

School Counseling Program

Course Descriptions and Objectives (Revised 2026)

SCP 505: Fundamentals of Counseling in the Schools

Course Description:

This course provides school-based counselors with a combination of theory and practice for implementing a comprehensive school counseling program that is consistent with national and state developmental models. A school-based counselor advances academic, personal/social, and career opportunities for all children in a pluralistic society. The history and evolving role of school-based counseling is emphasized. The primary roles of the school-based counselor at all grade levels are covered. Curriculum development and instruction, educational planning, and consultation and collaboration skills are introduced. Practical strategies for planning, managing, and evaluating a comprehensive school program are covered utilizing national and state models. Other topics covered are Curriculum Frameworks and their relationship to educational planning and advising, professional issues including confidentiality, legal and ethical standards, and the future of the profession.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate a knowledge of the history and development of the school counseling profession
- Identify the elements, themes, and components of the ASCA National Model for School Counseling Programs
- Examine comprehensive developmental models of school counseling with an emphasis on a comprehensive developmental model as an integral component of a school's educational philosophy and mission
- Examine issues concerning the development of a professional identity as a school counselor, focusing on the school counselor as a leader, advocate, and collaborator
- Demonstrate an understanding of the legal and ethical responsibilities of the school counselor
- Identify the various school counselor responsibilities to students in a multicultural, diverse society, and examine different strategies/interventions to carry out those responsibilities
- Examine the distinct roles of the elementary, middle, and high school counselors
- Examine school counseling curriculum units based on "best practice" research in the school counseling field
- Demonstrate an understanding of use of data to evaluate program effectiveness
- Explain current and developing issues in school counseling
- Demonstrate an understanding of the social, emotional, academic, and career concerns of children and adolescents
- Identify ways in which school counselors can serve as change agents concerning the school culture/climate
- Demonstrate an ability to work collaboratively with peers towards shared goals

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SCP 510: Professional Orientation to Counseling
Course Description: This foundational course is an introduction to professional counseling. This course covers the foundational and culturally responsive microskills required for development of the therapeutic alliance necessary in promoting growth and change. Development of the foundational skills /microskills are accomplished via opportunities to practice skills in role play scenarios. History, specializations, ethics, legal issues, the importance of advocacy, current trends, and credentialing are covered. Anti-bias education and a social justice ethos are emphasized as necessary for effective counseling interventions. Cultural responsiveness is integrated throughout all aspects of the course. The importance of professional development, membership in professional organizations and systemic approaches are emphasized.
Course Objectives: After completion of this course, students will: • Understand the history and philosophical underpinnings of counseling as a profession. • Be familiar with the ethical codes that guide all professional counseling practice (ASCA, CRCC, ACA, APA, AMHCA). • Understand counseling specializations and the role of the counselor in a various settings with a diverse group of clients. • Understand the importance and necessity of advocacy for the profession and the clients served. • Understand the identity and what it means to be a professional counselor. • Possess basic counseling microskills and be able to utilize these microskills in face-to-face and virtual settings with adults and youth. • Be familiar with theoretical orientations in counseling. • Understand the importance of, and have acquired, culturally responsive interviewing skills that facilitate a strong therapeutic alliance with clients representing all social identities.
SCP 515: Advanced Counseling Theory and Practice
Course Description: This advanced course builds and expands on the development of the therapeutic alliance and counseling microskills while covering the major counseling theories and corresponding interventions. Theories and interventions used by counselors in professional counseling settings representing all counseling specializations (School, Mental Health, Rehabilitation, Marriage and Family) will be covered. Humanistic, Psychoanalytic, Behavioral, and Cognitive-Behavioral theoretical approaches will be covered along with an introduction to other emerging theoretical orientations that guide counseling practice. Understanding and applying theoretical principles is the focus of this course. Ethical and culturally responsive

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practice will be reinforced in this course. Skill development and practice are emphasized by role playing and recorded session review.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Understand and apply the major theories of counseling to professional practice.
- Understand and apply interventions associated with the major theories of counseling to professional practice.
- Utilize the counseling microskills when implementing theoretically-based counseling interventions.
- Utilize culturally responsive counseling interventions and strategies.
- Utilize counseling interventions and strategies consistent with Counselor Code of Ethics (ASCA, ACA, AMHCA, CRCC, APA).
- Have developed preferences for theoretical approaches on which to build throughout their professional practice.
- Have begun to develop and hone clinical intuition when considering client issues and presenting pathology.
- Understand the importance of staying up to date on emerging intervention strategies and client presenting issues.

SCP 520: Psychology of Learning and Motivation

Course New Description:

This course covers the major theories and research in the psychology of human learning and motivation. How knowledge, behaviors, and skills are acquired, maintained, and retrieved are covered. Behaviorism, Cognitivism, Social Learning, Sociocultural, Social Cognitive Theory, and Constructivism are emphasized along with emerging theories. Intentional application of learning theories with a focus on student outcomes are emphasized. Theories on motivation are covered along with evidence-based motivational strategies for challenges in motivation in the school setting. The impact of culture on learning and motivation is studied and culturally sensitive learning and motivational strategies are emphasized.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Understand the major theories describing how learning is acquired, retained, and applied.
- Apply learning theories to better understand and intervene in learning issues in educational settings.
- Understand the major theoretical approaches and constructs for motivational behavior and the factors driving motivation.
- Apply motivational theoretical perspectives in educational contexts.
- Understand cultural implications on learning and motivation

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- Utilize culturally responsive interventions to positively impact learning and motivation in educational contexts.
- Understand how pedagogical and motivational practices are effectively utilized in a classroom setting.

SCP 665: Group Counseling*

*Note course number and title change

Course Description:

This course covers the use of group strategies as an instrument of change in the counseling process. This course provides historical, theoretical and experiential understanding of group purpose, group development, group dynamics and specific counseling theories applicable to group work. Group counseling facilitation and leadership methods for clients in different developmental stages and practice settings will also be covered with specific attention paid to youth in school-based settings. Students will develop and apply knowledge of group processes and techniques through participation in, and facilitation of, group experiences, as well as through observing and assessing group processes as they relate to specific settings where group counseling occurs. The course covers ethical guidelines and standards for groups. Culturally responsive strategies for designing, screening, selecting members for, facilitating, and evaluating groups are also covered.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the principles of group dynamics including the components of group process, developmental stage theories, roles and behaviors of group members, and the therapeutic factors associated with group work.
- Analyze therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness.
- Define and distinguish different types of groups (therapeutic, psychosocial, psychoeducational), the goals associated with each, and the tasks and roles of the leader and members of each type of group.
- Apply knowledge of different leadership styles and approaches, skills and techniques appropriate for each stage of the group process, and the roles of leaders and members within each phase.
- Critically evaluate theories of group counseling, including commonalities, distinguishing characteristics, and research literature associated with their application in practice.

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- Design and implement groups appropriate to professional practice settings, considering the developmental/life stage and cultural background of the population being served, including screening and member selection.
- Apply the legal and ethical standards associated with group counseling, including the Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW) Best Practice Guidelines, to professional practice.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply theory in practice, facilitate group sessions, and evaluate group processes and outcomes in professional settings.
- Demonstrate self-awareness as a group leader, including recognition of personal biases, values, and emotional reactions, and articulate how these may impact group facilitation and the counseling relationship.
- Assess and document individual member progress and overall group outcomes using appropriate evaluation methods relevant to the professional practice setting.
- Demonstrate effective co-facilitation skills, including collaboration with a co-leader, shared leadership responsibilities, and the ability to process and reflect on the co-facilitation experience.
- Identify and apply developmentally appropriate group interventions across the lifespan, with specific attention to children and adolescents in school-based settings.
- Recognize signs of group process breakdown including conflict, scapegoating, monopolizing, and resistance and demonstrate appropriate leader responses to restore therapeutic functioning.

SCP 540: Introduction to Research and Program Evaluation

Course Description:

This course is designed to enable students to become critical consumers of research in education and counseling. The course introduces the concepts of research design and research methodologies in an applied setting. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are addressed. The course covers the analysis research findings and designing research projects in counseling and educational settings. Principles, practices, and methods of conducting a needs assessment and conducting program evaluation are covered. The use of computer software for

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data management and analysis are reviewed. Guidelines for conducting research and program evaluation in a culturally responsive and ethical manner are emphasized in this course.
Course Objectives: After completion of this course, students will: • Identify and distinguish between quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and when to utilize each. • Demonstrate knowledge of research constructs and terminology. • Demonstrate understanding of research methodology typically used in counseling and educational research. • Understand issues and guidelines for analyzing and interpreting empirical data related to diverse, underrepresented, and vulnerable populations. • Present research results using anti-bias language and references. • Identify common ethical issues in conducting research and program evaluation. • Conduct searches for scholarly articles and review the research literature in counseling and education. • Critically analyze research studies for use in practice. • Understand the difference between research and program evaluation and know when each is appropriate to use. • Understand and apply program evaluation methodologies as a means of assessing program improvement and assessing impact. • Construct a logic model/theory of change as a means of guiding program evaluation.
SCP 545: Human Growth and Development Across the Lifespan
Course Description: This course covers human growth and development throughout the lifespan. Physical, neurological, cognitive, socio-cultural, and emotional development are covered as they occur across the lifespan. The course emphasizes an ecological systems model of individual-in-context interactions in families, cultures, schools, communities, and society. The impact of trauma and crisis on development is covered along with utilizing developmental frameworks to promote healthy development and resilience across the lifespan.
Course Objectives: After Completion of this course, students will: • Demonstrate understanding of the major theoretical perspectives in the study of human growth and development. • Demonstrate understanding of how human beings grow and develop from conception through late adulthood and death in the physical, cognitive, soci-cultural, emotional, and personality dimensions of life. • Analyze research related to lifespan development and understand how it frames our understanding of how humans move through the life cycle in typical and atypical ways • Use theories of human development to inform professional practice

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- Evaluate major developmental theories for their usefulness with marginalized and underrepresented populations (e.g., cultural bias, structural oppression)
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of normative processes of physical, biological, cognitive, socio-cultural, and emotional development across the lifespan
- Understand and apply an ecological systems perspective to human development across the lifespan
- Identify early signs of developmental and learning impairments to develop interventions aimed at minimizing developmental and learning delays.
- Utilize developmental frameworks to promote healthy development and resilience across the lifespan
- Demonstrate understanding of gerontological and thanatological theories of older adults as they encounter aging and eventual death.

SCP 560: Psychological and Educational Assessment

Course Description:

This course covers both formal and informal, evidence-based assessments administered to youth and adults using a systematic and comprehensive approach. Frequently used diagnostic tools in the areas of academic achievement, cognitive functioning, language acquisition, social-emotional skills, and personality dimensions are examined. Emphasis is placed on assessment strategies that yield objective data regarding individual skill repertoires, learning characteristics, and psychological diagnoses. How assessment data is used to provide a basis for educational decision making and clinical treatment planning as well as conducting risk assessments for evaluating student safety (risk to self, others, community) are covered. Attention is paid to understanding how standardized tests can misidentify language differences as learning disabilities or academic deficiencies in multilingual learners. The importance of accounting for unique developmental trajectories in multilingual learners is covered. The course focuses on interviewing, assessment selection, administration of assessments, interpretation of results, report writing, cultural bias in assessments and administration procedures, and communicating results with caregivers, school personnel, and other stakeholders.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Understand and articulate the purpose of utilizing assessment data in decision making and intervention planning.
- Understand the considerations for effectively evaluating youth and adults using reliable and valid assessment measures.
- Demonstrate the effective and ethical use assessments typically used in educational and clinical settings.
- Understand and implement standardized test and assessment administration procedures.
- Conduct risk assessments to evaluate student safety (risk to self, others, community).

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- Understand test interpretation procedures based on standard scores.
- Advocate for standardized and culturally informed administration procedures.
- Identify accurate scoring on commonly used assessments.
- Demonstrate proficiency in basic methodologies and statistical principles related to educational and psychological evaluations, assessments, and tests.
- Demonstrate proficiency in the interpretation of test and assessment results.
- Demonstrate proficiency in writing assessment, evaluation, and test reports that are accurate, concise, thorough, and targeted for understanding by caregivers, colleagues, teachers, and other stakeholders.
- Recommend treatment and interventions based on assessment results.

SCP 600: Family Counseling, Collaboration, and Engagement

Course Description:

This course examines individual development within a systemic framework, emphasizing the complex dynamics of family relationships across cultural, social, and developmental contexts. Students explore the evolving family life cycle, family systems theory, and the impact of intersecting identities—such as race, gender, socioeconomic status, and disability—on family functioning. Through a multidisciplinary and trauma-informed lens, the course addresses key issues including separation, loss, violence, substance use, chronic illness, migration, and poverty. Integrating theory, research, and applied practice, students develop culturally responsive skills for engaging and supporting families in educational, clinical, and community settings. Emphasis is placed on fostering safety, healing, and resilience through evidence-based and strengths-based approaches. The course also covers relevant policies, strategies, and ethical considerations in family engagement, preparing students to work effectively and compassionately with diverse families across the lifespan.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Understand the principles of family systems theory and its application to human development across the lifespan.
- Assess family structure, roles, functions, communication patterns, and relational dynamics using tools such as genograms, ecomaps, and culturagrams.
- Examine how sociocultural factors—including race, gender, class, ability, and sexual orientation—shape family structures, processes, and resilience.
- Explore the effects of trauma, loss, chronic illness, and family violence on individuals and family systems to develop trauma-informed and culturally responsive strategies for supporting families in educational and professional settings.
- Identify and utilize available resources, best practices, and strategies for family and community engagement.

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- Integrate theory, research, and reflective practice to strengthen professional competence in family- centered work.

SCP 610: Cultural Responsiveness in Counseling

Course Description:

This course covers core competencies in cultural responsiveness, equipping counselors to integrate diversity and social justice into counseling theories, practices, and research. The course highlights the intersection of identities and the dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression that influence the counseling relationship. Emphasis is placed on the domains that foster competence: counselor self-awareness, understanding clients' worldviews, development of the counseling relationship, advocacy, and systemic interventions. Case studies are examined with a focus on employing culturally responsive best practices. This course focuses on developing culturally responsive approaches to race, systemic inequity, oppression, bias, disability, and cultural humility. The course provides a strong foundation and serves as a springboard for developing professionals to engage in deeper exploration.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Regularly assess counseling literature, theories, and interventions to determine efficacy with clients representing sociocultural experiences that differ from their own.
- Demonstrate understanding of clients' sociocultural identities (e.g., national origin, race, social class, religious and spiritual beliefs, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, disability status) and their impact on the counseling process.
- Foundational knowledge and skills needed to provide mental health counseling services to diverse populations in a culturally competent manner.
- Explain racial identity development models and apply an intersectional lens to understand clients' experiences of oppression, discrimination, and domination.
- Identify and reflect on conscious and unconscious biases and apply strategies to mitigate their impact in clinical work.
- Understand the imperative nature of cultural humility and will have begun the development of cultural humility.
- Demonstrate cultural humility and awareness of power privilege, and oppression in the counseling relationship.
- Acknowledge their own position of power in relation to the client populations they serve.
- Understand that cultural responsiveness and cultural competence are life-long processes (i.e., cultural humility).

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SCP 625: Neuropsychology of Learning and Behavior
Course Description: This course introduces students to neuropsychological principles underlying learning and behavior in children and adolescents. The neuropsychological basis of learning and behavior disorders (e.g., math, reading, nonverbal language disabilities, autism spectrum, attention, executive functioning) are covered along with evidence-based treatment and accommodations, with a strong emphasis on educational neuropsychology and the application of neuropsychological research and principles in academic settings. Psychopharmacological interventions are introduced.
Course Objectives: After completion of this course, students will: • Demonstrate knowledge of basic neuroanatomical structures and pathways. • Understand the impact of neuropsychological development and disorders on learning, memory, and behavior. • Understand the implications of psychotropic medications on learning and behavior. • Develop a general understanding of neuropsychological assessments. • Develop an understanding of how neuropsychological information is useful in developing evidence-based academic, social, and emotional learning interventions.
SCP 630: Social-Emotional Interventions*
*Note Title Change
Course Description: This course provides school-based counselors with evidence-based prevention and intervention strategies for implementing social-emotional learning (SEL) in school settings. Emphasis is placed on culturally responsive interventions and strategies. Supportive mindsets that promote social-emotional skill development in children are studied along with strategies and practices to enhance social-emotional learning. Strategies and interventions to improve overall school culture and important considerations for SEL development for educators are highlighted. The impact of compassion fatigue and burnout on adults working in school settings are covered. Students will access material and resources to support development as SEL coaches in their roles, and to explore interventions and strategies that can be carried out by school counselors, school adjustment counselors, school administrators, and educators.
Course Objectives: After completion of this course, students will: • Employ evidence-based, culturally responsive prevention and intervention strategies aimed at increasing social emotional skills for youth. • Understand the social-emotional mindsets that promote skill development in youth.

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- Employ a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) aimed at improving social emotional skill development across the school setting including strategies to positively influence school culture
- Become coaches for teachers to implement proactive, social-emotional skill development strategies in the classroom

SCP 635: Academic and Learning Interventions*

Note Title Change

Course Description:

This course develops advanced competencies in designing and implementing evidence-based interventions to support students' academic and learning outcomes across individual and group settings. Emphasis is placed on interventions targeting organization and study skills, learning and mnemonic strategies, oral language development, reading, mathematics, written expression, content-area instruction, and test-taking strategies. The course also emphasizes understanding the laws, regulations, and ethical considerations related to students with disabilities and the provision of special education services within educational settings. Instruction is delivered through applied case studies, modeling, and demonstration-based approaches that foster the integration of theory and practice. Students learn to utilize data-based decision making, progress monitoring, and outcomes assessment to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention and intervention strategies for diverse learners.

Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of terminology, concepts, accommodations, and interventions for working with multilingual learners (MLLs).
- Demonstrate knowledge of terminology, concepts, accommodations, and interventions for working with students experiencing academic challenges and/or learning disabilities.
- Utilize knowledge of terminology, concepts, accommodations, and interventions to write and support a 504 Accommodation Plan.
- Understand the core components of executive functioning and be able to apply this knowledge to create appropriate accommodations and/or interventions.
- Understand the impact of neuropsychological disorders on learning, memory, and behavior and be able to apply this knowledge to recommend appropriate accommodations and/or interventions.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how a student's learning style is necessary in the development of effective interventions.
- Understand the complexities of an Individualized Education Program, goal writing, and effective progress monitoring.

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SCP 640: Developmental Psychopathology
Course Description: This course addresses the etiology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of psychological disorders across the lifespan. This course utilizes developmental theories to understand atypical development and psychopathology. The course will utilize a culturally responsive lens to examine diagnostic criteria and treatment of mental health disorders diagnosed in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Methods of assessment and diagnosis of mental health disorders will be covered. The latest edition of the DSM, the standard classification manual used by mental health professionals, will be covered to understand the criteria on which diagnoses are based. Emphasis will be on the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of disorders commonly identified in school age youth and their caregivers. Disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, specific learning disorder, motor disorders, intellectual disorders, psychotic disorders, depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, trauma and stressor-related disorders, feeding and eating disorders, substance-related and addictive disorders, and personality disorders will be covered.
Course Objectives: After completion of this course, students will: • Use developmental theory and frameworks to compare typical development to atypical development. • Understand the classification system used in the most current edition of the DSM. • Have knowledge of psychological disorders and their characteristics. • Have knowledge of the criteria used to diagnose psychological disorders. • Have knowledge of the methods of assessment and diagnosing psychological disorders. • Have knowledge of interventions used to treat psychological disorders including psychopharmacological treatment. • Determine strengths and resiliency factors of those experiencing psychological disorders. • Understand the role of social and cultural factors in the diagnosis, treatment, and presentation of psychological disorders.
SCP 660: Behavioral Assessment and Intervention
Course Description: This course covers the principles of effective behavioral assessment and intervention for general education, inclusion, and special education classrooms. The skills required to identify, implement, and evaluate developmentally appropriate, research-based behavioral interventions to support youth in the school setting are learned. Emphasis is placed on collaboration and consultation skills for special educators and counselors. Also covered are classroom management strategies, organization strategies, and integrating behavior support within Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

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Course Objectives:

After completion of this course, students will:

- Analyze student behavior and social-emotional functioning within a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and/or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework and evaluate the role of school systems in creating effective, tiered social-emotional-behavioral (SEB) support structures.
- Demonstrate understanding of the relationship between behavior and its context, including environmental factors, skill deficits, mental health, trauma, and stress across school settings.
- Conduct objective, equity-centered, culturally sustaining assessment procedures that identify patterns of behavior, hypothesized function, contextual variables, lagging skills, and student strengths.
- Design individualized, preventative interventions that emphasize prevention, environmental support, explicit skill instruction, and responses aligned with students' social, emotional, and executive functioning needs.
- Identify and teach skills that reduce reliance on interfering behaviors, including functional communication, self-regulation, problem solving, and social interaction skills.
- Apply trauma-informed, culturally sustaining, and linguistically responsive practices when assessing and supporting student behavior to promote inclusive and educationally meaningful interventions.
- Analyze the impact of historical and systemic inequities in school discipline, including awareness of the ethical and legal responsibilities for providing behavior supports.
- Collaborate effectively with students, families, educators, and community providers to develop behavior support plans that recognize student strengths, family voice, and cultural assets.
- Use behavioral, social-emotional, and intervention data across all levels of support to identify needs, select evidence-based interventions, monitor progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.