Course Overview and Goals:
The purpose of this introductory course is to provide students with didactic and experiential training in counseling processes and skills to prepare students for practicum and future courses. By the end, you will have:

1. Basic counseling skills practiced in initial counseling sessions with classmates
2. Skills to develop an empathic and professional counseling relationship
3. Recognized self-care as an ethical imperative for practicing therapists.
4. Positive, creative, and solution-focused techniques to assist students in brief approaches to problem solving
5. Appropriate responses to matters of diversity and individual difference across several domains

Course Expectations:
The majority of the students’ time will be spent learning how and then conducting counseling-client dyads, where students will alternately enact the roles of counselor and client in individual and group simulations. These interactions will be recorded for class review and discussion. Full participation in all activities, as demonstrated by weekly attendance and active involvement in the simulations with an ability to self-examine skills as a counselor and receive and give appropriate feedback is necessary.

It is important to note that in your role as client you are asked to share only that which you are comfortable with, and as a counselor you are expected to maintain the confidentiality of your peers. Full engagement in the course will require that you enlist not only your intellectual resources but also your emotional resources. As such, you will be asked, on occasion, to step outside of your comfort zone. In engaging in these activities or in reactions to materials and discussions, you may experience various levels of discomfort. That being said, professional behavior is expected in and out of the classroom. You are asked to treat one another with respect, dignity, and support even in the face of disagreement. You are also asked to treat yourself with care, and seek professional services for additional support when necessary. The goal is to create a safe space conducive to learning.

Required Texts:

Required Readings:
Brown, B. (2006) I thought it was just me, but it isn’t. Harper Collins
Crisp, R. (2014). Characteristics of master therapists and the influence of Carl Rogers: A discussion. Counselling Psychology Review, 29, 55-64. doi:


Marini, I. (2016). Enhancing client return after the first session, and alternatively dealing with early termination.

In I. Marini, M. A. Stebnicki, I. Marini, M. A. Stebnicki (Eds.), The professional counselor's desk reference (pp. 99-103). New York, NY, US: Springer Publishing Co.


Other Readings As Assigned

Course Evaluation:

Experiential Component & Professionalism: 50pts

This is a highly experiential class. We will be utilizing regular role-plays, training groups, giving and receiving feedback, and processing our experiences. This is also an introductory course in your journey toward becoming a therapist, you will be evaluated on your demonstrations of professionalism in this class. Indicators of professionalism include: (a) active participation; (b) open willingness to offer and receive feedback from others; (c) demonstrate respect toward others; (e) proper boundaries; and (f) respect for confidentiality.

Preparation. Please arrive well-prepared for class. This preparation includes bringing readings to class, notes for discussions, and turning in assignments at the start of class. In addition, please complete all readings with enough scrutiny to engage in active class discussions. As you read the assignments, please note sections that are of particular interest to you, that sparked a question, or that are related to your clinical or research interests. When each person is prepared to contribute in this manner, our discussions will be more engaging, and you will begin the important process of getting to know one another.

Confidentiality: This course will involve experiential learning through role-playing and practice interviewing. It is expected that students will uphold the ethical principle of confidentiality with the content of role-plays and interviews with student colleagues. When role-playing a client, you have the right and personal responsibility to share only those personal details or experiences that you choose. You have the right to stop participating in any exercise at any time without penalty. If you feel that a breach of confidentiality has occurred, please discuss this problem with me as soon as possible.

Self-Exploration Paper: 10pts - (approx. 6-8 pages)

This is a self-exploration paper reflecting upon your current stage of development as a therapist. Integrate data from your responses on the Counselor Activity Self-Efficacy Scales (CASES) with reflective questions, such as: What led you to pursue graduate education to become a therapist? What influence did your biology, your family, your identities, your environments, and/or your own personal agency play? What are your anxieties about becoming a therapist? What parts of being a therapist do
You anticipate being the most difficult for you? What strengths and skills do you bring to the therapeutic endeavor? This paper will be evaluated on the depth of self-reflection, level of integration, and quality of writing, not on the content of your disclosures. You are not required to disclose anything you do not wish to.

**Journal Entries: 5pts - Due the Monday BEFORE class**

Students are required to write and submit a one-page journal entry each week (12-point font, double-spaced). Self-awareness is a critical skill that requires counselors to constantly evaluate the extent to which their own issues and history may bias or influence the counseling relationship. The journal is a way to communicate thoughts, feelings, and concerns that occurred with the student while engaging in the content, readings, class time, and/or counseling dyads (therapist and/or client role). The journal should be self-reflective, vulnerable, include thoughts and feelings, and explore how your personal history and culture may have influenced your thoughts and feelings in the moment. The journal is not a critique of class nor is it a place to summarize what you learned from the live session or the asynchronous content. The journal is about self-reflection and taking the time to evaluate how your biases may either enhance empathy or cloud your understanding. These journal entries will be treated as confidential information by the instructor. These will also provide fodder for discussion in the next class. The journal should be submitted no later than 48 hours before the start of class. (500 words minimum)

**Do:** In today’s class, I found myself feeling frustrated when we went over the recordings because I felt like I should have known how to do this. Additionally, I was feeling a little vulnerable after sharing something personal while I was in the client role. I am worried about what others will think.

**Don’t:** In today’s class, I really learned a lot and think that using listening responses will improve the way I work with clients. I think the instructor did a great job of explaining the topics and the readings were interesting.

**Marker Recordings: 10 pts**

The cornerstone of Counseling Methods and Techniques is to provide new clinicians the opportunity to experience the role(s) of both client and clinician. These practice opportunities come in the form of marker recordings. Marker recordings are time-limited interactions where each student will take on the role of a client or clinician with another student. Time for these recordings will increase from week to week and may be viewed in class to assess your progress over the course of the term. With each recording, you will record, review, and identify places to discuss in class. For each recording, you will need to identify two or three time stamps where in you want to share thoughts, feelings, hypotheses, OR, want assistance with coming up for a better response, OR ask the client the question you thought of afterward.

**Midterm & Final Evaluations: 15pts**

You will be asked to complete two evaluations, one at the midpoint of the semester and one at the final. This will require you to be honest and thoughtful about your progress in the course. Further information will be provided in class.

**Transcription Trios: 10 pts**

Throughout the semester, there will be two (2) occasions where you will participate in a Trio role-play (therapist, client, observer) and complete the associated feedback forms. You will transcribe and analyze the feedback forms according to the protocol used by Clara Hill. More specific instructions will be given as you are taught about this method. After your transcription, you will have to complete a short a
two-page (maximum) summary of your counseling session as you evaluate it in its totality; add this summary at the end of your corrected script. Please be sure to answer the following  questions:

1. What did I do well? Why did that go well?
2. What area(s) do I need improvement? How will I work to improve them?
3. How many reflections of feelings did I complete? (Identify each of them.)
4. How many questions did I ask? (Identify them.)
5. What was the overall reaction to the interaction. How was I feeling? (i.e. nervous, confident)

**Grades in this class will be based on the following scale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>69 or below</td>
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**Competency:**

When you successfully pass this class, I am indicating that I have full faith in your ability to practice the APA & ACA Principles of beneficence and nonmalfeasance, fidelity and responsibility, integrity, justice, respect for people’s rights and dignity, autonomy, and veracity. I do not take this job lightly. You will only earn a passing grade, should I believe that you are competent for the level at which you are. If I have concerns about competency, I will discuss them with you straightaway, in a transparent and open manner so that we can rectify any issues. If the concerns continue, we will create a remediation plan to bring you to level. If you have any concerns about yourself or another student, I ask that you share those with me as well. I will be utilizing APA’s Benchmarks of Competency, distributed at the start of class, as a gauge for your ability to be deemed competent in the course.

**Self-Disclosure:**

A major goal of our graduates is to demonstrate a core professional identity as counselors or counseling psychologists in science, practice, teaching, supervision, and other roles. Core values of counseling and counseling psychology include understanding contextual and cultural influences; holding a strength-based, social justice approach; understanding self and others as being shaped by cultural diversity; and demonstrating the capacity to engage in reflective practice. I believe that self-awareness of attitudes, values, and beliefs toward diverse others and the ability to continually reflect on one's own personal and interpersonal dynamics are critical to the development of effective professional skills and identity.

Toward this aim, students will be asked to engage in a process of personal exploration with their supervisors and trainers in their clinical courses and practicum settings. Some courses also require completing assignments that involve self-disclosure and self-reflection about personal history and cultural identities. Although content of self-disclosure will not be used as a basis for grading, students may be evaluated on their capacity to engage in self reflective processes that are critical to professional development and practice. Please also note that should a student disclose information indicating impairment or the potential for harm to clients, the faculty may take appropriate action in accordance with the ACA Code of Ethics (2005) Section F.7.b and/or APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (2002) Standard 7.04.

**Attendance and Participation:**

Attendance and participation are required (unless approved or excused by the instructor). The nature of the learning activities for this course makes attendance and active participation are critical. Students who do not attend class meetings regularly, arrive late or leave early consistently, or who fail to participate in meaningful ways are demonstrating a lack of professionalism and their grade will be affected as such.

With that said, I do require my graduate students to pick one day where they will not attend class and spend the time practicing self-care. This is a challenging profession, and we must learn how to set boundaries and care for ourselves. You will need to submit a 500 word summary of what we would have covered in class by the start of
the class you would miss, as well as submit anything that’s due that day, to indicate that you are staying up-to-date on the information. You cannot take a self-care day on the last day of class or during the reviews. You are responsible for making up any missed information.

**Other things of note:**

**Policy on Children in Class:**
Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student parents.

1. All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.
2. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in child care often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable, and I prefer you do this then miss class.
3. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
4. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

**Laptops and Technology:**
All assignments must be submitted through Google Drive. When you are ready for me to grade the assignment, you will add me as a collaborator. This will allow me to real-time edit documents and for you to make any adjustments needed for future assignments. Additionally, Google Docs/Drive allows me to see comments/changes that you make. It’s a powerful tool and I will help you with the learning curve that inevitably exists when one requests changes.

**ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS STATEMENTS**

**Disability Services**
ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting: Ms. Dallas A. Swafford (dallas.swafford@angelo.edu)

**Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Days**
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information.

Incomplete Grade Policy

It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Title IX

Angelo State University is committed to the safety and security of all students. If you or someone you know experience sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic or dating violence, stalking, or discrimination, you may contact ASU’s Title IX Coordinator: Michelle Nicole Boone (michelle.boone@angelo.edu). You may also speak with her if you need help with pregnancy accommodations.

I also want you to know that I will seek to keep any information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct and crimes I learn about to make our campus safer for all. This includes in written assignments or conversation. This is called being a “Responsible Employee” is a legal responsibility that I have to uphold. It is meant to connect you with resources and to inform you of your options in addressing the report.

Additional Sources Support: You are more than your grades or your ability to perform in college. Your general well-being is important to me as a faculty member, and this university as a whole. Issues such as insufficient food, safe housing, and mental health concerns may leave you struggling to complete assignments and perform to your standards. We have support on campus for students in these positions.

Food Pantry

Research shows that college students experience food insecurity at higher rates than the American household rate, and that food insecurity can negatively impact academic performance and persistence. Ram Pantry exists through the Office of Multicultural Affairs and is available 8-5, Monday through Friday to assist with food scarcity.

Counseling Services

Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance. The source of symptoms might be strictly related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance.

ASU provides mental health services to support the academic success of students. Counseling Services offers free, confidential psychological services to help you manage personal challenges that may threaten your well-being. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do -- for yourself and for those who care about you.

Conduct Policies

Academic Integrity
Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject to disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU. The Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) [http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code](http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code).

*Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s [Academic Integrity policy](http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code) in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the [ASU Writing Center](http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/17358-university-honor-code).

*Copyright Policy*

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

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**SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER**

This syllabus constitutes an agreement between the student and the instructor. Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes your agreement to abide by the terms of this syllabus. If changes must be made to the schedule or to any other aspect of the syllabus, all students will be notified in class and in writing as soon as possible. Any changes made to the course policies or the schedule/calendar will apply to all students.