



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

SOWK 4725 THEORY AND PRACTICE IN MENTAL HEALTH

Instructor Contact

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Communication Expectations

Students should primarily communicate through email, either through Canvas messaging or through UNT e-mail. Teams meeting may be scheduled virtual.

Course Description

The prevalence of mental health disorders in U.S. society is high; becoming an important source of concern that impacts many differing professions. It is therefore beneficial for students from any major to be better equipped in understanding the challenges of living with mental illness. This course emphasizes a comprehensive framework for addressing mental health issues and understanding the influence of mental health across biological, psychological, and social domains. Students will become familiar with the most common mental health disorders and will be guided by differing theoretical orientations including a strengths perspective to understand the challenges faced by individuals with mental health difficulties. The aim is to equip students with the essential knowledge and skills needed to effectively interact and respond to individuals with mental disorders. Overall, the course will focus on students' being prepared in these interactions with the capacity to interact in culturally competent, sensitive, and effective ways. Students will also examine the classification system (the DSM-5) that is used in the field to determine diagnosis (DSM-5 and ICD-10). Further, the effects of trauma are explored to deepen your knowledge and understanding of trauma and its relationship to mental health.

Course Structure

This is an online course - There are no mandatory online or face to face meetings. The content for this course is structured in a series of 16 Learning Modules that include readings, assignments, activities, and exercises to assist you in achieving the learning objectives. Reading assignments are specified in the syllabus/modules and must be diligently read in order to adequately complete the module assignments.

Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites or other restrictions for this course. It is open to students from any major.

Course Objectives

- Upon successful completion of this course, learners will be able to:
- Identify the primary indicators and symptoms of mental illness
- Apply the biopsychosocial features that influence mental disorders
- Distinguish between major mental disorders that impact individuals
- Describe the risk and protective factors influencing mental disorders
- Appraise the intersection of mental health and trauma



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Materials

The required text for this course is:

Corcoran, J. and Walsh, J. (2020). *Mental Health in Social Work: A Casebook on Diagnosis and Strength-Based Assessment* (3rd Ed). Hoboken, NJ: Pearson Education.

The text is available from the UNT Bookstore. Search for this information at the UNT bookstore using the following link: UNT Bookstore (Select SOWK as Department, Course as 4725, Section as 900).

Other supplemental or optional readings will also be periodically assigned. These materials will be made available electronically in the course or through the UNT library.

Technical Requirements & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

The following is a list of the minimum technology and other requirements necessary for all students enrolled in this course. This includes:

Reliable internet access
Speakers

[Canvas Technical Requirements](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements) (<https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

The minimum, course-specific technical skills needed for learners in this course are:

Extensive computer skills
Use of Canvas
Computer access to create documents, download and upload files, send emails, and use of attachments

Netiquette

Netiquette, or online etiquette, refers to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors online. Here are some general guidelines:

Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in email or any other communication

Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
Unless specifically invited, don't refer to your instructor by first name.

Use clear and concise language

The use of profanity is not permitted
Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar (this includes discussion boards)

Please note that communication can be civil even if there is some type of conflict involved. Instructors may choose not to respond to emails or other forms of communication that are perceived as insulting or disrespectful.

- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you."
- Use standard fonts such as Ariel, Calibri or Times New Roman and use a size 10 or 12 point font
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING.



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- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or sound offensive
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's)
- Do not send confidential information via e-mail
- Written communication—including email—forms a permanent record and so it is important to use care about how you make requests, ask questions, or express concerns

Success in an Online Course

While the online classroom shares many similarities with the face-to-face classroom, success in online education requires certain skills and expectations that students may not be aware of. Review the following link that provides recommendations on succeeding in online courses:

<https://clear.unt.edu/teaching-resources/online-teaching/succeed-online>

Getting Help

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130 Walk-In Availability: 8am-5pm Support Availability:

Monday-Thursday: 8am-9pm

Friday: 8am-5pm

Saturday: 11am-3pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

Student Support Services

[Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/) (<https://registrar.unt.edu/>)

[Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

[Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)

[Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)

[Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)

[Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

[Student Affairs Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)

[Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)

[Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)

Academic Support Services

[Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)

[Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)

[UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)

[Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

[MathLab](https://math.unt.edu/mathlab) (<https://math.unt.edu/mathlab>)



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Course Policies

Assignment Policy

Assignments will be listed in the modules and in the Assignment and Quiz sections of Canvas. Due dates will be listed with all assignments. Late assignments will not be graded without a University excused absence.

Possible extra credit assignments will be listed in the Announcements on Canvas.

I will be using Turnitin to check for plagiarism in written papers for the course. It is your responsibility to read the details of the policy on academic integrity on canvas and ask questions when you do not understand.

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

AI Policy

This course assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves. Students should not have another person or entity do the writing of any substantive portion of an assignment for them, which includes the use of artificial intelligence tools such as Chat GPT.

Technical Difficulties:

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any confirmed, unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty preventing completion of a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or [940.565.2324](tel:940.565.2324) and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time. Also, have a back-up plan on how you can access the Internet in case your service is disrupted (for example coming to a campus computer lab, using the library, friend etc., and submit assignments early if possible).

Assignments can always be submitted by email if needed and there is not a penalty for email submissions. However, it will only be graded if it is sent before the due date and time! Late assignments for technical issues are not accepted unless there was a verifiable and documented technical issue with Canvas (not related to students' personal computer difficulties). Always keep a copy of your work before submitting it in case glitches or errors occur.

Instructor Responsibilities and Feedback

My responsibility is to help you grow and learn in this course. As such, I am committed to providing clear instructions for assignments, answering questions, identifying additional resources as necessary, providing rubrics as appropriate, and continually reviewing and updating course content.

You may typically expect responses regarding your emails within three business days by myself or teaching assistant. Feedback and grades on assignments may take several weeks.



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Late Work

Students must adhere to the posted due dates as late assignments may not be accepted or graded – I understand LIFE HAPPENS!! But since you have the flexibility to choose which discussion/case templates to complete, I'm not going to be as forgiving for missed assignments. Make sure you communicate with me! I'm big on communication!

Do not wait until the last day to submit assignments – as potential problems are unpredictable! Also, do not submit assignments after the deadline thinking there will be an exception made in your case.

Instead, work on the next assignment to ensure it is submitted on time! Always allow yourself a minimum of several hours to upload documents – many students report their computers freeze! Remember, even one minute late means it is late! (Note: rarely will university policies supersede these requirements – However, exceptions as verified by the Dean of Students office are sometimes granted.)

Class Participation

There are typically weekly assignments that require students' participation. Participation is calculated into your grades for some activities – such as discussion posts. You are encouraged to contribute your personal perspectives and insights throughout this course to express your opinions, feelings, and reactions to course topics and are free to disagree.

Safe Environment Policy

Sometimes the potential impact of mental illness is not apparent but this topic can bring up unexpected reactions, emotions or opinions. You are encouraged to make every effort to take care of yourself and immediately seek out resources and support upon signs of distress as needed! Keep in mind there are resources on and off campus for students needing assistance with mental health issues or other types of trauma.

Syllabus Change Policy

Rarely will the syllabus, course information, or due dates change; however, in extreme circumstances it may be necessary. If any change is deemed vital, efforts will be made to ensure it does not adversely impact students. The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any point in the semester!

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website \(https://disability.unt.edu/\)](https://disability.unt.edu/).



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Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, disrespectful treatment of other students (verbal or written), disrupting, and use of inappropriate or profane language or gestures in class or other instructional settings. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be referred to the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. Visit [UNT's Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail Eagle Connect (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.



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Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565- 2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>) The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.

Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.



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Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

Use of Student Work

- A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:
- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.
- If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.
- Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses

No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.

In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.

Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

Course Requirements

The table below provides a summary of how points are allocated for this course.



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Assignments	Points Possible	Percentage of Final Grade
Course Activities <i>Exercises / Task Assignments Discussion Forums</i>	280 points (7 @ 40 pts each) 200 points (10 @ 20 pts each)	48%
Assignment 1 – Mental Status Exam	70 points	7%
Assignment 2 – Case Templates (5)	300 points (5 @ 60 each)	30%
Assignment 3 – Tests (3 tests)	150 points (3 @ 50 each)	15%
Total Points Possible	1000 points	100%

Remember, assignments must be submitted on time and late work is not accepted, as noted throughout this syllabus. Extra credit opportunities are typically not available for this course. However, if special opportunities arise, an announcement will be made to the entire student body.

Exercises / Task Assignments

You will have a total of seven (7) assignments. They will cover a variety of topics. There is more information on Canvas – make sure you follow all directions!

Discussions

There are a total of fourteen (14) discussion posts. You will choose TEN (10) to complete. Make sure you follow all of the directions to receive the full points!

Case Templates

There are a total of twelve (12) case studies you can choose from! You will only choose five (5). There are templates and rubrics uploaded to Canvas. There are strict requirements for these assignments.



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MODULES & WEEK	TOPIC	REQUIRED READINGS <i>Text or Supplemental Readings</i>	ASSIGNMENTS
Module 8 & 9 All assignments for Module due Sunday April 12 @ 11:59 PM			
Module 8 & 9 Week 4	<i>Bipolar & Depressive Disorder</i>	Read Module 8 Read Corcoran & Walsh text: Chapter 6 Read Module 9 Read Corcoran & Walsh text: Chapter 7	M8 Assignment: Bipolar Discussion – Bipolar Case Template: Bipolar Discussion- Suicide Risks Case Template: Depression
Module 10 & 11 All assignments for Module due Sunday April 19 @ 11:59 pm			
Module 10 & 11 Week 5	<i>Anxiety, Obsessive- Compulsive Disorders, Eating Disorders</i>	Read Module 10 Read Corcoran & Walsh text: 2 Chapter 8, Anxiety (Section A) Chapter 9, Obsessive/Compulsive (Section B) Read Module 11 Read Corcoran & Walsh text: Chapter 11	M10 Assignment: Anxiety Intervention Discussion – Anxiety & OCD Case Template (Section A): Anxiety Case Template (Section B): OCD TEST 2 Discussion- Eating Disorders Case Template: Eating Disorders



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MODULES & WEEK	TOPIC	REQUIRED READINGS <i>Text or Supplemental Readings</i>	ASSIGNMENTS
Module 12 & 13: All assignments for Module are due Sunday April 26 @ 11:59 PM.			
<p>Module 12 & 13 Week 6</p>	<p><i>Oppositional Defiant Disorder,</i> <i>Conduct Disorder,</i> <i>Substance & Addictive Disorders</i></p>	<p>Read Module 12 Read Corcoran & Walsh Text Chapter 12</p> <p>Read Module 13 Read Corcoran & Walsh Text Chapter 13</p>	<p>Discussion – Symptoms by Gender</p> <p>Case Template: ODD/CD</p> <p>M13 Assignment: Motivational Interviewing</p> <p>Discussion – Reducing Harm</p> <p>Case Template: Addictive Disorders</p>
Module 14 & 15: All Assignments for Module due Sunday May 3 @ 11:59 PM			
<p>Module 14 & 15 Week 7</p>	<p><i>Gender Dysphoria & Alzheimer’s Disease</i></p>	<p>Read Module 14 Read Corcoran & Walsh text: Chapter 14</p> <p>Read Module 15 Read Corcoran & Walsh Chapter 15</p>	<p>Discussion – Gender Dysphoria</p> <p>Case Template: Gender Dysphora</p> <p>Discussion- Supporting Caregivers</p> <p>Case Template: Alzheimer’s Disease</p>



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MODULES & WEEK	TOPIC	REQUIRED READINGS <i>Text or Supplemental Readings</i>	ASSIGNMENTS
Module 16: All Assignments for Module due FRIDAY May 8 @ 11:59 PM			
Module 16 Week 8	<i>Borderline Personality Disorder</i> & <i>Stigma</i>	<i>Read Module 16</i> <i>Read Corcoran & Walsh text: Chapter 16, BPD (Section A) & Stigma (Section B)</i>	TEST 3 Case Template: BPD Discussion – Dx Criteria
Wrap-Up! Make sure all work has been turned in!	REMEMBER TO COMPLETE THE COURSE EVALUATIONS! THANKS FOR YOUR HARD WORK THIS SEMESTER!!		

Grading

The method of grading for this course is strictly based on a point system. The table below specifies how grades will be earned in the course.

- A = 900-1000
- B = 800-899
- C = 700-799
- D = 600-699
- F = <500-599

Course Evaluation

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT and allows students the ability to confidentially provide constructive feedback to their instructor and department to improve the quality of student experiences in the course. I am very interested in the feedback as I work to continually improve my teaching. The SPOT (Student Perceptions of Teaching) survey will be made available to you towards the end of the semester. Pay attention to any announcements regarding when the survey is open and available. You will receive a link specific to this course for the survey.