PSY6315 DF1: Marriage and Family Counseling (3-0)  
Spring 2021 (January 25 – March 17)

Instructor: Sangeeta Singg, PhD, LP, ACN  
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Phone Conference: by Scheduled Appointment  
Online Availability: M-F 3:00-5:00 pm. Other times by appointment.
I check my email several times a day. You are welcome to contact me via email any time. All course announcements will be posted in Blackboard and sent by email.

COURSE INFORMATION

Catalog Description: Examination of current issues, theories, and therapeutic techniques in the field of marriage and family counseling.

Course Delivery: This class will be conducted entirely online via the Blackboard Learning Management System. Please review the following course folders: Announcements, Syllabus & Due Dates, My Professor, Study Guide, PowerPoint, Chapter Summaries, Videos, FOS & Genogram, Handouts, Task Preview, Discussions, Examinations, Helpful Folders, Accessibility Resources, My Grades, IDEA Evaluations, and other resources.

Location: The Blackboard website for this class is located at: http://blackboard.angelo.edu.

Required Textbook: Theory and Practice of Family Therapy and Counseling, 2nd Edition by James R. Bitter

Wadsworth, Cengage Learning
**Course Overview:** This online course is designed to provide a basic overview of the field of marriage and family counseling. Students will learn selected counseling theories, techniques and ethics for working with families and couples. Mainly the course is directed toward enhancing one's knowledge of persons as members of the family systems and examining how different theorists and clinicians have applied that knowledge to intervene as counselors with couples and families.

**Goals and Objectives:** Specific objectives of the course are

1. gaining basic knowledge about marriage and family counseling,
2. learning to apply course material to marriage and family issues, and
3. developing basic skills, competencies and perspectives of marriage and family counselors.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** Upon successful completion of Marriage and Family Counseling at the Angelo State University, students will be able to

1. understand the concepts of major marriage/family counseling theories and be able to compare and contrast them,
2. critically examine the major theories in the framework of their own background, values, and professional skills,
3. become familiar with the therapy in action by watching assigned videos,
4. identify issues from their own family of origin and/or current family and how these issues influence their function as counselors-in-training,
5. appreciate characteristics needed to be an effective marriage/family counselor,
6. have knowledge of what constitutes an ethical marriage/family counseling practice and appreciate the important ethical and legal issues in marriage and family counseling, and
7. develop their own theoretical orientation.
8. understand the concepts of major marriage/family counseling theories and be able to compare and contrast them,
9. critically examine the major theories in the framework of their own background, values, and professional skills, become familiar with the therapy in action by watching assigned video,
(10) identify issues from their own family of origin and/or current family and how these issues influence their function as counselors-in-training.
(11) appreciate characteristics needed to be an effective marriage/family counselor,
(12) have knowledge of what constitutes an ethical marriage/family counseling practice and appreciate the important ethical and legal issues in marriage and family counseling, and
(13) develop their own theoretical orientation.

**Method of Assessing Learning Outcomes:** Learning outcomes will be assessed via exams, papers, writing assignment, and participation in discussions.

**Informed Consent Statement for Psy 6315:** As the counselors in training, you should be familiar with the codes of ethics of both American Psychological Association (APA) and American Counseling Association (ACA), which provide the guidelines for responsible and ethical counseling. Please review both APA and ACA codes of ethics.

I am dedicated to facilitate the educational, personal, and professional growth and development of my students. As such, please be aware of the following information regarding this course:

(1) The counseling profession encourages that counselors integrate their own personal attributes, identity, strengths, and weaknesses into therapeutic processes. Self-awareness is critical to this process of becoming an effective counselor.
(2) There will be an emphasis on self-awareness/exploration and giving feedback to peers during discussions. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner which is appropriate at a college level. All discussions and writing assignments will be presented on an objective, clinical, and academic level. All forums will maintain interpersonal respect and professional tone. If any student violates these etiquettes, Dr. Singg reserves the right to drop them from the class.
(3) Students often experience personal growth as they progress through this course. However, the course is *not* meant to be a means of personal therapy. The focus of this class is to challenge you to be an effective and responsible counselor.
(4) Please be aware that in this course I strive to create a safe environment for any personal disclosures, but I cannot guarantee that other students will maintain the confidentiality of any such disclosures that are made. Therefore, it is each student’s responsibility to determine an appropriate level of self-disclosure (i.e. the content and depth of personal information that you share) during discussions.
(5) Students must accept and know that they are counselors in training and making mistakes is a part of learning. Everyone must be tolerant and kind towards each other and use only professional language in dealing with each other.
(6) Students are urged to discuss emotionally charged issues in a non-defensive way and they are encouraged to courageously own, examine, and alter their beliefs, feelings, worldviews, and issues that would likely interfere with their effectiveness as future counselors.
It is through this process that the “unmentionable” can lose its hold and honest nonthreatening discussions can occur.

(7) While many of such challenging conversations are predictable and are inherent to the nature of this course, it has been my experience that some of the most important discussions that will occur will be unplanned and open up to great “learning moments.” Thus, students must take responsibility of their own feelings and no blaming or calling names will take place.

(8) Every effort is made to present the sensitive materials in a mature and professional manner. A person who would be offended by open discussions is not a good candidate for this class. In order to gain knowledge and enjoy learning about marriage and family psychotherapy, students will need to exercise a mature attitude, have an open mind, and be respectful of others’ opinions and comments.

**Competencies Needed:** You must have prerequisite skills of using Blackboard, proficiency with Microsoft Word, and using ASU Library resources. It is also most important that you know the terms of the syllabus of this course. Therefore, a “Know-the-Course Test” is required of everyone, which will cover the syllabus, Blackboard map, and important requirements of this course. You will lose 20 points toward your grade if you miss this test. The online course format requires access to a fully functional PC and a lot of self-discipline for the timely completion of exams, discussions, and writing assignments.

**TENTATIVE TOPIC SCHEDULE**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/25-1/29</td>
<td><strong>Semester Long Discussion: Student Lounge</strong></td>
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<td>{Objective: student-student interaction and networking; discussion of topics prior to exams}</td>
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<td><strong>Discussion: Getting-to-Know-You (from 8:00 am on 1/25, Mon to 5:00 pm on 1/29, Fri)</strong></td>
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<td>{Objective: Student-teacher and student-student interaction, networking, and getting acquainted with the teacher and classmates}</td>
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<td><strong>Read syllabus, contents of the Blackboard folders, &amp; find Blackberry, Dr. Singg’s cat lost somewhere in the Blackboard folders (for taking the Know-the-Course Test).</strong></td>
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<td>{Objective: Students will become familiar with the game plan of the course and contents of different folders of Blackboard}</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Know-the-Course Test (from 8:00 am on 1/25, Mon to 5:00 pm 1/29, Fri).</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>Assignments</td>
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| 1    | 2/1-2/5   | Read - Introduction and Overview (Ch. 1)  
(Objective: Students will learn to identify different motives for choosing marriage/family counseling as a profession and learn family systems theory.)  
Read - The Family Practitioner as Person and Professional (Ch. 3)  
(Objective: Students will learn about personal characteristics and orientations of effective marriage/family practitioners. They will also be oriented to gender, multicultural, and personal growth issues.) |
| 2    | 2/8-2/12  | Exam 1 (Chs. 1 & 3; from 8:00 am on 1/30, Sat to 5:00 pm 2/5, Fri)  
Read - Multigenerational Family Therapy (Ch. 7); Watch Video  
(Objective: Students will learn about triangulation, family projection process, sibling position, leadership in family systems, genogram work, process questions, relationship experiments, coaching, I-positions, and displacement stories.)  
Read - Human Validation Process Model (Ch. 8); Watch Video  
(Objective: Students will learn about family life, family communication, family roles and triads, R.E.C.I.P.E., assessing the personal iceberg, and family reconstruction.) |
| 3    | 2/15-2/19 | Discussion: Family-of-Origin & Genogram work (see instructions on the Blackboard in the FOS & Genogram folder and participate in the Required Family Discussion; from 8:00 am on 2/13, Sat to 5:00 pm on 2/19, Fri)  
(Objective: Students will have first-hand experience with family genograms and assessing dysfunction in the family by learning to use Family of Origin Scale and Genogram.)  
Read - Virtue, Ethics, and Legality in Family Practice (Ch. 4) Honor System Reading Assignment  
(Objective: Students will learn about the legal and ethical dilemmas, ethical codes and standards of practice pertaining to marriage and family counseling.) |

Prepare for the Family-of-Origin & Genogram Discussion:  
(This required assignment has two parts: (a) taking and scoring the Family-of-Origin Scale (FOS; found in FOS & Genogram folder) and (b) creating a three-generation Genogram of your family of origin (see p. 171, Ch. 7 for directions). After completing the FOS and genogram, write a narrative of at least 500 words on what you have learned about yourself and your family. Post it on the Discussion Board forum titled, “Required Family Discussion.” However, if you do not want to share about yourself with the class, then write a narrative as to what you have learned as a counselor in training from this assignment and post it.)
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Activity and Details</th>
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| 5    | 2/22-2/26 | Read - Structural Family Therapy (Ch 10); Watch Video  
  {Objective: Students will learn about the family structure, family subsystems, and boundaries, unbalancing, intensifying, family mapping, enactments, and reframing.}  
  Read - Strategic Family Therapy (Ch. 11); Watch Video  
  {Objective: Students will learn about the MRI model, Washington School, Milan model, joining, directives, paradoxical interventions and other therapeutic techniques.}  
  Exam 3 (Chs. 10 & 11; from 8:00 am on 2/20, Sat to 5:00 pm on 2/26, Fri) |
| 6    | 3/1-3/5   | Discussion #1: (Read Ch. 4 and see the Task Preview folder; from 8:00 am on 2/27, Sat to 5:00 pm on 3/5, Fri)  
  {Objective: Students will discuss three most important legal and ethical issues, their applications, and implications in practice of marriage and family therapy.} |
| 7    | 3/8-3/12  | Discussion #2: Read Handouts on “Rejection” & “Deathbed Confession” (from 8:00 am on 3/6, Sat to 5:00 pm on 3/12, Fri)  
  {Objective: Students will discuss the effects of parental rejection and spousal confessions.}  
  Substitute Writing Assignment (from 8:00 am on 3/2, Tue to 5:00 pm on 3/8, Mon; Only for those who have missed an exam.)  
  {Objective: Students will research a topic of their interest not covered in the text. This will enhance their learning in the area of marriage/family counseling.} |
| 8    | 3/15-3/17 | Read - Solution-focused/Solution-oriented Therapy (Ch. 12); Watch Video  
  {Objective: Students will learn about the miracle questions, exception questions, scaling questions, signs and questions of difference, complement and coping questions, embedded messages, summary messages, introducing doubts, normalization, changing and doing of the problem, working with the future, and multiple –choice questions.}  
  Read - Cognitive-Behavioral Family Therapy (Ch. 15); Watch Video  
  {Objective: Students will learn about classical and operant conditioning, reinforcement, cognitive distortions, self-report questionnaires, interviews, behavioral observation, communication and problem-solving training, irrational belief challenging, cognitive restructuring, contracting, acting “as if,” and homework assignments.}  
  Exam 4 (Chs. 12 & 15; from 8:00 am on 3/13, Sat to 5:00 pm on 3/16, Tue) (NOT on Fri) |
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. In order to successfully complete this course, you must visit the Blackboard course site on a regular basis, and participate in all discussions and assignments. All course work has specific due dates specified in the syllabus and due dates document.

2. You are expected to check Blackboard and ASU email on a regular basis, preferably daily. Please complete reading assignments each week and meet all deadlines for submission of coursework. Late submissions will not be accepted.

3. There will be five exams (one Know-the-Course Test and four Text-Exams). Each text exam has 20 multiple-choice questions and is worth 20 points and the Know-the-Course test has 15 questions with one question on finding Blackberry. Time limit for each exam is 1 hour. All exams (except the Final Text Exam) will be available in the Examinations folder of Blackboard for seven days including a Saturday and a Sunday. Therefore, please DO NOT ask to make-up a missed exam unless you can provide a doctor’s note stating that you were in no condition to take the exam during the days allowed. There will be NO MAKE-UP EXAMS under any circumstances. For emergencies such as hospitalization or accident, a special provision for completing the course will be made with documentation from the doctor recommending that student is unable to complete the course due to his/her condition.

Because all assignments are available for weekends and weekdays with an ample amount of time even for those who work full-time, there are no make-up provisions. The missed discussions cannot be made-up because they involve other students. However, you can participate in the Substitute Writing Assignment to substitute up to 15 points for one missed exam.

4. Substitute Writing Assignment = 15 points
   If you miss an Exam, these points can be substituted for it. Please know that you can use this for only one missed exam in this course.

5. Study Guide: The test cues are provided for each exam in the Study Guide. Please use it.
6. **Know-the-Course Test** (on Syllabus, Blackboard buttons, & finding Blackberry) = 20 points
   This test is **REQUIRED** of everyone. The purpose is to orient you to this course and its requirements. **Missing this test will negatively affect your grade.**

7. **Total points in the course**
   - Five Exams = 100 points
   - Two Discussions = 20 points

8. **Instructions for taking exams through Respondus™ Monitor**

   Access to exams will be through Respondus™ Lockdown Browser [see the handout for downloading under ROSPONDUS button on the Blackboard] and will be video recorded via Respondus™ Monitor [see **Other Required Materials** below for a list of needed equipment]. Use of another electronic device is prohibited.

   There are two practice tests: a Webcam test and a short 10 question practice test over ASU trivia that are not graded. These tools will be available to you to assure accessibility. You are highly encouraged to go through these practice tests in advance of taking a graded exam. This process will allow you to become familiar with the technology associated with testing and improve the testing environment. **These tests, instructional videos, and more information regarding Respondus Monitor can be found under the Respondus Monitor Help tab in your Blackboard course.**

   **OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS**
   - Computer with MAC or Windows Operating System
   - High Speed Internet Access
   - Ethernet adapter cable highly recommended (wireless connections can drop during test and Collaborate sessions)
   - Webcam

   Refer to **Angelo State University’s Distance Education** website for further technology requirements: [http://www.angelo.edu/distance_education](http://www.angelo.edu/distance_education)

   **HELPFUL LINKS**

   Respondus Monitor is a companion tool to Respondus LockDown Browser. Monitor is a tool to proctor the online exam. Below are the two links for more information regarding Respondus LockDown Browser and Monitor:
Stable Test Taking Experience: In order to have a stable test taking experience with the Lock Down browser, you should clear the temporary internet files and cookies before taking the test. You should also take the test on a computer that is hard wired to the network and not using a wireless network. Using computers on campus is an alternative if you continue experiencing issues with personal computers with the Respondus browser.

The exams are not set up to be taken on an iPad or a cell phone.

Set aside the correct amount of time to complete an exam and save your answers as you progress through the exam. This will help preserve the answers should you lose Internet connection. If you do not save your answers, the answers will NOT be available.

If you still have technical problems, please contact the e-Learning Center at 486-6263 before 5:00 pm (M-F); DO NOT contact me for the technical problems.

9. Instructions for Assignments in Task Preview Folder: See the Task Preview folder for the instructions in advance. All assignments will also show instructions when they are made available for posting. If you miss an exam or discussion, completing the Substitute Writing Assignment will help you substitute up to 10 points.

Make sure all your write-ups reflect university-level writing skills. Use complete sentences; check your spellings; and put together graduate level discussions or the substitute writing assignment that reflect quality. Points will be deducted for spelling/grammatical mistakes. Feel free to use your peers for editorial help.

10. Required Family Discussion for Everyone: This assignment will require (a) taking and scoring the Family-of-Origin scale (FOS; found in FOS & Genogram folder) and (b) creating a three-generation genogram of your family of origin (see p. 171, Ch. 7 for directions). After completing the FOS and genogram, write a narrative of at least 500 words on what you have learned about yourself and your family. Post it on the Discussion Board forum titled, “Required Family Discussion.” However, if you do not want to share about yourself with the class, then write a narrative as to what you learned as a counselor in training from this assignment and post it. Please comment on two or more other posts. Because of its importance, this assignment is REQUIRED of all students and will not be scored due to its personal nature. If you miss this assignment, your grade will be lowered by one letter grade.

11. Introductory Discussion for Everyone: You are REQUIRED to participate in the Getting-to-Know-You discussion which is designed for class introduction so that you can know something about your professor and classmates. To access this and other discussions, click on the Discussions button on the Blackboard and follow the instructions.
12. **Two Discussions for Everyone:** There are two **Discussions worth 10 points each.** See Task Preview folder to get a heads-up on the discussions. Please do not miss the dates for the discussions because you cannot make-up a discussion when there is no one to discuss.

13. **Student Lounge** in the Discussions folder provides a forum for an ongoing discussion for you to interact with other students and discuss topics and questions prior to exams. You can contact each other via email and then decide to go to the Student Lounge.

**GRADE DETERMINATION**

- 108-120 raw scores (90% - 100%) = A
- 96-107.99 raw scores (80% and <90%) = B
- 84-95.99 raw scores (70% and <80%) = C
- 83.99 or less raw scores <70%) = F

*If you miss an exam, you can substitute up to 15 points by completing a Substitute Writing Assignment.*

**SPECIAL NOTES**

1. **Your Professor’s Philosophy:** Teaching is not just a job for me; it is a calling, an “educational ministry.” I am here to guide you, help you, and inspire you to do your best to earn the grade you desire. However, you have the personal responsibility to apply yourself and be an active learner, especially in an online course which requires a lot of self-discipline. For more information about Dr. Singg, please click on “My Professor” on the Blackboard.

2. **Academic Honesty:** Academic honesty is expected on all work. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their online experiences. 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. University “faculty expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that
is above reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experience both in and out of the classroom setting and may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials."

**Plagiarism** at ASU is a serious topic. The Angelo State University’s Honor Code gives specific details on plagiarism and what it encompasses. 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. We use the APA Style Manual of the American Psychological Association as a guide for all writing assignments. Quotes should be used sparingly. 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 Bb Turnitin. For more information, see ASU Writing Center.


3. **Students with Disabilities:** “Angelo State University 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 Act 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 the Office of Student Affairs, University Center, Room 112 at (325) 942-2047 or (325) 942-2211 (TDD/FAX) or by e-mail at studentservices@angelo.edu to begin the process. The Office of Student Affairs will establish the particular documentation requirements necessary for the various types of disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students determined to be disabled or who have documented disabilities.

4. **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 Dr. Singg prior to the absence. This should not be a problem in this online class because we don’t take attendance and all assignments have a week (including a Saturday and a Sunday) to complete.
5. **Syllabus Changes:** I reserve the right to make changes as necessary in this syllabus throughout the semester. I will notify students of such changes by email or announcements.

6. **Email Policy:** If you need to communicate with me via e-mail, please do so from your angelo.edu email account. As per ASU policy, I will not respond to emails from your personal email address. Please use **good e-mail manners** and include the following information in your message.
   - A clear subject line, including the course number "Psy 6315."
   - A clear message (check grammar and spellings) with one issue at a time.
   - A proper salutation including my name (Dr. Singg) and signing off with your name.

7. **IDEA Evaluation:** Students are provided the opportunity and are strongly encouraged to participate in the course evaluation at the end of the semester. Areas of evaluation include:
   - Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories).
   - Learning to **apply** course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions).
   - Learning specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.

8. **Task Preview/Instructions:** Please see this folder on the Blackboard for all instructions.

9. **Ten Important Points** are listed in the Announcements folder on the Blackboard for you.

10. **Student Responsibility:** It is your responsibility to read/understand the course syllabus and ALL announcements posted on the Blackboard and meet the deadlines for all assignments. This will be the key to doing well in the course. Ignorance about details given in the syllabus and various announcements on the Blackboard cannot be accepted as excuse in any manner.

11. **Browser Compatibility Check:** It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the browser used to access course material on his/her computer is compatible with ASU’s Blackboard Learning System. Dr. Singg reserves the right to deny additional access to course assignments lost due to compatibility issues. Students are responsible for reviewing the guidelines posted in this course regarding accessing Blackboard assignments. Problems in this area need to be discussed with Dr. Singg at the time of occurrence, either via a phone call during the posted availability hours or via email notification during times outside those posted for calls.

12. **Title IX at Angelo State University:** Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty,
staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. Sex discrimination, sexual misconduct, public indecency, interpersonal violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, and stalking are not tolerated at ASU. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I will report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. You are encouraged to report any incidents to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

Michelle Boone, J.D., Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator
Mayer Administration Building, Room 200
michelle.boone@angelo.edu Phone: 325-942-2022

You may also file a report online 24/7 at www.angelo.edu/incident-form. If you are wishing to speak to someone about an incident in confidence you may contact the University Health Clinic and Counseling Center at 325-942-2173 or the ASU Crisis Helpline at 325-486-6345. For more information about Title IX in general you may visit www.angelo.edu/title-ix.

13. Required Use of Masks/Facial Coverings by Students in Class At ASU: As a member of the Texas Tech University System, Angelo State University has adopted the mandatory Facial Covering Policy to ensure a safe and healthy classroom experience. Current research on the COVID-19 virus suggests there is a significant reduction in the potential for transmission of the virus from person to person by wearing a mask/facial covering that covers the nose and mouth areas. Therefore, in compliance with the university policy students in this class are required to wear a mask/facial covering before, during, and after class. Faculty members may also ask you to display your daily screening badge as a prerequisite to enter the classroom. You are also asked to maintain safe distancing practices to the best of your ability. For the safety of everyone, any student not appropriately wearing a mask/facial covering will be asked to leave the classroom immediately. The student will be responsible to make up any missed class content or work. Continued non-compliance with the Texas Tech University System Policy may result in disciplinary action through the Office of Student Conduct.

“People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care”
Theodore Roosevelt