

Counseling Program

Techniques of Counseling I

EDUC 6321

3 semester credit hours

Fall Semester 2020



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Student Availability and Office Hours:

Available for virtual assistance via Collaborate, email, text or voice

9:00 am – 12:00 pm Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays

Available at other times by appointment

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Community Counseling Clinic: <https://www.srsu-mrg-ccc.org/>

Clinic Email: srsu.mrg.counseling@gmail.com

Counseling Program Web Page: <https://www.sulross.edu/page/4849/master-education-counseling>

Course Prerequisites: Student must have earned a grade of B or higher in *Personality and Counseling Theories* (EDUC 5314) and have permission of the instructor. This course is taken concurrently with *Group Counseling* (EDUC 7315).

Course Purpose: This course will provide an experiential opportunity in professional counseling practice designed to develop communication and conceptualization skills essential to an effective and culturally relevant counseling relationship.

Course Description: This class will meet on Monday evenings, from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., on the Collaborate Ultra or Zoom platform. Class sessions will include fishbowl demonstrations, debriefing, discussion, role-play, and skill rehearsal. Additionally, all students are expected to attend and participate in a minimum of **thirteen (13)** weekly triad/tetrad (i.e., groups of three or four) practice sessions outside of class (approximately once per week throughout the semester). Due to the pandemic-related restrictions, these weekly practice sessions will be conducted on Collaborate Ultra, Zoom or Google platforms. These video-recorded practice and rehearsal sessions typically take between two and three hours and are scheduled at the convenience of the triad and tetrad members. Practice Triads (composed of three students) and Practice Tetrads (composed of four students) consist of a counselor, a client, and an observer (or two observers) that rotate through all positions until everyone has counseled a client for that particular week. All triad practice sessions must be video recorded for the purposes of supervision and evaluation. All recordings and written documentation must be uploaded to your individual folder on the shared Google space. These procedures will be thoroughly explained by Mr. Tadeo Martinez, Clinic Director. Students are entirely responsible for the accurate recording of each and every triad/tetrad practice rotation. All students are expected to participate in a minimum of **twelve (12)** one-hour weekly individual clinical supervision sessions with Clinical Supervisors who will be assigned by the instructors prior to the second meeting of the class. Supervision is a powerful teaching and learning tool; but it is definitely not an egalitarian relationship. In other words, the clinical supervisors know your course schedules and time demands. They will identify the few times during the week that they are available for scheduling supervision. Ultimately, they will have the final word in all decision-making struggles.

Course Goal: The primary goal of this course is to assist the students in establishing a firm foundation for their emerging and evolving integrated personal approach to counseling and psychotherapy. As the first “hands-on” class of the Counseling Program, the students must develop and understanding and application of the basic counseling skills that are essential in initiating and maintaining an effective and culturally relevant counseling relationship.

Student Learning Objectives: Upon successfully completing this course students will:

1. Identify and demonstrate basic listening and influencing skills necessary to initiate and maintain an effective counseling relationship.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Final Skill Evaluation, Clinical Supervision Reports and Counselor Evaluation, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

2. Assess the unique counseling needs of the client, incorporating the data from various formal and informal assessments.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Clinical Appraisal Report, the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Final Skill Evaluation, and the Objective Final Examination.

3. Identify and describe the essential characteristics and qualities of an effective counseling relationship.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Final Skill Evaluation, the Objective Final Examination, the Mindful Observation Blog, the Mindfulness Practice Log, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

4. Evaluate the effectiveness of counseling skills, techniques, and interventions at the beginning counselor level.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Final Skill Evaluation, the Clinical Supervision Reports, the Objective Final Examination, the Mindful Observation Blog, the Mindfulness Practice Log, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

5. Describe and discuss the ethical and professional foundations on which the effective counseling relationship is based.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Final Skill Evaluation, the Clinical Supervision Reports and Counselor Evaluation, the Objective Final Examination, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

6. Demonstrate and discuss the fundamental features of the student-counselor's dynamic and evolving integrated personal approach to counseling and psychotherapy.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Final Skill Evaluation, the Clinical Supervision Reports and Counselor Evaluation, the Mindful Observation Blog, the Mindfulness Practice Log, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

7. Recognize and define the concept of mindfulness as it relates to the counseling process and implement and maintain a personal mindfulness practice.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Final Skill Evaluation, the Clinical Supervision Reports and Counselor Evaluation, the Mindful Observation Blog, the Mindfulness Practice Log, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

8. Demonstrate professional commitment and personal growth.

Evaluation Method: Assessment of this objective will be conducted by the Midterm Skill Evaluation, the Clinical Supervision Reports, the Final Skill Evaluation, the Mindful Observation Blog, the Mindfulness Practice Log, and Instructor Observation of Class Participation.

Counseling Program Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of the Counseling Program, the candidates for the degree of Master of Education in Counseling, will clearly and unambiguously demonstrate to the Counseling faculty that they:

- Understand traditional and contemporary personality and counseling theories and can apply appropriate counseling interventions and strategies in individual and small group counseling.
- Identify and utilize basic assessment principles related to standardized assessments and designing an appropriate treatment plan.
- Comprehend the role and function of the counselor in a variety of work settings.
- Know and apply the professional standards of practice and the relevant code of ethics.
- Attend to their own personal growth, as well as that of their students and clients, through utilizing supervision, valuing interpersonal feedback, and engaging in mindful self-examination.
- Possess the knowledge and skills necessary to practice as a highly competent counseling professional.
- Employ personal self-awareness and professional sensitivity to the divergent values, behaviors, traditions, and counseling needs of all students and clients regardless of gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, ability, language, religion, ethnicity, or race.
- Engage in compassionate cultural sensitivity by applying core counseling concepts, mindfulness-based skills, and professional practices with diverse populations, in particular, the bilingual and bicultural students and clients living in the South Texas border region.
- Model intellectual curiosity and a strong personal commitment to continually expanding their counseling knowledge and proficiency through lifelong learning and professional development.

Required Readings: The instructors are conscientious of the outrageous costs of graduate studies and the rapidly escalating costs of counseling textbooks. Additionally, after 35 years of training masters level counselors, Dr. Russell considers most techniques and skills textbooks to be deficient in one or more areas of training. Therefore we do not use any required textbooks. Instead, all required readings are posted on our class Blackboard site. After the first night of class you will be granted access to the Blackboard site for *Techniques of Counseling I*. You are expected to remain current with the posted readings, articles, handout materials, videos and presentations available on Blackboard. Although there are no textbooks for this course, there is an abundance of required reading that will be posted and available to students on Blackboard.

Course Requirements and Grading:

*regular attendance and participation	50 points
*mindful observation blog	40 points
*evaluation progress reports by clinical supervisors	20 points
*clinical appraisal report	30 points
*midterm skill evaluation	60 points
*final skill evaluation	100 points
*objective final examination	100 points

According to this scale, there are 400 total points possible on which your final course grade will be based. A final point total of 360 or greater will earn you a final grade of A, a total of 320-359 will be a final grade of B, and a total of 280-319 will be a final grade of C, which is not acceptable for advancing to *Techniques of Counseling II* (EDUC 6322). If you earn a final grade of C or less, you will be invited to enroll in *Techniques I* again at a later time with a different cohort of learners. You will have the opportunity to repeat the course and improve your performance. Regardless of the excuse, late assignments will be discounted in point value at 10% of the total points possible per day of lateness.

Glimpse of a Typical Week in Techniques I: Here is a brief glimpse of what your “average week” will look like:

- 180 minutes (three hours) of class (“*fishbowl*”)
- 150 minutes (two and one-half hours) of triad practice and debriefing
- 60 minutes (one hour) of reading and academic study
- 60 minutes (one hour) of self-evaluation and skill review
- 60 minutes (one hour) of clinical supervision
- 60 minutes (one hour) of triad supervision
- 30 minutes (one-half hour) of mindfulness practice

Minimum of 600 minutes or ten (10) hours per week

Proposed Course Outline

DATE TOPICS, TASKS & ASSIGNMENTS DUE

August 24

- *Introductions
- *Course Overview and Expectations
- *Overcoming Obstacles
- *Dynamics and Characteristics of Emotional Intensity
- *Counseling as Intimate Personal Relationship
- **Due by 08/28/20: Creation of Blog & Mindfulness Log Due**
- ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

August 31

- *Conceptualizing Counseling
- *Understanding Clinical Supervision
- *Leaning into Fear and Apprehension
- *Introduction to Mindfulness
- *Fishbowl and Debriefing Structures
- *Development of Effective Observation Skills
- **Clinic Training Procedures**
- ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

September 7

- **Labor Day! – No Class**
- ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

September 14

- *Art of Counseling
- *Helping Relationship
- *Attending Skills
- *Maintaining Mindful Presence
- ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

September 21

- *Listening Skills
- *Encouraging
- *Paraphrasing
- *Summarizing
- *Supportive Silence
- *Practicing Mindful Listening
- ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

September 28

- *Understanding the Client
- *Observation Skills
- *Selective Responding
- *Gentle and Kind Mindful Awareness and Observation
- ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

November 23 *Termination of Counseling Relationship
 *Client Conceptualization
 *Mindfulness in Clinical Supervision
 *Final Fishbowl and Last Class Experience
 ***Blackboard: Readings and Blog

November 25-27 ****Thanksgiving Holiday – No Class!**

November 30 ****Final Skill Evaluations**

December 7 *Overview of *Techniques of Counseling II* (EDUC 6322)
 *Individual Learning Contracts
 *Termination Rituals
 ****Due 12/8 11:00 pm: Clinical Supervisor Evaluations**
 ****Due 12/9 11:00 pm: Objective Final Examination Due Online**
 ****Due 12/10 11:00 pm: Mindful Observation Blog**

Remember these important dates:

August 24	Class begins and last day to add EDUC 6321 or EDUC 7315
August 27	Last day for late registration and schedule changes
August 28	Initial entry required for Mindful Observation Blog
September 7	Labor Day Holiday: No Class
September 9	Last day to drop the Experiential Block without an academic record
October 19	Midterm Skill Evaluations conducted
November 11	Veterans Day Holiday: No Class
November 13	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University
November 16	Clinical Appraisal Report due by 11:00 pm
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Day Holidays
November 30	Final Skill Evaluations conducted
December 7	Last class meeting and termination for <i>Techniques I</i>
December 8	Clinical Supervisor Evaluation is due by 11:00 pm
December 9	Objective Final Exam must be completed online by 11:00 pm
December 10	Mindful Observation Blog completed by 11:00 pm
December 11	Final Grades Submitted

Attendance and Participation: All students are expected to attend class regularly and on time. Attendance and participation are worth a total of **50 points**. Due to the restrictions imposed by the national pandemic, all class, practice and supervision meetings will occur on one of the reliable video meeting platforms. Tardiness and absenteeism have extreme detrimental effects on both learning and counseling skill rehearsal. Missing a class session for any reason will result in the deduction of **20 points** from the attendance and participation score, regardless of the excuse. Showing up late (after the three instructors have convened the class) will result in the deduction of **10 points** from the attendance and participation score, regardless of the excuse. Additionally, missing a scheduled triad practice session or a clinical supervision session will result in the deduction of **10 points** from the attendance and participation score, regardless of the excuse. The instructors will not judge the merits of a student's reasons for missing class – all absences and tardies will be treated the same. There will be no opportunities for making up missed class time. Participation in the class is measured by one's willingness and courage to take risks.

In addition to our Monday evening class meeting, you will also be meeting and practicing (outside of class time) with two or three other students who constitute a particular triad or tetrad (or quintet). You must attend and participate in **thirteen (13)** weekly (once per week throughout the semester) triad practice sessions. These video-recorded practice and rehearsal sessions typically take between two and three hours and are scheduled at the convenience of the triad or tetrad members. Practice triads (composed of three students) consist of three roles which are assumed by every student-counselor each practice session: Counselor, Client, and Observer. Practice tetrads (composed of four students) consist of four roles which are assumed by every student-counselor each practice session: Counselor, Client, Observer #1, and Observer #2. In a single triad/tetrad recorded practice session all group members will rotate through all positions until everyone has counseled a client for that particular week. Group members will maintain the same rotation position and assigned client for the duration of the semester. All triad practice sessions must be video recorded for the purposes of supervision and evaluation.

Immediately following each practice counseling session (20-45 minutes in length), the observer(s) share(s) feedback with the counselor. The focus of observation and debriefing is on the skill and conceptualization of the counselor and not the content (storyline) presented by the client. When one counselor-client practice session is complete and feedback has been shared, everyone rotates to a new position. The entire triad/tetrad practice session must be video recorded (non-stop), from the beginning of the first counseling session, through the feedback debriefing, for each of the rotations.

Students are required to leave their video feed on during class sessions unless otherwise instructed. During fishbowl counseling demonstrations all observers must keep their audio feed muted. Then during the debriefing sessions everyone must have both their video and audio on and active. It is safe to assume that we will all be learning about effective methods for translating in-person experiences to the world of digital platforms. Students should feel free to help problem-solve issues that may arise.

Mindful Observation Blog: All students are required to maintain a Mindful Observation Blog on the class Blackboard platform. The journal-like task will be located in a specified blog folder on Blackboard. You must title your blog space with your first and last name followed by the designated assignment title. For example, *Todd Russell Mindful Observation Blog* would be the title of my blog space under that particular function. The Mindful Observation Blog includes documentations and demonstrations of personal growth, struggle, awareness and professional/academic understanding. Blog posts should include cognitive and affective responses to fishbowl demonstrations, debriefings, and discussions. The blogs should include a minimum of **two entries per week** that are based on the events and experiences of that week's fishbowl, debriefings and discussions, triad practice work, and supervision experiences. The level of analysis woven throughout your blog entries must reflect a depth of awareness and introspection characteristic of graduate student insight and sophistication. You are required to interact with other students via the blogs.

The initial entries in you Mindful Observation Blog must start with the date/time, followed by your observations and awareness. When you return to the blog space for your second, third and fourth (and so on and so forth) entries, you will simply edit your existing blog entry by clicking the gray down-arrow and selecting "Edit." Begin the subsequent entries by first posting the date and time (e.g., September 22, 2020 at 8:30 pm) and then your comments. You must make at least two substantial entries (250-500 words) per week in the Mindful Observation Blog. All entries should be thorough, insightful and dynamic. All students are expected to follow the blog postings of fellow classmates. In so doing, observations, insights, feedback and questions can be posed for the blog author simply by using the "Comment" button at the end of blog journal. If someone has made a comment on your recent blog entry, you should respond to the comment in the regular body of your blog. Do not use the "Comment" button to respond to someone's comment of your blog. Simply address the issue raised right in the body of your blog journal. At various points throughout the semester the instructors will provide feedback to you regarding the content and depth of your Mindful Observation Blog entries. In the first blog post for your Mindful Observation Blog, please tell us about yourself; your educational and career history; and your aspirations in the field of counseling. Your blog must be created, and your first entry posted on or before **Friday, August 28, 2020**. Your final blog entries must be completed by the Tuesday of finals week in December. The Mindful Observation Blog is worth a total of **40 points** toward your final grade in this course.

Mindfulness and Counseling: Mindful counselors are able to interact more effectively with their personal and professional environments; they are able to respond rather than react to life's unexpected happenings; they are more effective communicators professionally and personally; and they are more creative and effective agents of client-desired change. A routine personal mindfulness practices provides the counseling graduate student with the knowledge and skills to:

- Slow down or stop the cascade of automatic and habitual reactions.
- See oneself and others more clearly.
- Listen deeply and understand situations just as they are.
- Be open to creativity beyond conditioning.
- Respond effectively to complex and/or emotionally charged situations.
- Act competently and ethically.
- Achieve balance and resilience in personal and professional lives.

Objective Final Examination: All students are expected to satisfactorily complete a 100-point objective final examination that is based on the readings (posted articles and handouts), resources, and class experiences during the entire semester. The examination items will expect you to integrate course content with the readings and will consist of one hundred objective items (multiple-choice and true/false). The final examination will be available online for five days prior to its deadline of **December 9, 2020** at 11:00 pm. This examination is worth a total of **100 points** toward your final grade in the course.

Clinical Supervision: Clinical supervision is a powerful tool for managing and ensuring continuous improvement in the delivery of counseling services. Clinical supervision is comprised of balancing four distinct functions: administrative, evaluative, supportive, and clinical. Fundamental structures include a positive working relationship, client-centered approach, commitment to professional development, and legal and ethical accountability. The following action principles ensure high-quality clinical supervision:

- ☉ Maintains a safe, trusting relationship that promotes a learning alliance.
- ☉ Advances a counselor-centered approach with cultural relevance and sensitivity.
- ☉ Promotes professional growth and development.
- ☉ Sustains clinical oversight to ensure the therapeutic quality of the counseling relationship.
- ☉ Ensures ethical and legal responsibility.
- ☉ Employs an individualized approach that is responsive to the needs of the supervisee.
- ☉ Shares the values and philosophy of the Counseling Program and the agency or institution.

All students are expected to engage in weekly individual clinical supervision meetings with a Clinical Supervisor (assigned by the Instructors). These weekly one-hour supervision sessions will be individual, and a minimum of **twelve sessions** are required during the course of the semester. All *Techniques I* students will be assigned to an individual clinical supervisor by the second night of class. (Students cannot select their own clinical supervisor.) You are required to submit to your clinical supervisor the “*Weekly Self-Assessment*” form (and **only** copy Lynette and Ricardo). This must be sent at least 24 hours in advance of your supervision meeting. Thus at the end of the semester, the Instructors will have a complete record of your twelve weekly supervision sessions. The clinical supervisors will submit to the Instructors an evaluation of the supervisee’s counseling performance at the end of the supervision relationship (refer to the *Clinical Assessment of Counselor Skill* evaluation form). Additionally, the clinical supervisors will maintain regular contact with Lynette, Ricardo, Tad and Dr. Russell informing them of your growth and development. The various components of clinical supervisor are worth a total of **20 points** toward your final grade in this course.

Triad Practice Sessions: The purpose of this course is to assist the student in establishing a firm foundation for their emerging and evolving integrated personal approach to counseling and psychotherapy. This is the first “hands-on” class of the Counseling Program. All students will be assigned to a practice triad or a practice tetrad (or larger) on the first night of class. Each group must meet once a week for a full rotation of roles while video recording. The practice groups must maintain the same rotation schedule for the duration of the semester. The general goal of the practice group is to prepare students for the two major evaluations of counselor knowledge, skill development, and application of the basic counseling techniques and interventions. In this course your access to appropriate online shared space requires your familiarity with the *Community Counseling Clinic*. This no-cost community service clinic is administered by the Clinic Director with assistance of a collaborative team consisting of the professor, the Assistant Clinic Manager, and the graduate Teaching Assistants/Mentors. Clinic Mentor, the Graduate Student Mentors, and the local site-based Administrative Assistants.

Midterm and Final Skill Evaluations: All students are expected to engage in regular skill practice outside of class with an assigned triad or tetrad of fellow students. On the first night of class all students will be assigned to a practice triad or a practice tetrad. The purpose of these small groups of three (or four if necessary) is to practice the basic counseling skills and provide observant and mindful feedback and support to one another. Practice triads (composed of three students) consist of three rotating roles of counselor, client, and observer. Each triad member serves in each of the three roles during the course of one weekly practice and recording session. Practice tetrads (composed of four students) consist of four rotating roles of counselor, client, observer #1, and observer #2. Each tetrad member serves in each of four roles during the course of one weekly practice and recording session. All triad practice sessions must be video recorded for the purposes of supervision and evaluation. The triad or tetrad produces one single video of one weekly practice meeting, from start to finish. This ensures that in addition to the counseling session, the debriefing discussions are also recorded for later review. Procedures for uploading the practice session recording will be discussed in class.

For the Midterm Skill Evaluations, students must choose a recent video (at least 20 minutes) of a counseling session that will be evaluated by the three instructors. The Midterm Skill Evaluations will be conducted during the regular class time on **October 19, 2020**, on the Zoom platform, and will be worth **60 points** toward your final grade in this course. There will be no class meeting on the evening of the skill evaluations. The Final Skill Evaluation is worth **100 points** toward your final grade in the course and will be scheduled on **November 30, 2020** in the same fashion as the Midterm Evaluation of Skill. For the Final Skill Evaluations, students must choose a recent video (at least 40 minutes) of a counseling session that clearly demonstrates growth and improvement from midterm.

Clinical Appraisal Report: All students are expected to complete a Clinical Appraisal Report on the most important client in the world: *Self*. The primary objective of this assignment to assist you in interpreting and integrating formal and informal assessment data into the client's treatment plan and the counseling relationship. The thematic purpose of the Clinical Appraisal Report is to assess your potential effectiveness and likelihood of success in the career field of Counseling. Students will be required to engage in various methods of assessment and psychological appraisal to collect data on the self, and then write a concise, but comprehensive, Clinical Appraisal Report. All students are required to incorporate all scaled scores and percentiles (e.g., Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Analytical Writing) from the general **Graduate Record Examination** (GRE). The task cannot be completed without all three GRE scores. Writing scores are sent to examinees about four to six weeks after completion of the examination.

In this Clinical Appraisal Report, you must report your standard scores and percentiles for the three major areas: Verbal, Quantitative, and Analytical Writing. More importantly, you must provide a thorough clinical interpretation of the obtained scores. (Refer to both empirical and clinical research articles for comprehensive clinical interpretation of your GRE scores.) You are required to interpret the scores in light of the purpose of the Clinical Appraisal Report. Students must incorporate other assessment data available to them, including standardized test scores (**MBTI**, **MMPI**, **TE_xES**), academic grades, behavioral observations, projective testing techniques, dream journals, personal histories or narratives, and other sources of assessment and appraisal data. The Clinical Appraisal Report is worth a total of **30 points** toward your final grade and is due, via email, to all three Instructors, on or before **November 16, 2020**. The clinical report must be written professionally in the third person (as if you were writing about your client). Clinical Appraisal Reports are typically seven to ten pages in length (single-spaced). Sample Clinical Appraisal Reports will be made available on Blackboard, but students are cautioned against following the sample verbatim when constructing this report. Instead, regardless of what you might see in the samples, you should format your report in reflection of the following outline:

Client Name: Indicate client's full name.

Client Contact Information: Include client's address, phone numbers, and email.

Date of Birth: Indicate client's date of birth.

Age: Indicate client's age at time of testing or reporting.

Tests Administered: Indicate the standardized tests (e.g., **GRE**, **MMPI-2**, **MBTI**) administered to the client and the specific dates that the assessments were conducted.

Behavioral Observations: Indicate the client's physical and emotional behaviors and experiences during the administrations of the various standardized tests.

Other Assessment Data: Indicate the other sources of client appraisal data and the methods in which the data were obtained.

Background Information: Include as much background information and historical narrative as is relevant to addressing the issue of potential effectiveness and likelihood of success in the career field of Counseling; avoid tangential story-telling and informational overload.

Standardized Test Results: Include both the quantitative information (standard scores and percentiles) and descriptive information about the client's obtained scores, as well as a thorough clinical interpretation and psychological explanations of the obtained scores.

Other Assessment Results: Include both a description and clinical interpretation of the data obtained gathered on the client through other sources of assessment and appraisal.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Include a comprehensive summary of the assessment interpretations, as well as a thorough response to the thematic focus of the client's potential effectiveness and likelihood of success in the career field of Counseling.

Hint: When gathering assessment and appraisal data for this report, and while writing the various sections of this psychological evaluation, imagine one of the following two "purposes" of your Clinical Appraisal Report: (1) A university professor makes the sole decision about which student applicants will be admitted to the graduate training program in counseling and which applicants will be rejected; or (2) An employer makes the sole decision about which applicant will be hired in a coveted counseling position and which applicants will not. Your Clinical Appraisal Report must include enough accurate assessment data to be logical, understandable, and convincing, but not so much so that it appears that you are "recommending" the client. A recommendation by definition is biased; a clinical psychological report is highly objective and entirely fact-based.

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. By the time a student is admitted to the **Experiential Block**, it is expected that she or he has thoroughly read and comprehended the complete policies, procedures and recommendations of the most recent 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. 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 and/or the field of counseling is not 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) 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 focus on 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, prepared to examine their own values and assumptions, ready to recognize their own prejudices and biases, willing to be present in the moment with highly uncomfortable (painful) emotions that initially evoke the "fight-flight-freeze" hijacking of the primitive limbic system, able to receive critical feedback in the company of peers with an open mind and a tender heart, and capable of engaging in personal growth and transformation. At times this will involve examining one's own life experiences while creating space and understanding for one's inner demons and emotional obstacles to personal growth. Willingness to do this important personal work is an integral part of any counselor's professional 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 and supervisors, understand and behave in accordance with the professional standards of behavior, 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 interpersonal and therapeutic interventions. 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

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 SRSU 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 SRSU 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. Students with disabilities are provided assistance in gaining opportunities for full participation in programs, services and activities. The Coordinator of Student Services (830-279-3003), Ms. Kathy Biddick (kbiddick@sulross.edu), serves as the Disability Services Coordinator and she is located in Uvalde. 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 SRSU 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 SRSU 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 (Coordinator of Student Services). 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.

Distance Education Statement: Due to the conditions and restrictions associated with the COVID-10 pandemic, the experiential learning and skill development of *Techniques of Counseling I* (EDUC 6321) will take place on Blackboard, Collaborate Ultra, Zoom and Google platforms. Required readings, assignments, blogs, 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 aspect of this course. The policy on Distance Education at Sul Ross State University 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 SRSU 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.

Triad Observer Feedback Form

Observer Name: _____
Student Counselor: _____

Date of Observation: _____
Triad Practice Session Number: _____

Directions: The peer observer role in the triad/tetrad practice rotation will use this form to document observations and feedback of the student-counselor's performance. During the debriefing session, the observer will verbally share his/her feedback with the student-counselor and then give the completed form to the student-counselor.

Opening: Was the opening comfortable, friendly, and pleasant? Any role definition needed? Any introduction needed?

Rapport: Did student counselor establish good rapport with client? Was the stage set for a productive counseling session?

Interaction: Were the client and student counselor really communicating in a meaningful manner? If the client was nonverbal, were the student counselor and client meaningfully engaged in the counseling process?

Acceptance: Was the student counselor accepting of the client's emotions, feelings, thoughts, and values? Were attempts made to impose counselor values, opinions or beliefs during the session?

Reflection of Feeling: Did the student counselor reflect and empathically respond to feelings or did the counseling session remain on an intellectual and cognitive level?

Counselor Responses: Were the student counselor responses appropriate in view of what the client was expressing or were responses concerned with trivia and minutia? Did the student counselor rely on interrogation and questioning as means to elicit client content and affect? Did the counselor rely on paraphrasing and reflecting of feeling as means to elicit client content and affect?

Counselor Relationship: Was an effective counseling relationship established? Was the counselor-client relationship conducive to productive and therapeutic counseling?

Closing: Was the session terminated in an effective and sensitive manner? Was the closing abrupt, awkward, or brusque? Did the counselor terminate the session in a way that facilitated the client leaving the experience with deeper awareness of emotions and issues?

General Techniques: How well did the student counselor conduct the mechanics of the counseling session? Did the student counselor effectively use silences? Was the vocabulary appropriate? Where the interventions appropriate? Was the timing and pace of the session therapeutic?

Fishbowl Observation Guidelines

Attending Skills

Visual Cues and Eye Contact
Vocal Qualities
Verbal Tracking and Selective Attention
Gestures, Posture and Proximity

Listening Skills

Encouraging
Paraphrasing
Summarizing
Personalizing
Client Focusing

Observation Skills

Observing Client Behavior
Observing Content Themes

Affective Skills

Rapport
Working Alliance
Reflection of Feeling
Empathy

Intervention Skills

Minimal Interrogation
Avoidance of Advice
Avoidance of Judgment
Working Hypothesis
Confrontation
Influencing Skills

Fishbowl Observation Form: Every class session in *Techniques of Counseling I* will involve at least one fishbowl demonstration of counseling. Each evening the instructors will select at least one student at random to be the client in the fishbowl while Dr. Russell serves as the counselor. In the absence of Dr. Russell, Lynette and/or Ricardo will conduct the fishbowl counseling sessions. All fishbowl observers are required to complete a **Fishbowl Observation Form** for each fishbowl session. Immediately following the fishbowl debriefing discussion, you are required to submit the completed Fishbowl Observation Form to the TA's. Use this form to record your observations, questions, concerns and insights.

Attending Skills

- ☞ What did you observe about the counselor's eye contact with the client?
- ☞ Did you observe the counselor disengage eye contact with the client for a therapeutic reason?
- ☞ How would you describe the counselor's vocal qualities?
- ☞ What might be helpful or harmful about the counselor's vocal qualities?
- ☞ In what ways did you observe the counselor's process of verbal tracking?
- ☞ Did you observe the counselor engage in selective attention or selective non-attention?
- ☞ How would you describe the counselor's gestures, postures, and proximity?
- ☞ In what ways did the counselor "teach" the client that the counseling relationship is unlike all other social relationships?

Listening Skills

- ☞ In what ways did you observe the counselor engaging in mindful listening of the client?
- ☞ Did you observe the counselor employ encouragers, paraphrases or summaries? Where they therapeutic, detrimental, or simply "plops?" How can you tell?
- ☞ In what ways did the counselor personalize client content? Were these interventions therapeutic, detrimental, or simply "plops?" How can you tell?
- ☞ Where were the primary focal points of the counselor?

Observation Skills

- How could you tell that the counselor was mindfully observing the client's behaviors?
- Did the counselor miss a key observation?
- How could you tell that the counselor was mindfully observing the client's internal processes?
- Did the counselor miss any key client processes?

Affective Skills

- ♥ In what ways did the counselor establish rapport with the client?
- ♥ Was there a working alliance between the counselor and the client? How do you know?
- ♥ In what ways did the counselor demonstrate mindful reflection of client affect? Did the counselor miss important opportunities to reflect feeling?
- ♥ In what ways did you observe the presence of empathy? What was the counselor feeling? How might you know this?
- ♥ How would you describe the atmosphere of this intimate relationship?

Intervention Skills

- ★ How often did the counselor engage in interrogation or the use of questions?
- ★ What strategies were emphasized by the counselor instead of questioning?
- ★ Did the counselor assume a "one up" position by offering advice or judgment? If the client asked for advice, opinion or judgment, how did the counselor respond? Were these interventions therapeutic, detrimental, or simply "plops?" How can you tell?
- ★ Did the counselor appear to be guided by an internal "working hypothesis?" If so why? If not, why not?
- ★ In what ways did the counselor employ mindful conflict or confrontation? Were these interventions therapeutic, detrimental, or simply "plops?" How can you tell?
- ★ What other advanced skills, influencing skills, or theoretically-specific skills did you observe? What was your reaction to them?

Weekly Self-Assessment for Clinical Supervision

Directions: In preparation for a clinical supervision session, you must complete this one-page self-assessment of the counseling skills that you demonstrated (or failed to demonstrate) in the particular counseling session you are going to share in supervision. At least 24 hours prior to your scheduled individual supervision session, the weekly self-assessments must be emailed to your clinical supervisor and the two GM's.

Date of Counseling Session: _____ **Counseling Session #:** _____

Overall Performance: 0 1 2 3 4 5

(Rate your counseling demonstration on a scale of 0 to 5, with 5 being excellent.)

⊗ **Summary of Counseling Session:**

⊗ **Techniques Employed, Attempted or Needed:**

⊗ **Areas of Skill Development in Need of Improvement:**

⊗ **Additional Comments, Concerns or Questions:**

Clinical Assessment of Counselor Skill

Completed By Individual Clinical Supervisor

Student-Counselor: _____ Date: _____

Clinical Supervisor Signature: _____

1. Counselor demonstrated effective attending skills.	0	1	2
2. Counselor observed client behavior and responded appropriately.	0	1	2
3. Counselor communicated concern and empathy.	0	1	2
4. Counselor employed effective listening skills.	0	1	2
5. Counselor elicited and reflected client affect appropriately.	0	1	2
6. Counselor avoided questioning and interrogation.	0	1	2
7. Counselor employed appropriate influencing intervention skills.	0	1	2
8. Counselor was open-minded and productive during supervision.	0	1	2
9. Counselor maintained a receptive attitude when receiving criticism.	0	1	2
10. Counselor demonstrated an appropriate level of insight.	0	1	2

Rating Scale: A rating of 0 indicates no demonstration of skill area when it was required; a rating of 1 indicates improvement needed in skill area; and a score of 2 indicates appropriate and satisfactory demonstration of skill area.

Briefly describe the student-counselor's strengths and weaknesses:

Midterm Skill Evaluation

Student Counselor: _____

Date of Evaluation: _____

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Counselor effectively employed attending skills. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2. Counselor communicated concern and empathy. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3. Counselor mindfully attended to client themes and messages. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4. Counselor paraphrased and summarized client content. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5. Counselor reflected client affect in a therapeutically mindful fashion. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6. Counselor personalized client content. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7. Counselor avoided relying on interrogation and question-asking. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8. Counselor employed an appropriate sense of timing. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9. Counselor demonstrated mindfulness, insight and understanding of the therapeutic process | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10. Counselor accurately evaluates own effectiveness. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Total Points Awarded (60 possible): _____

***Note:** The value of 6 indicates *excellent or exemplary* demonstration of the skill; the value of 3 indicates *average or satisfactory* demonstration of the skill; the value of 1 indicates *the serious need for immediate improvement* in the use and demonstration of the skill; and the value of 0 indicates *poor or no* demonstration of the skill when it was critically required. Students should assume that *excellent or exemplary* ratings are very seldom awarded at this level of counselor training.

Counseling Considerations

Respond to these brief questions prior to the scheduled skill evaluation.

1. Why did you select this particular session for the skill evaluation?
2. What do you consider to be your two greatest strengths as a counselor? What do you consider to be your two greatest weaknesses as a counselor?
3. What is your plan for enhancing and improving your counseling skill through the remainder of the semester? Your skill development plan will be used as performance criteria on the Final Evaluation of Skill.

Final Skill Evaluation

Student Counselor: _____ Date of Evaluation: _____

1. Counselor effectively employed attending skills. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
2. Counselor mindfully communicated accurate and authentic empathy. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
3. Counselor paraphrased and summarized client content. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Counselor personalized client content and process. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
5. Counselor mindfully reflected client affect in a hierarchical fashion. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
6. Counselor avoided interrogation using only therapeutically essential questions. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
7. Counselor took therapeutic risks by effectively using one or more influencing skills. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
8. Counselor demonstrated a sense of therapeutic timing. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
9. Counselor maintained authentic and genuine interactions with the client. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
10. Counselor demonstrated an emerging integrated personal approach to counseling. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Total Points Awarded (100 possible): _____

Note: The value of 10 indicates *excellent or exemplary* demonstration of counseling skills and knowledge; the value of 5 indicates *good or satisfactory* demonstration of counseling skills and knowledge; and the value of 1 indicates *poor performance or the serious need for immediate improvement* in counseling skills and knowledge. Students should assume that *excellent or exemplary* ratings are very seldom awarded at this level of counselor training. If your total score is above 50, you can assume that your performance is average or above.

Counseling Considerations

Please respond to these brief questions prior to your scheduled final skill evaluation.

1. Why did you select this particular session for the final skill evaluation? How does your counseling performance in this session demonstrate your improvement since midterm?
2. In what ways does your counseling performance in this session reflect your own unique emerging integrated approach to counseling? What do you consider to be three essential elements of your own integrated and evolving personal approach to counseling?
3. What role did clinical supervision play in your skill development during this semester?
4. What specific skills and interventions do you believe you need further practice and development?