



## SYLLABUS

### EDSR 6341 Psychopathology

SEMESTER: Fall 2026 (August 24 – December 9, 2026)

#### **Instructor Information:**

**Instructor:** Beniam Aster Megabi Awoke Betsiha, PhD, MA, MRC, NCC, LPC, LCDC, CRC

**Email:** [bbetsiha@sulross.edu](mailto:bbetsiha@sulross.edu) (Sul Ross email is the preferred method for all course-related inquiries. Responses can be expected within 24 hours, Monday through Friday.)

**Phone:** 903.231.5010 (Text message preferred. Please reserve phone contact for urgent or emergency matters only. Texts receive a response within 24 hours.)

**Physical Office Location:** Virtual (online) — no physical campus location

**Virtual Office Hours:** Thursdays, 5:00–6:00 p.m. CST via Zoom. Students wishing to attend must request an appointment at least 24 hours in advance via Sul Ross email or Blackboard message. The Zoom link is provided upon confirmation. Additional appointments outside this window are available on request with a minimum of 24 hours' notice.

#### **Required Texts:**

American Psychiatric Association. (2022). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5-TR (5th ed. Revision). American Psychiatric Association. [ISBN-13: 978-0890425763]

#### **Film Requirement (for the Assignment):**

Perry, T. (2025). Straw. Access Motion Pictures.

*or*

Van Zant, G. (2015). Sea of Trees. Access Motion Pictures.

#### **Recommended Texts:**

1. American Psychological Association. (2019). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.). [ISBN-13: 978-1433832161]
2. Barlow, D. H., Durand, V. M., & Hofmann, S. G. (2023). Psychopathology: An Integrative Approach to Mental Disorders (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.
3. Ingersoll, E. & Rak, C. (2016). Psychopharmacology for Mental Health Professionals: An Integrative Approach (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

#### **Recommended Reference (Drugs.com):**

- SSRIs — [drugs.com/drug-class/ssri-antidepressants.html](https://www.drugs.com/drug-class/ssri-antidepressants.html)
- SNRIs — [drugs.com/drug-class/ssnri-antidepressants.html](https://www.drugs.com/drug-class/ssnri-antidepressants.html)
- Antipsychotics — [drugs.com/drug-class/atypical-antipsychotics.html](https://www.drugs.com/drug-class/atypical-antipsychotics.html)

- Anxiolytics — [drugs.com/drug-class/anxiolytics-sedatives-and-hypnotics.html](https://drugs.com/drug-class/anxiolytics-sedatives-and-hypnotics.html)
- MAOIs — [drugs.com/drug-class/monoamine-oxidase-inhibitors.html](https://drugs.com/drug-class/monoamine-oxidase-inhibitors.html)
- Tricyclics — [drugs.com/drug-class/tricyclic-antidepressants.html](https://drugs.com/drug-class/tricyclic-antidepressants.html)

### **Course Prerequisites:**

None.

### **Course Purpose and Description:**

This course investigates abnormal behavior as defined by 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 disorders; 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 difference.

### **Course Objectives and Key Performance Indicators:**

These objectives function as this course's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): the student learning outcomes the program uses to track your acquisition of the knowledge and skills required by the 2024 CACREP Standards. After successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Recognize and classify the foundational structure of the DSM.
- Analyze, assess, and synthesize how to use the DSM in clinical practice.
- Associate and indicate signs and symptoms of mental health disorders.
- Demonstrate critical thinking for evaluating “typical” and “atypical” behavior.
- Demonstrate a foundational understanding of diagnostic criteria, comorbidity and differential diagnosis, modifier function, and ICD-10 application.
- Distinguish the basic principles of treatment planning and evaluate how to develop a treatment plan reflecting the client's problems and strengths.
- Ascertain key clinical elements and disclose relevant information collaboratively as part of a treatment team.
- Appraise how ethics, race, gender, age, social bias, and culture influence the diagnostic process.
- Recognize and classify groups of psychotropic medications according to diagnostic presentation.

This course promotes the following areas in accordance with the 2024 CACREP Standards, Section 3 (Foundational Counseling Curriculum) and Section 5 (Entry-Level Specialized Practice Areas, Clinical Mental Health Counseling). Course Objective numbers refer to the numbered list above.

## **Section 3.A – Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice**

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                                                                                              | <b>Course Activities</b>                       | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| A.10 Ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and application of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Discussion Board | 8                          |
| A.11 Self-care, self-awareness, and self-evaluation strategies for ethical and effective practice                                                                        | Discussion Board                               | 8                          |

### **Section 3.B – Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences**

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                                                                                                        | <b>Course Activities</b>                       | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| B.2 The influence of heritage, cultural identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, understandings, within-group differences, and acculturative experiences on individuals' worldviews | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Discussion Board | 8                          |
| B.5 The effects of stereotypes, overt and covert discrimination, racism, power, oppression, privilege, marginalization, microaggressions, and violence on counselors and clients   | Discussion Board                               | 8                          |

### **Section 3.C – Lifespan Development**

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                                                                              | <b>Course Activities</b>                                 | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| C.5 Theories and neurobiological etiology of addictions                                                                                                  | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Lectures, Discussion Board | 1, 9                       |
| C.10 Biological, neurological, and physiological factors that affect lifespan development, functioning, behavior, resilience, and overall wellness       | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Lectures, Discussion Board | 3, 5                       |
| C.11 Systemic, cultural, and environmental factors that affect lifespan development, functioning, behavior, resilience, and overall wellness             | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Discussion Board           | 8                          |
| C.12 The influence of mental and physical health conditions on coping, resilience, and overall wellness for individuals and families across the lifespan | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Discussion Board           | 3                          |
| C.13 Effects of crises, disasters, stress, grief, and trauma across the lifespan                                                                         | Assigned textbook reading;<br>Lectures, Discussion Board | 3                          |

**Section 3.E – Counseling Practice and Relationships**

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                            | <b>Course Activities</b>                                                                                     | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| E.13 Developmentally relevant and culturally sustaining counseling treatment or intervention plans     | Discussion Board; Final Paper                                                                                | 6                          |
| E.16 Record-keeping and documentation skills                                                           | Discussion Board                                                                                             | 7                          |
| E.17 Principles and strategies of caseload management and the referral process                         | Discussion Board; Lectures                                                                                   | 7                          |
| E.18 Classification, effects, and indications of commonly prescribed psychopharmacological medications | Assigned reading (Psychopharmacology for Mental Health Professionals, drugs.com); Lectures, Discussion Board | 9                          |
| E.19 Suicide prevention and response models and strategies                                             | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                                                  | 3                          |
| E.20 Crisis intervention, trauma-informed, community-based, and disaster mental health strategies      | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                                                  | 3                          |

**Section 3.G – Assessment and Diagnostic Processes**

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                                                    | <b>Course Activities</b>                                                                     | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| G.7 Use of culturally sustaining and developmentally appropriate assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes | Assigned DSM-5-TR reading; Discussion Board; Assignment                                      | 2, 8                       |
| G.10 Use of structured interviewing, symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing                             | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                                  | 3                          |
| G.11 Diagnostic processes, including differential diagnosis and the use of current diagnostic classification systems           | Assigned DSM-5-TR reading; Lectures, Discussion Board; Midterm Exam, Final Exam, Final Paper | 1, 2, 5                    |
| G.12 Procedures to identify substance use, addictions, and co-occurring conditions                                             | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board; Midterm Exam                                    | 5                          |
| G.13 Procedures for assessing and responding to risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, and suicide       | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                                  | 3                          |
| G.14 Procedures for assessing clients' experience of trauma                                                                    | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                                  | 3                          |

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                                                                       | <b>Course Activities</b>                                | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| G.15 Procedures for identifying and reporting signs of abuse and neglect                                                                          | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board             | 3                          |
| G.16 Procedures to identify client characteristics, protective factors, risk factors, and warning signs of mental health and behavioral disorders | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board; Assignment | 3, 4                       |

### **Section 5.C – Clinical Mental Health Counseling (Specialized Practice Area)**

| <b>2024 CACREP Standard</b>                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Course Activities</b>                                                        | <b>Course Objective(s)</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| C.1 Etiology, nomenclature, diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental disorders                                          | Assigned DSM-5-TR reading; Lectures, Discussion Board; Midterm Exam, Final Exam | 1, 2, 5                    |
| C.2 Mental health service delivery modalities and networks within the continuum of care                                                                                     | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                     | 7                          |
| C.3 Legislation, government policy, and regulatory processes relevant to clinical mental health counseling                                                                  | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                     | 8                          |
| C.4 Intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management | Assignment (Film Character Diagnosis Paper); Discussion Board; Final Paper      | 5, 6                       |
| C.5 Techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues                                                                      | Discussion Board; Final Paper                                                   | 6                          |
| C.9 Third-party reimbursement and other practice and management issues in clinical mental health counseling                                                                 | Assigned textbook reading; Discussion Board                                     | 7                          |

### **Methods of Instruction:**

This course is delivered fully online and asynchronously; there are no scheduled live class meetings. Instruction combines assigned DSM-5-TR and psychopharmacology textbook readings, short instructor video presentations, and diagnosis-focused case discussions, with differential diagnosis practiced weekly rather than reviewed in the abstract. Students demonstrate learning through discussion boards, one applied diagnostic paper, a midterm and final exam, and a capstone case conceptualization paper. Optional live virtual office hours are available weekly for students who want real-time discussion.

### **Counselor Education Marketable Skills:**

- Graduates will demonstrate oral and written communication skills applicable to careers in mental and behavioral health, including school counseling.
- Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of ethics, social justice issues, and multicultural concerns applicable to careers in mental and behavioral health.

- Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of human growth and development across the lifespan applicable to careers in mental and behavioral health.

### **Counseling Program Marketable Skills:**

- Demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills.
- Demonstrate empathy and listening skills.
- Demonstrate deductive and inductive cognitive skills.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):**

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students seeking accessibility services are responsible for initiating that request through the Student Services Specialist for their campus.

### **Nondiscrimination and Title IX:**

Sul Ross State University complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in university programs and activities, and with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The university encourages anyone experiencing or witnessing sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, or other sexual misconduct to report it immediately to the Title IX Coordinator, Alec Hershberger, Compliance Assessment Officer, University Center Room 211, Alpine, (432) 837-8262, [titleix@sulross.edu](mailto:titleix@sulross.edu), or [sulross.edu/Title-IX](http://sulross.edu/Title-IX). As a graduate instructor, I am a mandated reporter for disclosures of sexual misconduct made to me, including in a discussion board post or assignment; I cannot guarantee confidentiality for such a disclosure, though I will handle it with discretion and direct you to confidential campus resources.

### **Student Support Services:**

Student Support Services provides advising, tutoring, and workshops at the Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass sites during fall, spring, and summer terms. Student center computers include Grammarly for writing support. Visit [sulross.edu/page/1568/student-services](http://sulross.edu/page/1568/student-services) or contact the Student Services Specialist for your campus: Del Rio (830) 703-4816, Eagle Pass (830) 758-5037, Uvalde (830) 279-3027.

### **Student Mental Health and Wellness Resources:**

This course covers serious clinical content, including suicide risk assessment, trauma, and abuse, and studying it can surface personal reactions worth attending to. Sul Ross Counseling and Accessibility Services provides confidential, no-cost counseling to enrolled students, in person or via Zoom telehealth.

**Counseling and Accessibility Services:** (432) 837-8203, [counseling@sulross.edu](mailto:counseling@sulross.edu), Ferguson Hall Room 112 (Alpine); Del Rio Academic Building 110C (Del Rio). [sulross.edu/counseling-and-accessibility-services](http://sulross.edu/counseling-and-accessibility-services)

**988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** call or text 988, available 24/7, for you or anyone you are concerned about.

### **Technology Requirements:**

The following minimum hardware and software requirements are necessary to access an online class through Sul Ross-RGC's current version of Blackboard. Individual instructors may have additional

requirements for specific classes; discuss technology needs with your instructor as early in the class as possible.

|                      | <b>Minimum</b>                                                          | <b>Recommended</b>                                              |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Operating System     | Windows 10 or macOS 12                                                  | Windows 11 or macOS 14 or later                                 |
| Processor            | 1.6 GHz dual-core processor                                             | 2 GHz or faster, quad-core or better                            |
| Memory               | 4 GB of RAM                                                             | 8 GB of RAM or higher                                           |
| Monitor Resolution   | 1280 x 800                                                              | 1920 x 1080 or higher                                           |
| Free Hard Disk Space | 10 GB of free disk space                                                | 30 GB or higher of free space                                   |
| Internet Connection  | Broadband internet connection with a consistent minimum speed of 5 Mbps | Broadband internet connection with a speed of 25 Mbps or higher |
| Internet Browser     | Current version of Chrome, Firefox, or Edge                             | Current version of Chrome or Firefox, kept up to date           |
| Video Playback       | Built into the current browser; no separate plug-in required            | Same, plus VLC Media Player for downloaded video files          |

Students are required to have regular, reliable access to a computer with a stable broadband internet connection. Any system older than five years may not have the processing power to work with the current version of Blackboard and its components. If your computer is publicly accessed off campus or is loaned to you, you may be prohibited from downloading files or software. We strongly recommend the current version of Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome, since they are the most compatible with the current Blackboard system; having more than one browser installed helps rule out browser-related issues versus system or Blackboard issues. Adobe Flash Player and Java applets are no longer required or supported by Blackboard and should not be installed; both were retired industry-wide for security reasons and any site still requesting them should be treated as suspect.

#### **Browser downloads:**

| <b>Browser</b>  | <b>Availability</b>                           | <b>Download</b>                                               |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mozilla Firefox | Windows, macOS, Linux                         | <a href="https://mozilla.org/firefox">mozilla.org/firefox</a> |
| Google Chrome   | Windows, macOS, Linux                         | <a href="https://google.com/chrome">google.com/chrome</a>     |
| Microsoft Edge  | Windows, macOS (built in on Windows 11)       | <a href="https://microsoft.com/edge">microsoft.com/edge</a>   |
| Safari          | macOS and iOS only; not available for Windows | <a href="https://apple.com/safari">apple.com/safari</a>       |

#### **Document and file readers:**

Most Blackboard materials consist of web pages, Microsoft documents, or Adobe Acrobat files. The software required to view common file types is listed below; free viewers cover students who do not own Microsoft Office.

| Application                                    | File Extension                                        | Download                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Adobe Acrobat Reader                           | .pdf                                                  | <a href="http://get.adobe.com/reader">get.adobe.com/reader</a>               |
| Microsoft 365 (Word, PowerPoint, Excel)        | .doc, .docx, .ppt, .pptx, .xls, .xlsx                 | <a href="http://microsoft.com/microsoft-365">microsoft.com/microsoft-365</a> |
| Google Docs, Slides, Sheets (free alternative) | .doc, .docx, .ppt, .pptx, .xls, .xlsx (import/export) | <a href="http://docs.google.com">docs.google.com</a>                         |
| LibreOffice (free alternative)                 | .doc, .docx, .ppt, .pptx, .xls, .xlsx                 | <a href="http://libreoffice.org">libreoffice.org</a>                         |

### **Media playback:**

Course videos stream directly in the browser through Blackboard; no separate player is required to view them. For any video file you download rather than stream, VLC plays virtually every video format and is free and actively maintained. Do not install QuickTime for Windows: Apple discontinued and stopped patching it in 2016, and the Department of Homeland Security has specifically advised uninstalling it due to unpatched security vulnerabilities.

| Application      | Availability          | Download                                               |
|------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| VLC Media Player | Windows, macOS, Linux | <a href="http://videolan.org/vlc">videolan.org/vlc</a> |

### **Security software:**

Windows 10 and 11 include Microsoft Defender, and macOS includes built-in malware protection; both are automatically enabled and update themselves, so no separate antivirus purchase or download is required for this course. Microsoft Security Essentials, listed in older versions of this syllabus, was retired by Microsoft and superseded by Defender; do not seek it out. Keep your operating system's automatic updates turned on, since that is what actually keeps this protection current.

### **Technical Skills:**

Students will be required to interact through a virtual media real-time technological program (enhanced video streaming through Zoom). Students must know how to send and receive emails, how to cut and paste information, how to post and download assignments onto and from Blackboard, how to access videos and post comments on discussion boards, how to take exams through Blackboard, and how to access the Collaborate Ultra real-time or Zoom feature. Students must also be able to access their generated grade points to measure progress in the course. Review the introductory videos to refresh your understanding of how to access and navigate these Blackboard features. Student computers must be equipped with fully functional speakers, microphones, and video cameras.

The Blackboard orientation video clips are designed to help students navigate and use Blackboard while taking graduate coursework. Log in at [sulross.edu/bb](http://sulross.edu/bb), select Student Resources at the top-left of the Blackboard log-in page, then select Blackboard Orientation under the Orientation submenu for the orientation and “how to” videos.

**Blackboard Representatives:** (888) 837-6055, 24 hours, Monday–Sunday. Tim Parsons, (432) 837-8525, [tim.parsons@sulross.edu](mailto:tim.parsons@sulross.edu). Estella Vega, (432) 837-8247, [estellav@sulross.edu](mailto:estellav@sulross.edu).

**IT Technologist by campus** (call the Blackboard representatives above for Blackboard issues): Del Rio (830) 703-4818, Eagle Pass (830) 758-5010, Uvalde (830) 279-3045.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

It is the policy of Sul Ross State University–Rio Grande College to create inclusive learning environments. If any aspect of a course's instruction or design creates a barrier to your inclusion or to an accurate assessment of your achievement, notify the instructor as soon as possible. For accessibility support, contact the Student Service Specialist at (830) 279-3003.

### **Diversity:**

Discussion and activities will address issues of diversity as they relate to course learning objectives. Students are encouraged to introduce topics they see as relevant to enhancing awareness of diversity and multicultural understanding.

### **Scholastic Misconduct:**

Instructors expect students to be actively engaged in learning the course content. Scholastic dishonesty is not tolerated. Penalties depend on the circumstances and can range from a zero on the assignment in question to failure of the course and referral for University charges of academic misconduct.

### **Use of Artificial Intelligence:**

This course is built around diagnostic judgment: recognizing which criteria a case does and does not meet, weighing one diagnosis against another, and defending that reasoning in writing. Generative AI tools (ChatGPT, Claude, and similar) can produce a diagnostic-sounding paragraph without any of that judgment behind it, which defeats the purpose of every assignment in this course. Unless a specific assignment states otherwise, submitting AI-generated text as your own diagnostic reasoning, whether in a discussion board, the Assignment, or the Final Paper, is treated as a violation of the Scholastic Misconduct policy above. You may use AI tools to check grammar or explore how a concept is commonly explained, the same way you might use a study guide, but the diagnostic reasoning, the differential, and the treatment plan must be your own. If you are unsure whether a particular use crosses that line, ask before you submit.

### **Etiquette Expectations:**

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own academic work and to communicate with initiative and maturity. All communication, whether in discussion boards, email, phone, or video conferencing, should be respectful and clear, free of sarcasm, defamatory language, or disrespectful tone. Because culture shapes how people communicate and interpret meaning, be attentive to differences in language, speaking style, and nonverbal communication across the class.

### **Instructor and Student Responsibilities:**

#### **Instructor Responsibilities:**

- Maintain a structured, academically rigorous course aligned with 2024 CACREP standards.
- Provide clear, detailed instructions for all assignments, discussions, and assessments.
- Communicate expectations transparently and consistently throughout the term.
- Return feedback on submitted work within a reasonable timeframe, and complete all grading weekly.
- Respond to course-related emails and Blackboard messages within 24 hours, Monday through Friday.
- Remain available during posted virtual office hours and by appointment with 24 hours' notice.

### **Student Responsibilities:**

- Log in to Blackboard at least every 24 hours to monitor announcements and assignments.
- Complete assigned readings before engaging in module discussions and assignments.
- Submit work by the deadlines in the Course Schedule; late work follows the Late Work policy below.
- Engage in discussion forums with substantive, evidence-based, professionally appropriate contributions.
- Maintain the highest standards of academic integrity.
- Use Sul Ross email or Blackboard messages for all course communication; messages from non-Sul Ross accounts may not receive a response, since student identity cannot otherwise be verified.

### **Communication Expectations:**

Blackboard is the primary platform for course materials, announcements, and submissions. Students should monitor their Sul Ross email daily. The instructor responds to course-related inquiries within 24 hours, Monday through Friday; messages received after 5:00 p.m. CST on Friday receive a response by the following Monday.

### **Student Privacy (FERPA):**

Your education records, including grades, discussion board posts, and submitted work, are protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). I will not discuss your grades or performance with anyone outside the university without your written consent, except as FERPA otherwise permits. This also runs the other direction: because discussion boards in this course are visible to classmates, do not post another person's private health or identifying information, including a real client's, in any assignment; use de-identified or fictionalized details throughout the course.

### **Recording and Course Materials:**

Any recorded lecture, presentation, or Zoom session in this course is provided for the enrolled students in this section only. Do not download, copy, or redistribute course recordings or materials outside Blackboard, including to students in other sections or future terms; doing so is a violation of the Scholastic Misconduct policy above and may also raise copyright and FERPA concerns for any classmate whose voice or image appears in a recording. If you record a session yourself for personal study, that recording is subject to the same restriction.

### **Rules of Engagement:**

This is a graduate-level course addressing psychopathology, content that is sensitive, clinically complex, and personally meaningful for many students. This course operates under a modified Chatham House Rule: students are encouraged to explore emerging, controversial, or personally vulnerable perspectives in discussion forums without fear that their words will be taken out of context or shared outside the learning space. This is not a no-accountability policy; it is not a shield for harmful speech without repair, and it does not replace ethical responsibility. Students are expected to engage one another with honesty, courage, compassion, and full professional accountability, consistent with counseling ethics.

- Communication must reflect respect for the dignity, identity, and lived experience of every member of the learning community. Language or conduct that demeans, marginalizes, or

discriminates against any individual on the basis of a protected characteristic will be addressed under the Sul Ross Academic Code of Conduct.

- Challenge ideas, not individuals, and use evidence-based reasoning to engage differing perspectives.
- Speak from personal experience using “I” statements; avoid speaking on behalf of groups or other individuals' experiences.
- Use correct names and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Exercise clinical sensitivity and professional discretion when discussing diagnosis- and disorder-related content; avoid language that stigmatizes or pathologizes people living with mental illness.
- Avoid all caps in written communication.
- Be mindful that humor and sarcasm are easily misread online; when in doubt, err toward professionalism.
- Proofread submissions and verify sources before posting.
- Remember that online posts are a permanent record; use professional judgment before contributing to any course forum.

### **Quality of Work:**

As a counselor educator, I have a gatekeeping responsibility to the profession, and I take it seriously. I expect your work to reflect both the knowledge gained in this course and the effort put into producing it. Contact me to discuss an extension rather than submit work that has been thrown together. Your future clients deserve a counselor who learned as much as possible, not one who did just enough to pass.

### **Rubrics:**

Every discussion board, assignment, and exam has its own rubric provided within the corresponding module in Blackboard. I grade strictly against that rubric. Review it before you begin, since it is what I use to grade and what you can use to hold me accountable for the grade you receive. I own my mistakes and correct grades when a genuine error is found.

### **Attendance, Introduction, and Participation:**

This is an asynchronous course; there is no fixed meeting time, and attendance is tracked through Blackboard activity rather than live sessions. Active, timely, and substantive participation in the discussion boards is the primary way you will succeed in this course. Your first discussion board (DB 1) is a five-minute recorded introduction covering: full name, place of birth, place raised, the family or culture that best describes you, your interest in your undergraduate degree, your rationale for entering the counseling program, what you hope to accomplish with counseling training, and why that matters to you.

### **Late Work:**

Assignments are due weekly on the schedule below. Any discussion board post, assignment, exam, or the final paper submitted after its posted deadline is penalized 10% of the total possible points for that item for each day it is late, unless prior arrangements were made with the instructor. Contact the instructor before a deadline whenever possible.

### **University Holidays and Closures:**

This course follows the official Sul Ross State University Fall 2026 academic calendar and observes Labor Day (Monday, September 7) and Thanksgiving break (Wednesday, November 25 through Friday, November 27). Nothing new is released while the university is closed. Coursework already open before a closure stays open through it and remains due at its normal scheduled time; a closure extends a module's breathing room, it never shortens it. This keeps every discussion board a full week regardless of where a holiday falls, and protects students who travel over the break.

### **Syllabus Changes:**

Except for changes that would substantially affect the grading statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice to students.

### **Grading Structure:**

This course is delivered asynchronously, so discussion boards, rather than live sessions, are the primary vehicle for interaction, reasoning practice, and instructor feedback. Grading weight is allocated accordingly: discussion boards carry more than half of the final grade. To keep the math simple, discussion boards are scored directly on a 4-point rubric per post; 13 posts add up to 52 raw points, which equals 52% of the final grade with no averaging or conversion required. Every other component is scored on its own point scale and converted to its listed percentage in Blackboard's weighted grading.

| Component                                       | Weight | Description                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Discussion Boards (13 posts × 4 points)         | 52%    | One discussion board per module, scored 0–4 points each; the 13 scores sum directly to 52, the discussion board component of the final grade. |
| Assignment: Film Character Diagnosis Paper      | 14%    | Applied diagnostic paper based on the required film.                                                                                          |
| Midterm Exam                                    | 10%    | Covers Modules 1–7.                                                                                                                           |
| Final Exam                                      | 10%    | Covers Modules 8–13; due December 4.                                                                                                          |
| Final Paper: Integrative Case Conceptualization | 14%    | Case-based capstone applying differential diagnosis and treatment planning to a single complex case, due December 1.                          |

**Total: 100%.**

| Letter Grade | Percentage Range |
|--------------|------------------|
| A            | 90–100           |
| B            | 80–89            |
| C            | 70–79            |
| D            | 60–69            |
| F            | Below 60         |

Most grading is technology-driven and posts immediately; work requiring instructor review is graded weekly, giving students time to review outcomes before the next module opens. Students may schedule a virtual meeting anytime to discuss a grade.

### **Discussion Boards (52% of final grade):**

Because this course does not require live attendance, the discussion boards are where you demonstrate engagement, clinical reasoning, and integration of the week's material. Each module includes a diagnosis-focused video and, in most modules, a short instructor presentation; you will write a narrative discussion post that reflects your understanding of the video content, the assigned reading, and the presentation.

Every discussion board runs on the same two-part deadline: **your initial post is due Wednesday, 11:59 PM CST**, and your responses to at least two classmates' posts are due **Sunday, 11:59 PM CST**, when the module closes. Both parts are required for full credit; a strong initial post with no peer responses is an incomplete discussion board, not a complete one at half effort. The exact calendar date for each module's Wednesday and Sunday deadline is listed in the Proposed Course Schedule below, so you never have to calculate it yourself.

Each of the 13 discussion boards is scored directly on a 4-point scale, no averaging or percentage conversion involved. Your 13 raw scores add up over the term; 13 posts at full marks total 52 points, which is exactly 52% of your final grade. This is the largest single component of your grade, so treat every post as clinical writing: specific, evidence-based, and reflective, not a summary of the reading.

Module 13 is the exception, both in content and in timing. It falls on Thanksgiving week, so rather than assign heavy new reading against a holiday, that discussion board is a shorter reflection prompt on your own growth in diagnostic reasoning across the term, and its Wednesday deadline moves to Tuesday, since the university closes Wednesday afternoon for the holiday. The integrative case work originally planned for that week moves to the Final Paper below, where a full week of uninterrupted time actually exists to do it properly.

### **Assignment: Film Character Diagnosis Paper (14%):**

Watch *Straw* (Perry, 2025) or *Sea of Trees* (Van Zant, 2015) in full. Using the DSM-5-TR, provide a diagnostic formulation for the central character, including relevant background history, presenting symptoms, differential diagnosis, and rationale, in APA format. This paper moves you from passive to active learning by applying diagnostic reasoning to a character's full narrative arc rather than a brief case vignette.

Four to five pages of content in APA 7th edition format, plus a cover page and reference list.

**Due Sunday, October 18, 2026, 11:59 PM CST**, the close of Module 8, alongside the Midterm Exam.

### **Midterm Exam (10%):**

Administered in Blackboard, timed, multiple-choice and short-answer. The midterm covers Modules 1 through 7: DSM-5-TR structure and use, differential diagnosis, and comorbidity across the diagnostic categories addressed in the first half of the term. The exam window opens at the start of Module 8 and closes **Sunday, October 18, 2026, 11:59 PM CST**, the same closing time as the module's discussion board and the Assignment. Format and access details are posted with the exam link at the start of Module 8.

### **Final Exam (10%):**

The 16-week term's last class day is December 2, followed by Dead Day on December 3, with the official Fall 2026 final exam period running December 4 and 7–9. This course's final exam is due December 4, 2026, 11:59 PM CST, the first day of that window. Scheduling it there, rather than later in the exam period, reserves December 7–9 for grading ahead of the December 10 grade-submission

deadline. It does not fall on a Sunday like the weekly discussion boards, since the exam period sits outside the normal Monday-through-Sunday module structure; this is the one deadline in the course set by the university's calendar rather than by the module.

Timed, multiple-choice and short-answer, the final exam covers Modules 8 through 13: treatment planning, psychotropic medication classification, and the ethical and cultural considerations addressed in the second half of the term. Format and access details are posted with the exam link at the start of the final review period, November 30.

### **Final Paper: Integrative Case Conceptualization (14%):**

Every diagnostic category covered this term converges here. You receive a single extended case near the end of the term describing a client whose presentation intersects several of the disorder categories addressed across Modules 1 through 12: a procedural obstacle complicates access to the client's full history, more than two people are involved in the client's care or account of events, and one detail in the file cuts against the obvious reading. The assignment is diagnosing and planning for that client, not writing about a diagnosis in the abstract.

#### **Using the DSM-5-TR, the paper must:**

- State the primary diagnosis, including all applicable specifiers and modifiers, with the DSM-5-TR criteria that support it.
- Document at least two differential diagnoses actively considered and the specific evidence that ruled each one out.
- Identify any comorbid or co-occurring conditions the case presents.
- Propose a treatment plan grounded in the case, including any psychotropic medication considerations relevant to the presentation (medication class and rationale only; counselors do not prescribe).
- Identify one cultural, ethical, or bias-related factor that could distort the diagnostic picture in this specific case, and explain how you accounted for it.

Six to eight pages of content in APA 7th edition format, plus a cover page and reference list. Cite the DSM-5-TR throughout and support the treatment plan with at least five scholarly or clinical sources; a literature review is not the point of this paper, sound clinical reasoning is. The final draft is due **December 1, 2026, 11:59 PM CST**, the day before the term's last class day (December 2), leaving adequate time for grading before the final exam period. Like the Final Exam, this date is set by the term's calendar rather than a Monday-through-Sunday module, since it falls in the final review period after the last content module ends.

### **Proposed Course Schedule:**

Dates follow the official Sul Ross Fall 2026 academic calendar, beginning Monday, August 24. Topics and DSM-5-TR chapter pairings are drawn from the approved module content plan. Every module runs Monday through Sunday: unless noted otherwise, the initial discussion board post is due Wednesday, 11:59 PM CST, and responses to at least two classmates are due Sunday, 11:59 PM CST, when the module closes. The current module is marked below.

## Module / Assignment Description

| Date            | Module 1: Neurodevelopmental Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Points     |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Aug 24 - Aug 30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR, pp. 35–99</li> <li>Participate in the DB1: Recorded Introduction discussion activity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Initial response: Due Wednesday, August 26, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> <li><b>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, August 30, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                          | 4 pts (4%) |
| Date            | Module 2: Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Points     |
| Aug 31 - Sep 06 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR, pp. 101–138</li> <li>Participate in the DB2: Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders discussion activity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Initial response: Due Wednesday, September 02, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> <li><b>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, September 06, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                       | 4 pts (4%) |
| Date            | Module 3: Anxiety Disorders; Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Points     |
| Sep 07 - Sep 13 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Labor Day, September 7: no classes</li> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Anxiety Disorders; Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB3: Anxiety and Substance Use discussion activity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Initial response: Due Wednesday, September 09, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> <li><b>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, September 13, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 4 pts (4%) |
| Date            | Module 4: Dissociative Disorders; Personality Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Points     |
| Sep 14 - Sep 20 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR, pp. 329–348 (Dissociative Disorders); pp. 733–778 (Personality Disorders)</li> <li>Participate in the DB4 Dissociative and Personality Disorders discussion activity                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Initial response: Due Wednesday, September 16, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> <li><b>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, September 20, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>                    | 4 pts (4%) |

| Date            | Module 5: Bipolar and Related Disorders; Depressive Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Points       |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Sep 21 - Sep 27 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Bipolar and Related Disorders; Depressive Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB5: Bipolar and Depressive Disorders discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, September 27, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                  | 4 pts (4%)   |
| Date            | Module 6: Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders; Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Points       |
| Sep 28 - Oct 04 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders; Trauma- and Stressor-Related Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB6: Participate in DB6: OCD and Trauma-Related Disorders discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, September 30, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, October 04, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 4 pts (4%)   |
| Date            | Module 7: Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders; Sleep-Wake Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Points       |
| Oct 05 - Oct 11 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders; Sleep-Wake Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB7: Somatic and Sleep-Wake Disorders discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, October 07, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, October 11, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                              | 4 pts (4%)   |
| Date            | Module 8: Feeding and Eating Disorders; Elimination Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Points       |
| Oct 12 - Oct 18 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Feeding and Eating Disorders; Elimination Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB8: Feeding and Eating Disorders discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, October 14, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, October 18, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                          | 4 pts (4%)   |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit Midterm Exam (Modules 1–7): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due Sunday, October 18, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 10 pts (10%) |

| Date            | Module 9: Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Points       |
|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Oct 19 - Oct 25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB9: Disruptive and Conduct Disorders discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, October 21, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, October 25, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                   | 4 pts (4%)   |
| Date            | Module 10: Neurocognitive Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Points       |
| Oct 26 - Nov 01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Neurocognitive Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB10: Neurocognitive Disorders discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, October 28, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, November 01, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                   | 4 pts (4%)   |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit Assignment: Film Character Diagnosis Paper: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due Sunday, November 1, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 14 pts (14%) |
| Date            | Module 11: Sexual Dysfunctions; Gender Dysphoria; Paraphilic Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Points       |
| Nov 02 - Nov 08 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read: DSM-5-TR: Sexual Dysfunctions; Gender Dysphoria; Paraphilic Disorders</li> <li>Participate in the DB11: Sexual Dysfunctions and Gender Dysphoria discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, November 04, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, November 08, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                               | 4 pts (4%)   |
| Date            | Module 12: Medication-Induced Movement Disorders; Other Conditions; Cultural Formulation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Points       |
| Nov 09 - Nov 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read DSM-5-TR: Medication-Induced Movement Disorders and Other Adverse Effects of Medication; Other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention; cultural formulation and assessment measures</li> <li>Participate in the DB12: Medication Effects and Cultural Formulation discussion activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial response: Due Wednesday, November 11, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> <li>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, November 15, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 4 pts (4%)   |

| Date                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Module 13: Reflection Week (Thanksgiving)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Points       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Nov 16 - Nov 22                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No new reading. University closed Nov 25 (afternoon) through Nov 27 for Thanksgiving; the module stays open across the closure rather than losing days to it.</li> <li>Participate in the DB13: Reflection on Diagnostic Growth discussion activity (short prompt, no new reading load) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Initial response: Due Wednesday, November 18, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b> (<i>moved up one day; the university closes Wednesday afternoon</i>)</li> <li><b>Response to two peer postings (minimum): Due Sunday, November 22, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> | 4 pts (4%)   |
| Date                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Final Exam Period                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Points       |
| Nov 30 - Dec 04                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Last class day is Wednesday, December 2, 2026 (16-week term). Dead Day is Thursday, December 3. Final Exam opens Monday, November 30, 2026.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |              |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit Final Paper: Integrative Case Conceptualization: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Due Tuesday, December 1, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 14 pts (14%) |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submit Final Exam (Modules 8–13): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Due Friday, December 4, 2026, 11:59 PM CST</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 10 pts (10%) |
| <p><b>A Note on Additional Reading:</b> The module readings listed above are drawn from the DSM-5-TR. Neither recommended text, <i>Psychopathology: An Integrative Approach to Mental Disorders</i> (Barlow, Durand, &amp; Hofmann, 2023) nor <i>Psychopharmacology for Mental Health Professionals: An Integrative Approach</i> (Ingersoll &amp; Rak, 2016), is assigned to a specific module in this schedule. A short reading from either text may be assigned to a given module during the term if it would meaningfully advance students' understanding of that module's diagnostic criteria, differential reasoning, or medication classifications. Any such addition will be posted in Blackboard at the start of the relevant module, with the specific chapter and page range identified, and will never be added retroactively to a module already in progress.</p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |              |