I. **Course Description** (3 semester hours)
This course offers in-depth consideration of ethical and legal issues that affect the practice of counseling in clinical mental health counseling; marital, couple, and family counseling; addictions counseling; and school counseling settings. The course will assist students in understanding and formulating sound positions on a variety of major issues related to the field of counseling. Students will be familiar with a variety of ethical codes as well as laws regulating the profession. In addition, students will demonstrate the ability to use ethical decision-making models to think critically about and resolve ethical issues in a variety of situations. There is no pre-requisite for this course.

II. **Rational**
This course meets a number of specific accreditation standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) for clinical mental health counseling; marital, couple, and family counseling; addictions counseling; and school counseling. In addition, it fulfills specific content requirements set forth by the State of Texas for both the Licensed Professional Counselor and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist.

III. **State Adopted Proficiencies for School Counselors**
*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.

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

V. **Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes**
The primary objective of this course is to ensure that learners achieve learning outcomes critical for ethical practice related to both CACREP standards and regulatory board requirements as set forth below.

*2016 CACREP Standards as set forth below:*
All program emphases
CACREP Standard 2.F.1.i: ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling

2016 Emphasis-specific CACREP Standards:

Addictions Counseling
CACREP Standard 5.1.2.i legal and ethical considerations specific to addiction counseling

Clinical Mental Health Counseling
CACREP Standard 5.C.2.i legal and ethical considerations specific to clinical mental health counseling

Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling
CACREP Standard 5.F.2.o ethical and legal considerations and family law issues unique to the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling

School Counseling
CACREP Standard 5.C.2.n legal and ethical considerations specific to school counseling

Requirements for licensure as set forth by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors and the Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists as set forth below:

TSBEPC Title 22 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 681, effective July 16, 2017
Subchapter C: Code of Ethics
Subchapter E: 681.83(c)(2): additional course in counselor ethics to include records management, an overview of business/family law and professional practice and the study of the current board rule

TSBEMFT Title 22 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 801, effective March 26, 2017
Subchapter C: Guidelines for Professional Therapeutic Services and Code of Ethics
Subchapter : 801.114(5) Professional ethics – including but is not limited to professional identity of the marriage, couple, and family therapist, including professional socialization, scope of practice, professional organizations, licensure and certification; and ethical issues related to the profession of marriage, couple, and family therapy as well as the practice of individual therapy.

B. Student Learning Outcomes
1. Students will demonstrate knowledge of ethical standards of professional organizations and credentia ling bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling as evidenced by (a) responses to objective questions on the final exam, (b) responses to case studies, (c) creation of informed consent document, and (d) performance on group presentation. Achievement of this SLO will be evaluated by an average of 70 or above on (a), (b), (c), and (d).

2. Students will demonstrate understanding of ethical and legal considerations specific to their program emphasis in addictions; clinical mental health counseling; marriage, couple, and family counseling; and school counseling as evidenced by a grade of 70 or above on the reflective research and literature paper.

VI. Course Topics
The major topics to be considered in this course are Codes of Ethics of professional organizations, ethical codes and rules of state licensure boards, state and national laws, impacting the practice of counseling, current major issues in ethics, and ethical decision-making models.

VII. Instructional Methods and Activities
A. Traditional experiences, including lecture, discussion, on-line activities, and case studies
B. Clinical experiences, including student presentations

VIII. Evaluation and Grade Assignment
1. Discussion Board Posts: You are expected to participate in Discussion Board posts. Topics and/or questions are provided in the discussion board area of BlackBoard. In addition, you are expected to respond to posts and comments of your peers. Responses should be thoughtful and refer to the readings, relevant issues in the news, information obtained from other sources, and/or ideas expressed in your peer’s responses. Where appropriate, you should use references to support your position using APA-formatted citation. There are four discussion posts required, which are due by 11:59 on the due date. Responses to peer posts are due within one week of due date.

2. Content Checks: Students will complete content checks. Questions are objective, multiple-choice format and drawn directly from your readings. Quizzes have time limits and are objective multiple choice format. Quizzes must be completed in one session. Quizzes will not be accepted late and are due by 11:59 on the due date.

3. Three Case Studies: Students will complete Case studies illustrating ethical dilemmas and potential legal issues. For each, identify potential dilemmas and describe the thinking process used in making decisions about how the case might be handled, including the use of an
ethical decision-making model. Recognition and identification of more than one decision that might be made may in some cases be appropriate. Identify content from applicable codes used in thinking through the case. Inclusion of the ethical code from your emphasis area as ONE source of discussion is required.

4. **Informed Consent Document:** Create an informed consent document that contains relevant elements required by the ACA Code of Ethics and the state regulatory boards.

5. **Critical Ethical Issues Group Presentations in Class:** Students will work in groups to identify a current topic in the profession that constitutes an ethical issue or concern. Groups will develop a presentation that explains the issue, identifies the ethical concern(s), and addresses current thinking in the field. Use a PowerPoint or similar format that would be appropriate for use as a training tool in your emphasis area.

6. **Annotated Bibliography:** Students will develop an annotated bibliography based on the Critical Ethical Issue identified in class. Each group member will contribute three peer-reviewed articles to compile a complete annotated bibliography.

7. **Self Assessments:** Students will complete 10 self-assessments for credit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method of Evaluation</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Posts</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Checks (4 at 25 points each)</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies (3 at 25 points each)</td>
<td>75 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed Consent Document</td>
<td>20 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Ethical Issues Group Presentation</td>
<td>30 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>10 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection Post</td>
<td>15 pts, 350 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IX. Course Schedule and Policies**

A. **Tentative Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments and Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Introduction, orientation to the course,</td>
<td>Chapters 1-3 (CC 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2</td>
<td>philosophical foundations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>July 4</td>
<td>The self of the counselor, self-awareness,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>values</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Week 2: July 9 | Rights of clients; informed consent, record keeping, and other counselor responsibilities  
Confidentiality, reporting requirements, so called duty to warn  
Boundaries, dual and multiple relationships, potentially beneficial interactions/relationships  
Issues of diversity and multiculturalism  
Training and competence | Chapter 5, 6 and 7 (CC 2)  
Content Check 1 --- due 7/8  
Informed Consent --due 7/11  
Discussion Post 1 due 7/14  
Case Study 1 -------- due 7/15  
Self-Assessments ongoing  
Chapters 4 and 8 (CC 3)  
Self-Assessments ongoing |
| July 11 |  |  |
| Week 3 July 16 | Models of Ethical Decision Making-Presentation-Ajitha (Teaching Assistant)  
Ethical Violations Presentations | Content Check 2 due 7/15  
Presentations-Discussion  
Discussion Post 2 due 7/21  
Case Study 2 due 7/22  
Self-Assessments ongoing |
| July 18 | Gatekeeping; Ethical Issues in Supervision  
Practice/Theory Issues and Ethics | Chapter 9 and 10  
Content Check 3 due 7/25  
Self-Assessments ongoing |
| Week 4 July 23 | Ethical Issues in Group and Community Work  
Ethical issues in working with couples/families  
Counseling in the Family Law System  
Communication, Technology, & Social Media | Chapter 11, 12 and 13 (CC 4)  
Content Check 3 due 7/22  
Case Study 3 due 7/25  
Discussion Post 3 due 28  
Case Study Discussion due 7/28  
Self-Assessments ongoing |
| July 25 | In-Class Critical Issues Presentation | Content Check 4 due 7/27  
Annotated Bibliography 7/29  
Self-Assessments ongoing |
| Week 5 July 30 | Critical Ethical Issues Presentations in Class | Content Check 4 due 7/29  
Discussion Post 4 due 8/01 |
| August 1 | Reflection on self assessments | Reflection post due 8/3 |

B. Policies X. Textbook

*Required:*

The textbook adopted for this course is:

Web resources for this course include but are not limited to: Texas Occupations Code, section 503 [available from http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/statutes/docs/OC/content/htm/oc.003.00.000503.00.htm ]
Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 502 (See if you can find it.)

Ethical Standards for School Counselors
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/legal-ethical

Texas LPC Board Rules, 22 TAC §681 (I expect you to locate and download these.)

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) [available from www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/administrative/statute/hipaastatutepdf.pdf as well as other web addresses]

*Mental Health Rules and Statutes* (Texas): 18th Edition Texas Laws Relating to Mental Health, describing changes made to laws during the 81st legislative session. See specific sections and chapters [available from www.dshs.state.tx.us/mhrules/]

XI. Bibliography


XII. **Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

XIII. **Disabilities Accommodations**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
XIV. Emergency Contingencies Plan
In the event of a campus evacuation I will make every effort to continue teaching your course. Should such an event occur, I will continue to interact with you by using the Blackboard Announcement, Bb Messages, Email, Collaboration, Discussions, Blogs, Journals, and/or Wikis tools. If you have access to the Internet, you will be able to continue your coursework by posting assignments and interacting with me as well as each other online. You will also be able to take your tests online using the Assessments tool and see your grades on assignments, quizzes, and tests using the My Grades tool.

XV. Rubrics
Note: For all rubrics below, elements of description for B or lower grades should be considered as “or” conditions rather than “and” conditions. That is, any of the factors listed could earn a grade at that level.

Group Presentation

A Presentation (27-30 pts.): Group members followed the directions for the presentation. The current topic chosen clearly constitutes an ethical issue or concern. The issue is clearly identified and the relationship of ethics to the topic is explained. Current thinking in the field is outlined.

B Presentation (24-26 pts.): Group members followed the directions for the presentation. The current topic chosen constitutes an ethical concern or issue; however the relationship between the topic and ethics may be less clearly articulated. Explanation of current thinking in the field may be limited.

C Presentation (21-23 pts.): Group members followed the directions for the presentation. The topic chosen is not really related to ethical concerns or the connection may not be explained. Current thinking in the field may be presented in a way that is confusing. The poster-board presentation has the appearance of being put together at the last minute.

Failing presentation (18 and below): Group members failed to follow directions. The topic chosen is clearly inappropriate, with no compelling connection to ethics demonstrated. Current thinking presented is outdated or lacking. The poster-board presentation appears to have been put together at the last minute.

Annotated Bibliography

A Paper (9-10 pts.): All elements of the bibliography are present as described in the assignment. References are from professional journals and follow APA (6th ed.) format. Spelling and grammatical errors are absent or minimal.
$B \quad$ Paper (8 pts.): All elements described in the assignment are present. References are from professional journals and follow APA (6th ed.) format with minor errors. Spelling and grammatical errors are minor.

$C \quad$ Paper (7 pts.): While all elements are present, the paper may have the appearance of last-minute work, and reflect lack of serious consideration of the topic. References are from professional journals and APA (6th ed.) format style errors are present. Spelling and grammatical errors may appear or be frequent.

$Failing \ paper \ (6 \ and \ below): \ Paper \ may \ not \ contain \ all \ elements. \ Professional \ journal \ references \ are \ lacking. \ Significant \ and \ repeated \ errors \ in \ the \ use \ of \ APA \ style \ are \ present.$