



University of Lynchburg

COUN 670: Legal and Ethical Issues in Counseling
 College of Education, Leadership Studies, and Counseling
 University of Lynchburg
 Spring 2025

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Course Description:

“An in-depth examination of the major legal and ethical issues facing the counseling profession. Extensive work with case studies is included” (University of Lynchburg Graduate Catalog, 2024-2025, p. 47).

Course Objectives and Expected Learning Outcomes:

The following are the course objectives and expected learning outcomes based on [2024 CACREP Standards](#).

Objective	CACREP Standard	Assessment
Understand the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of and with individuals receiving counseling services to address systemic, institutional, architectural, attitudinal, disability, and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success.	3.A.4.	Exams; Content Quizzes; School Counseling Conundrum Presentation; Ethical Theater
Understand the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of the profession.	3.A.5.	Exams; Content Quizzes; School Counseling Conundrum Presentation; Ethical Theater
Understand professional counseling credentialing across service delivery modalities, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards for all specialized practice areas.	3.A.7.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling	3.A.10.	Exams; Ethical Standards Analysis Paper; School

across service delivery modalities and specialized practice areas.		Counseling Conundrum Presentation; Ethical Theater
Understand self-care, self-awareness, and self-evaluation strategies for ethical and effective practice.	3.A.11.	Moral Development Paper; Professional Boundaries Paper
Understand the purpose of and roles within counseling supervision in the profession.	3.A.12.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand ethical and legal issues relevant to career development and career counseling.	3.D.12.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand application of technology related to counseling.	3.E.5.	Exams; Ethical Theater; Content Quizzes
Understand ethical and legal issues relevant to establishing and maintaining counseling relationships across service delivery modalities.	3.E.6.	Exams; Content Quizzes; Ethical Theater
Understand ethical and legal considerations relative to the delivery of group counseling and group work across service delivery modalities.	3.F.9.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand ethical and legal considerations for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessments.	3.G.6.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand ethical and legal considerations relevant to conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and program evaluation.	3.H.10.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand strategies for interfacing with the legal system and working with court-referred clients.	5.A.12.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand legislation, government policy, and regulatory processes relevant to clinical mental health counseling.	5.C.3.	Exams; Content Quizzes
Understand strategies for interfacing with the legal system regarding court-referred clients.	5.C.6.	Exams; Ethical Standards Analysis Paper; Content Quizzes
Understand strategies for interfacing with the legal system relevant to marriage, couple, and family counseling.	5.F.13.	Exams; Content Quizzes

Required Text(s) and/or Reading(s):

American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA Code of Ethics*.

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

American School Counselor Association. (2022). *ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors*.

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/getmedia/44f30280-ffe8-4b41-9ad8-f15909c3d164/EthicalStandards.pdf>

Remley, T. P., & Herlihy, B. (2020). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in counseling* (6th ed.). Pearson Education, Inc.

Recommended resource:

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association.

*Any additional readings will be posted in Google Classroom.

Syllabus Statements:

The University of Lynchburg Syllabus Statements can be found [here](#). Please read these statements and policies carefully, and contact the offices/individuals listed in the respective section if you have any questions.

Please pay particular attention to the [AI Syllabus Statement](#), which reads:

Materials, including text, authored by Artificial Intelligence (AI) and presented as your own constitutes plagiarism. Instructors reserve the right to use AI detection software to find instances of AI-generated work in student submissions. Moreover, instructors reserve the right to permit or restrict the use of AI-generated work in their classes. The use of AI-generated work without instructor consent constitutes cheating. Any allegations of an academic integrity violation will be reviewed and addressed in accordance with the student disciplinary process outlined in The Hornet.

Inclement Weather:

If classes are canceled due to inclement weather or other circumstances, announcements will be made on the University of Lynchburg Weather Hotline, (434) 544-SNOW, and University website.

Course Policies:**Methods of Instruction:**

Course content will be delivered utilizing a combination of faculty, student, and guest speaker presentations; synchronous in-person exercises and discussions; and asynchronous online presentations and discussions. Each of these activities will enhance the materials presented in our textbook and other assigned readings and content.

Synchronous Class Meetings

We will meet in Thompson-Polloway 101 on Mondays at 4:30 pm throughout the spring 2025 semester. Synchronous class meetings will be spent connecting, collaborating, and reviewing specific course content. Therefore, much of learning this semester will happen outside of synchronous class meetings, both independently and collaboratively with your COUN 670 colleagues.

Your classroom presence is a requirement for successful completion of this course.

If you miss more than one synchronous class meeting, you will be required to contact Dr. Bailey to prepare an additional assignment to indicate that you have engaged with course materials and have fully understood essential concepts. Failure to do so will result in a 10% reduction in your final Classroom Engagement grade for every class session (beyond the first) that is missed without the required additional assignment submission for each.

Arriving late to class is unprofessional and if chronic will result in a significant reduction in your final Classroom Engagement grade.

Professionalism

Professionalism is continuously monitored and used as an indicator of a student's ability to maintain professionalism in the workplace. Therefore, there is an expectation that students will conduct themselves as professionals *at all times* during class. This expectation extends to interactions with faculty, site supervisors, and fellow students outside of class, including professional communication in email and other written correspondence.

Students are expected to be fully engaged in the physical and virtual classroom, physically and intellectually *present* (see above). Students are encouraged to be passionate and honest during class discussions while also being sensitive and respectful of others. Although frequent contributions to classroom discussions are welcome, *all* students must be afforded the opportunity to share.

Counselors must demonstrate an ability to maintain high levels of presence for extended periods of time to effectively work with clients and students. Presence includes giving full attention to what is happening in the physical and virtual classroom, being actively engaged in discussions and activities, and not being distracted by technology.

An inability to be physically and mentally present in the classroom without relying on technological distractions predicts a similar difficulty in being present with a student or a client in the counseling space.

Students in our program are training to become counselors, and therefore learning to tolerate the distress of being apart from tech during classroom activities will help bolster every student's ability to do so as a counseling professional.

Therefore, tech devices should be kept stored throughout the entire class with the exception of class breaks or directed classroom activities. Students who need access to their phones or other devices during class time due to extenuating circumstances should notify the instructor before the beginning of class. Note-taking using electronic devices may be done on a case-by-case basis.

The use of technology for any purpose other than classroom activities (e.g., scanning a QR code, peer reviews, literature searches, note-taking) will not be allowed during class. Failure to abide by this policy will be considered unprofessional behavior and will result in a significant reduction in the qualitative portion of the Classroom Engagement grade for the semester.

Professionalism also extends to expectations regarding standards of academic products. “To complete the rigors of the program successfully, students are expected to produce graduate-level scholarship as evidenced through professionalism, high levels of mastery as assessed through course examinations, and quality written work that meets the standards of academic writing and the criteria for the discipline as set forth by the [American Psychological Association](#) (APA)” (University of Lynchburg Counselor Education Student Handbook, 2023-2024, p. 8). In addition, [Dr. Bailey’s Requirements for Written Assignments](#) provides additional writing and formatting guidance. Failure to integrate feedback into future work (e.g., on a paper Dr. B corrects your header formatting and on a subsequent assignment there is no sign of integration of that suggestion) will result in points deducted from such future work.

Assignment submissions.

All assignments, unless otherwise specified, are due by the start of class on the designated date (i.e., by 4:30 pm on the day the assignment is due). Students are required to submit assignments regardless of whether or not they attend class on the corresponding day.

Late assignments will not be accepted without express permission from the instructor.

If a student wants to request permission to submit a late assignment, they must consult the instructor to discuss the reason for the late submission. If approved for late submission, students will abide by the agreed-upon late submission deadline. Assignments submitted after the original assignment date will be graded with a 20% reduction in possible points.

Assignments will be submitted in Google Classroom and should be written using current APA (2020) writing conventions and using Dr. B’s Requirements for Written Assignments (under “Writing Conventions” in Classroom). Students **MUST** submit all assignments in order to receive a passing grade.

All written assignments must be submitted in Google Classroom as Google docs. Written assignments submitted in any other format will be returned ungraded. Once resubmitted (within 24 hours), the resubmission will be graded with a 20% reduction in total possible points.

For any collaborative assignments, *all group members will submit.*

Activities and Assignments:

Classroom Engagement 10% of your final grade

Classroom engagement will be assessed in a few ways. The first fairly quantitative way of measuring your engagement will relate to your scores on Content Quizzes and occasional “mini-assignments” peppered throughout the semester. All relevant mini-assignments will be simple and will be clearly described in Weekly Task Lists and/or included during class meetings. The second way will be your on-time attendance to class each week. The final more qualitative way of assessment will be determined by your engagement in classroom activities. If you sit silent, are distracted, and do not engage, then your Classroom Engagement grade will be significantly lower. If you speak up and allow others to do the same, contribute to discussions, and are generally focused on classroom activities, then your Classroom Engagement grade will be higher.

Please note: when you read this, send Dr. B an email with the title, “COUN 670, I read the syllabus” along with a picture of your favorite animal. This will indicate that you have read the syllabus and are well-prepared for the semester ahead. It will also be your first contribution to your cumulative grade for Classroom Engagement and will be due by 4:30 pm on Monday, February 3.

Content Quizzes

In these short quizzes, you will be tested on content knowledge from assigned readings and other assigned content. Quizzes may only be taken in person. Scores on Content Quizzes will go towards your Classroom Engagement grade for the semester.

Throughout the semester, during class

Moral Development Paper *Due Monday, 2/17/2025 by 4:30 pm.* 20% of final grade

Our sense of ethics and morality develops, in part, as the result of our interactions and experiences in life. Family, society, culture, and religion are just a few of the things that will have an impact on our ethical and moral “compass.” The purpose of this paper is to allow you the opportunity to reflect on your own ethical and moral beliefs and, just as importantly, where those beliefs originated. Papers should be **three to four** pages in length.

ACA/ASCA Ethical Standards Analysis Paper *Due Monday, 3/17/2025 by 4:30 pm.* 20% of final grade.

Professional counselors must have a comprehensive understanding of the most current ethical codes that govern the profession. For this assignment, students will read the ACA *Code of Ethics* (2014) and the ASCA (2022) *Ethical Standards for School Counselors* in their entirety. They will analyze **three** standards from the codes, CMHC students from the ACA Code, and School Counseling students from the ASCA code. Papers should be **three to four** pages in length (not including title page and reference page).

Group Presentations 20% of final grade

There will be two group presentations during the semester.

1. **School Counseling Conundrum Presentation**. *Due Monday, 4/21/2025 in Classroom and as an in-class presentation.* 10% of final grade.

This collaborative 10 to 15-minute presentation will focus on considerations of school counseling using the 2022 ASCA Code of Ethics as the ethical framework.

2. **Ethical Theater: Telehealth Edition Presentation**. Due Monday, 5/5/2025 as an in-class presentation. 10% of final grade.

You and your small group will share a 10 to 15-minute creative dramatized presentation designed to illustrate an example of and possible resolution of an ethical challenge involving telehealth services and the counseling relationship.

Midterm Exam 15% of final grade

The midterm exam will be held in person in Schewel 110 computer lab on Monday, 3/24/2025, beginning at 4:30 pm. The exam will cover all material covered through Monday, 3/17/2025. It will be administered via Google Forms.

Final Exam 15% of final grade

The final exam will be held in person in Schewel 110 computer lab on Monday, 5/12/2025, beginning at 4:30 pm. The exam will cover the entire semester, with an emphasis on critical decision-making and reviewing major ethical concepts. It will be administered via Google Forms.

Evaluative Methodology:

Your final grade will be computed utilizing the following percentages for each requirement.

Classroom Engagement	10%
Moral Development Paper	20%
ACA/ASCA Ethical Standards Paper	20%
School Counseling Conundrum Presentation	10%
Ethical Theater Presentation	10%
Midterm Exam	15%
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>15%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100
A-	90-92.9
B+	87-89.9
B	83-86.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	73-76.9
F	72.9 or below

Tentative Course Schedule

*This schedule is tentative and subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Date	Synchronous Meeting Topic/s	Due: Readings/Tasks/Assignments
1/27	Introduction to COUN 670 Syllabus Review	
2/3	Counselors, Ethics, & the Law Professional Identity	R & H – Chs. 1 & 2
2/10	Diversity, Equity, & Social Justice	R & H – Ch. 3
2/17	Client Rights & Counselor Responsibilities; Confidentiality & Privileged Communication	R & H – Chs. 4 & 5 <i>Moral Development Paper, 2/17 @ 4:30 pm</i>
2/24	Records and Subpoenas	R & H – Ch. 6 <i>Guest: Dr. Lattisha Naylor, President of Virginia College and University Relations (VACUR)</i>
3/3	Competence, Assessment, and Diagnosis & Malpractice and Resolving Legal/Ethical Issues	R & H – Chs. 7 & 8 <i>Guest: Eneida Rodriguez Santiago</i>
3/10	Midterm Break	Nothing assigned. Find time to BE.
3/17	Boundary Issues Technology in Counseling	<i>ACA/ASCA Ethical Standards Analysis Paper 3/17 @ 4:30 pm</i> R & H – Ch. 9 & 10 <i>Guests: Johnathan Willis Maddie Koontz</i>
3/24	Midterm Exam Schewel 110 Computer Lab	Chapters 1-10 & all other material covered in class and in assigned content so far
3/31	Counseling Children and Vulnerable Adults	R & H – Ch. 11
4/7	Counseling Families and Groups	R & H – Ch. 12
4/14	Professional Relationships, Private Practice, & Health Care Plans	R & H – Ch. 13 What is your MH and SUD insurance coverage?
4/21	Issues in Counselor Education; Supervision & Consultation	R & H – Chs. 14 & 15 <i>School Counseling Conundrum Presentations</i>
4/28	Professional Writing/Research	R & H – Ch. 16

5/5		Ethical Theater: Telehealth Edition Presentations
5/12	Final Exam	Schewel 110 Computer Lab