss participation. After this meeting request, you will be marked absent without prompting if disruptive, non-participatory, or non-compliant behaviors continue.

If disruptive behaviors occur, you may be asked to exit the Zoom class and will subsequently be marked absent for the day.

**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 Canvas. Please check your Canvas inbox and announcements regularly. For questions, email me using your official Auburn email. If I do not respond within 48 hours, feel free to follow up.

**Recording Policy:** To maintain a safe and private learning environment, recording class sessions—whether audio or video—is strictly prohibited.

**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 Work Policy:** Assignments and papers submitted late will incur an immediate 10% grade deduction per day.

**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. If unsure about proper credit or if you’re having trouble with an assignment, contact me for guidance.

**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). Services are accessible during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through counselors located in the Medical Clinic and Haley Center. For emergencies, the East Alabama Mental Health Center offers a toll-free, 24/7 helpline at 800-815-0630.

**Title IX Compliance:** Auburn University is dedicated to maintaining a discrimination-free environment. If you experience harassment or discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression), please report it. Faculty members must report incidents of sexual assault or misconduct to the University’s Title IX Coordinator. For information on Title IX reporting and resources, visit [Auburn Title IX](https://www.auburn.edu/administration/tix-eeo/).