

Sul Ross State University
Rio Grande College
Counseling Program
Department of Education

PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

EDUC 6319

3 semester credit hours

Fall Semester 2016

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Office Hours:

Available to meet with students by appointment in Uvalde on Mondays and Wednesdays 4:00 – 6:00 pm and 8:45 – 10:00 pm.

Available for virtual assistance via online chat, email and cell phone 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Available at other times and locations by appointment.

Course Purpose

This course will investigate abnormal behavior as defined by the most recent edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Topics include disorders of infancy, childhood, and adolescence; delirium, dementia, and amnesic and other cognitive disorders; substance-related disorders; schizophrenia and other psychotic disorder; mood disorders; anxiety disorders; somatoform disorders; factitious disorders; dissociative disorders; sexual and gender identity disorders; eating disorders; sleep disorders; impulse-control disorders; adjustment disorders; personality disorders; and problems of cultural diversity and ethnic differences.

Prerequisite: *Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in EDUC 6321, successfully completed all initial course work, and have permission of the instructor.*

Course Objectives

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Diagnose, in accordance with the **DSM-5**, the major psychological disorders and syndromes using the formulation narrative system. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted by observation of online participation, the four Case Study Diagnoses, the Film Character Diagnoses papers, the Objective Final Examination, and the Diagnostic Final Examination.*
2. Identify and discuss the diagnostic features, etiology, prevalence, and course of the major psychological disorders and syndromes. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted by observation of online participation, the four Case Study Diagnoses, the Film Character Diagnoses papers, the Objective Final Examination, and the Diagnostic Final Examination.*
3. Identify and describe cultural and ethnic factors which are of particular relevance in the diagnosis and treatment of the major psychological disorders and syndromes. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted by observation of online participation, the four Case Study Diagnoses, the Film Character Diagnoses papers, the Scholarly Research Paper, the Objective Final Examination, and the Diagnostic Final Examination.*
4. Acquire, interpret, and discuss the relevant empirical research in the field of psychopathology and the major psychological disorders and syndromes. *Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Scholarly Research Paper.*

Readings

The following three texts are required for this course:

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). ***Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5*** (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association. [ISBN-10: 0890425558 and ISBN-13: 978-0890425558]

American Psychological Association. (2010). ***Publication manual of the American Psychological Association*** (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [ISBN-10: 1433805618]

American Psychological Association. (2010). ***Mastering APA style: student's workbook and training guide*** (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. [ISBN-10: 143380557X]

Class Sessions

This class will meet in the virtual world online in the Blackboard system as well as through email (reply all) discussions. Students will be expected to log in and participate in presentations, discussions, assignments, and special readings for a minimum of twelve hours per week. (Refer to the *Distance Education Statement* of Rio Grande College near the end of this document.) Additionally, students are expected to regularly monitor email accounts for ongoing dialogues via emails to all. The instructor will specify the dates and evening hours that class sessions will be scheduled through Blackboard. There will be a two-hour class meeting every other Tuesday, beginning **Tuesday, August 30, 2016** through the Blackboard feature, **Collaborate**. Much like Skype, students will log in to Blackboard at 7:00 pm, link to **Collaborate**, and join the class meeting in “*real time*.” All students must begin the virtual classroom experience by **Sunday, August 28, 2016**. Start in the Content Area entitled, “Course Information,” and view the welcome video. Under the Content Area entitled, “Assignments,” you will find each week’s lecture notes, audio lectures and presentations, and various assignments in detail.

Course Requirements and Grading

| | |
|---|------------|
| *regular participation in the virtual classroom community | 50 points |
| *two film character diagnoses (@ 25 points) | 50 points |
| *ten case study diagnoses (@ 10 points) | 100 points |
| *five objective random quizzes (@ 20 points) | 100 points |
| *scholarly research paper or instructional project | 100 points |
| *objective final examination | 100 points |
| *diagnostic final examination | 100 points |

According to this scale, there are 600 total points possible on which your final course grade will be based. A final point total of 540 or greater will earn you a final grade of A, a total of 480-539 will be a final grade of B, and a total of 400-479 will be a C grade. **Regardless of the excuse, late assignments will be discounted in point value at 10% of the total points possible per day of lateness.**

Week #5: September 19 – 25

- *Bipolar and related disorders
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- **Due by 9/25: Case Study #2**
- ***Read: 123-154

Week #6: September 26 – October 2

- *Depressive disorders
- **Collaborate Session: September 27 7:00 pm**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- ***Read: 155-188

Week #7: October 3 – 9

- *Anxiety disorders
- *Obsessive-compulsive and related disorders
- **Due by 10/9: Case Study #3**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- ***Read: 189-264

Week #8: October 10 – 16

- *Trauma- and stressor-related disorders
- *Dissociative disorders
- **Collaborate Session: October 11 7:00 pm**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- **Due by 10/16: Case Study #4**
- ***Read: 265-308

Week #9: October 17 – 23

- *Somatic symptom and related disorders
 - *Feeding and eating disorders
 - *Elimination disorders
 - **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
 - **Due by 10/23: Film Character Diagnoses Paper I**
 - ***Read: 309-360
-

Week #10: October 24 – 30

- *Sleep-wake disorders
- *Sexual dysfunctions
- *Gender dysphoria
- **Collaborate Session: October 25 7:00 pm**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- **Due by 10/30: Case Study #5**
- ***Read: 361-460

Week #11: October 31 – November 6

- *Disruptive, impulse-control, and conduct disorders
- *Substance-related and addictive disorders
- **Due by 11/6: Case Study #6**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- **TCA 2016 Professional Growth Conference in Dallas**
- ***Read: 461-590

Week #12: November 7 – 13

- *Neurocognitive disorders
- *Personality disorders
- *Alternative DSM-5 model for personality disorders
- **Collaborate Session: November 8 @ 7:00 pm**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- **Due by 11/13: Case Study #7**
- ***Read: 591-684 and 761-781

Week #13: November 14 – 20

- *Paraphilic disorders
 - *Other mental disorders
 - *Medication-induced movement disorders and effects of medication
 - *Other conditions that may be a focus of clinical attention
 - *V-codes
 - **Due by 11/20: Case Study #8**
 - **Due by 11/20: Film Character Diagnoses Paper II**
 - **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
 - ***Read: 685-727
-

Week #14: November 21 – 27

- *Emerging measures and models
- *Assessment measures
- *Cultural formulation
- *Cultural concepts of distress
- **Collaborate Session: November 22 @ 7:00 pm**
- **Due by 11/27: Case Study #9**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- ***Read: 728-760 and 833-838
- **Thanksgiving Holiday: 11/23-11/25**

Week #15: November 28 – December 4

- *Conditions for further study
- *DSM review and application
- *Critical evaluation and practical implications
- **Due by 12/4: Case Study #10**
- **Due by 12/4: Scholarly Research Paper**
- **Weekly Assignments and Online Discussions**
- **Diagnostic Final Examination (11/28-12/7)**
- **Objective Final Examination Online (12/1-12/8)**
- ***Read: 783-806

Week #16: December 5 – 8

- **Collaborate Session: December 6 @ 7:00 pm**
 - **Due by 12/7: Diagnostic Final Examination**
 - **Due by 12/8: Objective Final Examination Online**
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Remember these important dates:

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| August 22 | Class begins. |
| August 25 | Last day for late registration and schedule changes. |
| September 5 | Labor Day Holiday: No Class. |
| September 11 | Case Study #1 is due. |
| September 18 | Approval of research or instructional topic is due. |
| September 25 | Case Study #2 is due. |
| October 9 | Case Study #3 is due. |
| October 16 | Case Study #4 is due. |
| October 17 | Mid-Semester. |
| October 23 | Film Character Diagnoses Paper I is due. |
| October 30 | Case Study #5 is due. |
| November 2-5 | TCA 2016 Conference in Dallas. |
| November 6 | Case Study #6 is due. |
| November 11 | Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University. |
| November 13 | Case Study #7 is due. |
| November 20 | Case Study #8 is due. |
| November 20 | Film Character Diagnoses Paper II is due. |
| November 23-25 | Thanksgiving Holiday. |
| November 27 | Case Study #9 is due. |
| December 4 | Case Study #10 is due. |
| December 4 | Scholarly Research Paper is due. |
| December 7 | Diagnostic Final Exam is due. |
| December 8 | Objective Final Exam is due. |
| December 10 | Fall Commencement in Uvalde at 7:30 p.m. |

Assignments and Activities

Participation in Virtual World

This class is being offered as an enhanced web-based course. The full experience of this course will take place on Blackboard. We will utilize the **Collaborate** feature of Blackboard in order to connect with one another for “*real time*” lectures, discussions and Q-and-A sessions. The **Collaborate** sessions are scheduled for every other Tuesday evening from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm and will be recorded and available for review on Blackboard. If you are unable to attend the real time Collaborate session you should plan to review the recorded session prior to the next quiz. Required readings, assignments, presentations, and videos will be posted on Blackboard. All students are expected to regularly access the class site on Blackboard and participate fully in the virtual elements of this course. Participation is evaluated by the instructor on a subjective basis and through Blackboard user statistics available to the Instructor. Participation in the virtual world is worth a total of **50 points** toward your final grade in this course.

All assignments are due via email no later than 11:59 pm on the dates specified on the course outline. Nearly all of the assignment due dates are on Sundays thereby allowing students a weekend to work on tasks, assignments and examinations. Do not attempt to fax, send, or hand deliver any assignments. Do not post or upload your papers on Blackboard. Email all assignments directly to the Instructor at trussell@sulross.edu. The Instructor will maintain contact with students via email and Blackboard announcements. Beware that if you do not check your various email addresses on a regular basis, you will miss important information. All announcements originating from Blackboard will only be sent to your Rio Grande College email account. Grades and comments on your papers will be sent to you personally via email.

Your routine and regular email correspondence with the Instructor is highly encouraged. It is how the professor knows that you are alive, thinking about the course material, and planning on earning a good grade! When the Instructor receives your email messages and attachments, he will send a confirmation notice to you via return email within two working days. The Instructor will rely on email to make special announcements and/or notifications. Please get in the habit of checking your various email accounts regularly each day, including your RGC account.

Please note that the Instructor will only send emails to you from trussell@sulross.edu. All other email announcements should be considered forgeries. **Important Rule:** When you email me a document, I will respond within two working days and confirm that I have received your email message and attached document. Therefore, if you send me something, and then a couple of days later you have not received a confirmation notice from me, then that means that I did not receive your email or your attachment. The confirmation notices are sent directly back to the sending email address. The technology consultant at your campus site can explain accessing Blackboard to you. You must get in the habit of checking this site several times per week for postings by the instructor, and you must schedule a minimum of twelve hours each week for working on the course requirements online.

Case Study Diagnosis

All students are expected to complete ten Case Study Diagnoses. Using the *DSM-5*, you will be expected to provide a brief diagnostic formulation, narrative, and rationale for each case you are given by the Instructor. Each Case Study Diagnosis is worth **10 points** for a total of 100 points possible toward your final grade in the course. You are free to consult and discuss the cases with class members. You will be provided with samples of the appropriate style and format for submitting the Case Study Diagnoses. These samples will be posted on Blackboard for your review and consideration.

Film Character Diagnoses

“Art imitates life.” Contemporary films offer intriguing and insightful opportunities to practice your psychopathology diagnostic skills. During this semester, you will be expected to select two movies (DVD) from the list below. After viewing the film of your choice, you will provide a comprehensive and thorough diagnostic formulation, narrative, and rationale for each of the two characters indicated. Furthermore, you will provide a details of your **differential diagnoses** (i.e., why the diagnoses were not other related syndromes or disorders) and the **justification** (i.e., why you decided on the particular diagnoses of the syndromes or disorders) for the diagnoses that you ultimately give to each of the two characters. The Film Character Diagnoses paper is worth a total of **25 points** for a total of 50 points possible toward your final grade in the course.

- *Away from Her*

Characters: Fiona & Grant

- *Rain Man*

Characters: Raymond & Charlie

- *The Hours*

Characters: Virginia &
Laura

- *Ordinary People*

Characters: Beth & Conrad

- *Donnie Darko*

Characters: Donnie &
Gretchen

- *Black Swan*

Characters: Nina & Erica

- *Requiem for a Dream*

Characters: Sara & Harry

- *Silver Linings Playbook*

Characters: Pat, Jr. & Tiffany

- *As Good as it Gets*

Characters: Melvin & Carol

- *K-PAX*

Characters: Prot & Mark

- *Girl, Interrupted*

Characters: Susanna & Lisa

- *Leaving Las Vegas*

Characters: Ben & Sera

- *American Beauty*

Characters: Lester & Carolyn

- *The Beaver*

Characters: Walter & Meredith

- *August: Osage County*

Characters: Violet & Barbara

- *No Country for Old Men*

Characters: Anton & Carla

Jean

Diagnostic Final Examination

All students are expected to satisfactorily complete a take-home Diagnostic Final Examination that will be disseminated via email, and posted on Blackboard, on or before November 30, 2016 and will be due, via email to the Instructor, on or before **December 7, 2016**. Do not attempt to fax or send the final. The Diagnostic Final Examination will consist of ten case studies for which you will be expected to provide accurate diagnoses, clinical narratives, differential diagnoses, and clinical justifications. This take-home Diagnostic Final Examination is worth a total of **100 points**.

Objective Final Examination

All students are expected to satisfactorily complete an Objective Final Examination that will be administered online. The examination will be available online from December 1, 2016 through December 8, 2016. The exam will consist of 100 multiple-choice items in timed formats. You will have 100 minutes to complete the 100-item examination. The exam will cover all Blackboard material and postings, *DSM-5* readings, special readings, lectures, presentations, and discussions. It is recommended that students use Chrome as the web browser for taking these exams as it seems to be more error-free than Mozilla Firefox or Internet Explorer when taking timed tests. However, if you experience technical difficulties with one web browser, your first action should be to try using a different web browser. The Objective Final Examination worth a total of **100 points**.

Random Quizzes

Throughout the semester there will be five brief random quizzes. Each of these quizzes will consist of 20 objective items (multiple-choice; true-false) and will be posted online. Students will have 20 minutes in which to complete the 20-item quiz. Each quiz must be completed in one sitting. You will not be allowed to log back on to a quiz once you have been timed out. Quizzes will occur on a “random” basis, however they will each be available from a Thursday to the following Sunday. This will give you four different days (including a weekend) in which to schedule the time and privacy you need to complete the quiz. Each quiz is worth **20 points** for a total of 100 points possible toward your final grade in the course.

Scholarly Research Paper

Students are expected to write a scholarly research paper on a topic directly related to the study of psychopathology. Since writing a scholarly research paper is a highly demanding semester-long endeavor, students are required to submit topic/title for instructor approval on or before **September 18, 2016**. The Instructor will review and comment on preliminary drafts of papers received before November 20, 2016. The final version of the scholarly research paper is due on or before **Sunday, December 4, 2016** and is worth a total of **100 points**.

Scholarly Research Papers typically consist of about 20+ pages of content, a minimum of 15 empirical references reviewed in the body of the paper, and a cover page. An abstract is not necessary. Students must adhere to the guidelines set forth in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Research papers not written in exact APA format will be returned ungraded. You are required to strictly adhere to the writing requirements established by the APA in this 6th edition style manual. (*Please be aware that the Instructor is nearly obsessive-compulsive about students' use of appropriate APA style. Do not follow the style of a professional journal. Only follow the 6th edition style manual.*) The Graduate Student Support Center Coordinator, Ms. Rita Ortiz, will be conducting seminars on appropriate APA style. These seminars will be conducted on **Collaborate**. The first webinar on APA style is scheduled for Saturday, September 17, 2016 at 10:00 am via Blackboard **Collaborate**. In addition to the required student workbook and the APA manual, you may find these three web sites helpful with APA style (6th ed.) and format:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>

<http://www.wooster.edu/psychology/apa-crib.html>

<http://www.apastyle.org/elecref.html>

All research papers must review the scientific literature related to the selected topic. Emphasis should be placed on the empirical literature found in the professional journals. Begin your research immediately. It is safe to assume that very little, if any, information will exist in the junior college library, and only a rare few of your related journal articles will be in *full text* format on the various library databases. You can expect to have to rely on interlibrary loan (online through SRSU) for most of your reference materials.

Students are only allowed to search the *PsycINFO* database available through SRSU (Alpine) via the Library web page: <http://library.sulross.edu/>. No other data bases are acceptable or appropriate for graduate students in Psychopathology. This activity can be done from the computer labs or from your own home or office. You can access *PsycINFO* from home by going to <http://library.sulross.edu/> and using your sulross user name and password. You will click on the tab entitled, "Databases," and then you will locate and select *PsycINFO*. Never conduct a "Google" search for a Scholarly Research Paper. You should consider Internet searches (e.g., Google, Yahoo, Excite) to be totally unscholarly and not acceptable for this research paper. I do not want to see any references to Internet sites in this scholarly paper. However, nearly all of your database searching will be online and some of your empirical journal articles may appear in online publication. In your Reference list you do not need to include the web link for a full-text article, just simply reference the source as a professional journal article (see *APA Style Manual*). The reference list must include a minimum of 20 sources, with at least 15 empirical sources from professional journals. These will most likely have to be ordered through Interlibrary Loan as it is highly unlikely that you will find many of your empirical articles in full text format on the *PsycINFO* database.

Your research topic must be approved by the Instructor before **September 18, 2016**. Your selected topic must be highly relevant to our geographic location and service population. You will not write papers on general psychopathology concepts such as depression, schizophrenia, and anxiety disorder. Instead your focus and research question must be highly refined for our particular corner of the world and our unique clientele. You are encouraged to use headings and subheadings as an organizational schema for the paper. You are also encouraged to write with a co-author and to work closely with the Instructor as the two of you research and write your co-authored Scholarly Research Paper.

The Instructor will provide editing recommendations on any drafts submitted prior to **November 20, 2016**. The final draft of the Scholarly Research Paper is due on or before **December 4, 2016** and is worth a total of **100 points**. Please remember to have at least **five** other people thoroughly and critically proof read your Scholarly Research Paper before submitting it to the Instructor. Scholarly Research Papers will be evaluated on the basis of:

- Readability
- APA style
- Organization
- Empirical Support
- Originality and Interest
- Topic/Title/Research Question
- Comprehensive Reference List

Students are encouraged to work very closely with the Instructor at all stages of completing the Scholarly Research Paper. Keep in mind that you have a great opportunity for having a well-written scholarly paper, one that is a unique contribution to the literature, published in professional counseling journals or even in a book on *Counseling Persons of Mexican Descent*. In previous years, several students have written Scholarly Research Papers that were eventually published in professional journals such as *The National Forum of Multicultural Issues Journal*.

Included below is a general outline for the format and content of the Scholarly Research Paper. If this description does not make sense to you, please consult with the Instructor.

A. Introduction

In this beginning section of the paper, you pull the reader in. Get the reader interested in your topic. You will state the purpose of your paper and/or your research question. You should discuss the relevance and importance of this topic to the field of counseling. Why is this topic or research important or of value? Give a general overview of how the paper is laid out. Tell the reader what you intend to do in this paper. (**Caution:** Never use first person in a Scholarly Research Paper. Never say, “I” or “me” or anything similar. Say things like, “The purpose of this research paper is to . . .”)

B. Review of Related Research

Obviously this is the most important section of the Scholarly Research Paper. This is the “meat-and-potatoes.” This section should be divided into various subheadings, depending on your topic, to facilitate smooth and easy reading. You will decide on your subheadings based upon your topic and how you want to present the studies. Organize this section in a logical format such as reviewing the more general (or least related) research first and working down to the most specific (and most closely related) research. You must review and discuss each study (at least 15 empirical articles). When reviewing a study always present and discuss the following factors for each of the 15 studies: purpose of research, methods employed, results and findings, interpretation of findings/researcher’s

conclusions, and criticisms and limitations of the study. Throughout this section of the paper you will need to periodically summarize your findings, and tie them back into your thesis statement.

Many students purpose topics and research questions which are original. This is referred to as “original research,” and it means that you are exploring a topic or research question that has not been thoroughly investigated. This is great! You will need to “extrapolate” from research studies that are closely related to your topic, and then draw conclusions from those findings. You will still need to thoroughly review at least 15 empirical studies.

C. Conclusion or Discussion

In this section you will pull it all together. Synthesize and integrate the important points from your Review of Related Research. From this section the reader gets to know what you found in a concise and straight-forward fashion. Reiterate the relevance of this research to the field of counseling and discuss implications of your findings to counseling. Also include discussion on further (or future) research that is needed in this area (your topic).

D. Summary

This section is basically like an abstract but is included at the end of the Scholarly Research Paper. In two or three paragraphs, summarize precisely and concisely your purpose, your findings, and your conclusions.

E. References

Include all references in appropriate APA format. Remember that everything cited in the body of the paper must be included in your References; and every reference citation in your References must be cited in the body of your paper.

Professional Counseling Identity and Behavior

In registering for classes in the Counseling Program at Rio Grande College, graduate students accept responsibility for attending scheduled class meetings, completing assignments on time, contributing to class discussions, and fully participating in all experiential learning activities. Counseling faculty members maintain specific attendance and participation requirements for each particular class. Faculty members may impose academic penalties upon absences from some classes and/or experiences; however, such penalties for absences will be a part of each course syllabus and will be distributed to each class at the beginning of each class and a copy filed in the departmental office.

The Counseling Program has specific policies and procedures which provide students with a sequential, growth-oriented progression of courses to take; students are fully responsible for knowing and following these policies and procedures. This is not a singular academic program to prepare students for advanced levels of teaching or beginning levels of administration, but rather a distinctly different profession entirely. Counseling is not an appropriate career field for all students. In the process of pursuing professional training in counseling, some students discover (or faculty may advise) that they are not appropriate for the counseling field, nor is the field of counseling appropriate for them. Faculty of the Counseling Program will provide continuous, honest and pragmatic feedback to each student regarding progress and suitability in this program.

Unethical behavior (as defined by the *Code of Ethics* of the American Counseling Association; refer to Appendix C) by a student enrolled in any counseling course will result in the exclusion of that student from the Counseling Program of Rio Grande College, and may subject the student to civil penalties as well. Professional behavior is expected of each and every student at all times across all counseling courses. Failure to maintain professionalism is considered unethical behavior.

The Counseling Program emphasizes professional, personal, and academic development as essential in counselor education and training. Students must not only excel academically, but must adhere to the professional and ethical standards of the profession, demonstrate effective counseling skills and competencies, and attend to their own personal development as it impacts their ability to work effectively and ethically as counseling professionals.

Counseling students are expected to attend to their own social and emotional development through extensive self-reflection and mindfulness. They must be open to new and divergent ideas, willing to examine their own values and assumptions, able to receive critical feedback, and capable of engaging in personal growth and transformation. At times this will involve examining one's own life experiences and facing one's own emotional issues. Willingness to do this important personal work is an integral part of any counselor's training.

Therefore, graduation from the Counseling Program requires that students successfully complete the academic and experiential requirements with mindful regard to both professional and personal development. Students must, in the professional judgment of the faculty, understand and behave in accordance with the professional and ethical standards, meet the requisite counseling competencies and skills to work as an effective professional counselor, and be free from any psychological or emotional impairment that may act as a barrier to effective professional practice. Throughout the counseling course work and the practical experiences, the faculty members regularly review student progress on the following basic qualities:

- Openness to new ideas
- Flexibility
- Cooperativeness with others
- Willingness to accept and use feedback
- Awareness of own impact on others
- Ability to deal with conflict
- Ability to accept personal responsibility
- Ability to express feelings effectively and appropriately
- Attention to ethical and legal considerations
- Initiative and motivation
- Development of professional skills and competencies
- Psychological functioning and mindful self-management

It is the personal and professional responsibility of each and every graduate student in the **Counseling Program** of Rio Grande College to be familiar with the most current issue of the *Counseling Program Handbook*. This document details and describes all aspects of the Counseling Program, from taking the first courses to passing the Comprehensive Oral Examination and graduating with the Master's in Counseling.

Unethical behavior (as defined by the *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* of the American Counseling Association) by a student enrolled in any counseling course will result in the exclusion of that student from the Counseling Program of Rio Grande College, and may subject the student to civil penalties as well. Professional behavior is expected of each and every student at all times across all counseling courses. Failure to maintain professionalism is considered unethical behavior.

Distance Education Statement

This course is being taught in an enhanced web-based format. The entire course experience will take place on Blackboard. Required readings, assignments, presentations, audio and video lectures and content training videos will be available on Blackboard. All students are expected to regularly access the class site on Blackboard and participate fully in the virtual aspect of this course. Every other Tuesday evening, from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm the class will meet in real time via the Collaborate feature of Blackboard. These bi-weekly sessions will be recorded so that students who were unable to participate in real time can view the proceedings at a later time.

The policy on Distance Education at Rio Grande College is as follows: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students' identities and to protect students' information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

Accessibility and Safe Learning Environment

The Counseling Program of Rio Grande College is committed to providing a learning environment that is free from intentional or unintentional sexual harassment, as defined below, or harassment on the basis of any protected classification including, but not limited to race, gender, color, religion, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, medical condition, marital status, veteran status or on any other basis protected by law. Such conduct is unprofessional, unproductive, illegal, and generally unacceptable. All conduct of this nature is expressly prohibited, regardless of whether it violates the law.

The Counseling Program of Rio Grande College supports equal employment and educational opportunities for all persons. No person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity sponsored by Rio Grande College on any basis prohibited by applicable law, including but not limited to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or disability.

The Counseling Program is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The Disability Services Coordinator assists students with disabilities in gaining opportunities for full participation in programs, services and activities. The Disability Services Coordinator is the Director of Student Services (830-758-5006) in Eagle Pass, Texas. Services available to all students include consultation, information and referral as well as personal counseling and academic advising. A student is eligible for disability services if s/he has been admitted to Rio Grande College and has a documented physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Qualified students with disabilities who need academic adjustments, auxiliary aids or services or other accommodations to ensure equal access must register with Disability Services. It is the student's responsibility to bring disability documentation with them to an appointment with the Disability Services Coordinator to discuss their individual needs at this time. Each request is considered on an individualized, case-by-case basis. As considerable time may be involved in obtaining complete and adequate documentation and arranging for qualified service providers, prospective and current students should request services in a timely manner. These services should be requested well in advance of the anticipated need.

Recent disability documentation from appropriate qualified professionals must be provided by the student to establish current functional limitations and the impact of the disability. Any recommendations for specific accommodations may be helpful in making determinations and these will be considered as part of the documentation review process. Documentation of disability status and other related information is handled in a confidential manner and is maintained in files separate from a student's educational record.

In compliance with applicable laws, unless Rio Grande College can demonstrate that an academic requirement is an essential component of a degree or program, the University will make reasonable adjustments to requirements to ensure that the requirements do not discriminate against qualified students with disabilities. A student with a disability may request a course substitution or a modification of a degree or program requirement through the following process.

The student's first point of contact for assistance with this process should be the Disability Services Coordinator. The student should submit:

1. A written request for the modification explaining his/her difficulties in the relevant areas and reasons for requesting the modification;
2. Information about the results of previous efforts in the relevant area (transcripts, etc.); and
3. Comprehensive documentation of the disability and the specific aspects of the disability which impair the student's ability to learn or perform in the area in which the student is requesting the modification. The Disability Services Coordinator will meet with the student, review the documentation and prepare a recommendation on the request.
 - a. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability, date of the current diagnostic evaluation (within a 5 year period), and the date of the original diagnosis.
 - b. A description of the diagnostic criteria and/or diagnostic test(s) used.
 - c. A description of the current functional impact/limitations of the disability.
 - d. Treatments, medications, assistive devices/services currently prescribed or used.
 - e. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability over time.
 - f. The credentials of the diagnosing professional(s) to include the training and experience which enable the person capable of making the diagnoses.

Recommendations for accommodation are helpful and will be given due consideration. If a student feels that s/he has been discriminated against based on disability, it is recommended that the student first attempt to resolve the issue directly with the individual or group suspected of discrimination. If this procedure is non-productive, a second step may be to seek assistance from the Disability Services office. Students may also file a complaint with the appropriate university officer for ADA/504 compliance, the ADA Compliance Officer, according to the student grievance procedure.

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances; demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies; leering; whistling; touching; pinching; assault; coerced sexual acts; suggestive, insulting or obscene comments or gestures. The Counseling Program prohibits all conduct of this nature whether or not such conduct violates any applicable laws.