



University of North Texas
College of Health and Public Service
Department of Rehabilitation & Health Services
Undergraduate Addiction Studies
Fall 2025

ADDS 4675

Addiction Counselor Competencies

Online

Pre-requisite: RHAB 4175 or ADDS 4175

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on familiarizing students with the core competencies necessary for effective interventions within addiction treatment settings and prepares students to apply these skills in addiction counseling practice.

Students successfully meeting course requirements will proficiently demonstrate marketable skills, including teamwork, written communication, civic engagement, and informal research.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students mastering content will:

1. Be familiar with Texas LCDC.
2. Comprehend the importance of treatment records.
3. Recognize fundamental concepts of substance use treatment in Texas, including diagnosis and levels of care.
4. Eliminate biased and stigmatic language related to substance use disorder.
5. Be aware of and demonstrate use of clinical writing.
6. Recall the Domains of addiction treatment, as identified by IC&RC.
7. Be familiar with state and national professional advocacy associations.
8. Adequately define “recovery” and access crucial resources from SAMHSA, NAADAC, & NIDA.
9. Identify the Competencies for Addiction Counselors
10. Compile appropriate referral resources for people with substance use disorder; and
11. Understand the importance of using professional language related to addiction and recovery.
12. Evaluate personal biases and their potential impact on clients.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

TAP 21: Addiction Counseling Competencies (United States of America, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, SAMHSA). Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

The TAP 21 cannot be purchased in the UNT Bookstore. It is available, *for no charge* from (HHS) the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration online.

RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

Those pursuing the LCDC may find the additional resources beneficial:

Zuckerman, E. L. (2019). *Clinicians Thesaurus: The guide to conducting interviews and writing psychological reports* (8th ed). New York, NY: Guilford.

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Professor Heller Garland has worked in treatment and education as an addiction professional for over 30 years. She served as President of the Dallas Chapter and Texas state board for the Texas Association of Addiction Professionals (TAAP), and on the board for NAADAC, the National Association for Addiction Professionals. She provides training and support to others in the helping profession, a passion she has nurtured since she was an intern. Heller Garland is an inductee of the Texas Counselor Hall of Fame, an award recognizing extended years of significant contributions to the addiction profession and TAAP.

Heller Garland is currently a Principal Lecturer at The University of North Texas in the Department of Rehabilitation and Health Service in the College of Health and Public Service and serves as Coordinator of the Addiction Studies program. She devotes time to the UNT Recovery to Practice initiative and serves as Faculty Advisor to Eagle Peer Recovery at UNT. Paula co-hosts *Life, Lived Better*, a lifestyle podcast about living well in body, mind, and spirit.

In her free time, she enjoys traveling, cooking, writing, spending time with her family and their dachshund.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My approach to teaching is based on my deep regard for the counseling profession. I believe my role is to equip students with the most current and accurate information possible. My goal is for students to become ethical, compassionate, and sought-after professionals in their field of choice. I aim to help students reach their goals by introducing new ideas and facilitating open dialogue. I want to provide ethical decision-making opportunities and scenarios and couple theory with application. I believe students learn from a multi-faceted approach and a practical application of information. I provide opportunities for students to actively participate through brainstorming new information and debating old ideas.

INSTRUCTOR COMMUNICATION

To communicate with the instructor most effectively and to receive the quickest response:

- Use the messaging feature through the course in Canvas.
- Clearly include all the details necessary for the instructor to best address your concern.
- Copy the message to your course TA, if there is a TA

CANVAS MESSAGE RESPONSES

Monday – Friday, during normal business hours Canvas messages will be returned within 48 hours. Messages sent on weekends, holidays, during university sanctioned closures, or after normal business hours will be returned within 48 hours of normal business hours resuming.

OFFICE HOURS

On campus or virtual appointments are available Monday – Friday by appointment. Contact the instructor through Canvas Messages to schedule.

Walk-in appointments begin the second week of class and are held on Wednesdays from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM.

CANVAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Much information about this course will be conveyed through Canvas Course Announcements. You are expected to read those announcements. It is advisable to turn on the notifications for Canvas.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment due dates are found on the Course Schedule on Canvas and details for each assignment can be found on Canvas within each module. Follow directions carefully to ensure fulfillment of assignment criteria. Following the directions for assignment criteria is a demonstration of professional readiness. Format and content are equally important and weighted in value in course assignments.

ADDICTION LANGUAGE

During the Introductory Module, all Addiction Studies courses offer a reminder lesson regarding the accurate and current language used related to addiction and recovery. Each student is expected to refrain from the use of antiquated language in the classroom and in assignment submissions. This is such an important part of professional development that point deductions for non-adherence may be given.

PERSONAL WORK

You are enrolled in a senior-level Addiction Studies course, which will continue preparing you for a career working with people who have substance use disorders. As such, you will be encouraged to view the classroom as an extension of the professional setting. Avoid the use of antiquated addiction language and consider implementing your self-care routine.

The role of an addiction counselor is among the most difficult, yet rewarding, of all in the helping profession. It is essential that LCDC's (addiction counseling credential in the state of Texas) be healthy and aware. To be a healthy and high-quality addiction professional, students will engage in experiential, personal exploration throughout all courses in the Addiction Studies program. These activities will require students to delve into their personal issues. Any information revealed during in-class discussions or in assignment submissions will be held in confidence by the course instructors. Personal insights are not for the benefit of the instructors, but for those preparing for a career in the helping profession.

A counselor can be one of the most valuable tools in the treatment of addiction, therefore, it is important for the counselor to take care of themselves. Therapeutic work is essential for counselors. There are many reasons it is suggested for counselors to have counselors. It is imperative that a counselor does their own personal work.

Reasons include:

1. **Empathy** - Knowing what it is like to sit in the chair of the client increases empathy. Empathy is an essential trait for counselors to possess.
2. **Knowledge** - Knowing and understanding that the healing process is not linear likely cannot be learned from a book. Having their own healing journey and experience teaches this.
3. **Ethics and avoiding harm** - Self-awareness provides insight into personal values, beliefs, experiences, and emotions. Being unaware of self can be an impediment in the counseling relationship and can result in harm to the client. [The ACA Code of Ethics](#) explicitly calls for counselors to "do no harm". Knowledge of personal issues and continued awareness can reduce the potential for countertransference.
4. **Self-Care** - Burnout is high among those who work in the addiction profession. Engaging in self-care is essential.
5. **Blind Spots** - Everyone has issues and experiences that are painful to recall. These issues are brought up for counselors during the counselor-client relationship. Clients may have similar experiences and pains. The client must be allowed to work through these issues and be the central focus. Counselors who do not do their own work can be activated by these engagements and unconsciously harm the client.
6. **Third-hand Trauma** - Even healthy counselors can struggle emotionally simply because of their position. Addiction counselors hear a lot of painful stories from their clients and need a place to process what is often referred to as "third-hand trauma".

If you are not currently in counseling or have a private, safe, and confidential place to do your personal work, begin planning to put such safeguards in place.

WRITING QUALITY

Writing submissions should reflect that of a college senior. The format of a formal paper is as important as the content. The same is true for meeting length requirements. Combat senseless point deductions by reading assignment directions carefully. The [UNT Writing Center](#) is available to all students wishing to improve their writing. Other resources will be provided within the Canvas classroom.

GRADING PERCENTAGES

20% - Tests & Quizzes (excluding Final Exam)

25% - Discussions, Summaries, & Culture Assignments

25% - Resources Assignments

30% - Final Exam & Related Assignments

GRADING BREAKDOWN

A: 90-100% (Outstanding. The student performs well above the minimum criteria.)

B: 80-89% (Good. The student performs above the minimum criteria.)

C: 70-79% (Solid. The student meets the criteria of the assignment.)

D: 60-69% (Below average work. The student fails to meet the minimum criteria.) F: 59 and below (Sub-par work. The student fails to complete the assignment.)

ROUNDING UP FINAL GRADE

.5 and above are rounded up on final grade.

.04 and below are not rounded up on final grade.

GRADE DISPUTES

Email instructor within 7 days of receiving a grade you desire to dispute. A meeting will be arranged between you and the instructor. Please provide rationale and plan to provide evidence that your assignment submission met the assignment requirements.

7 days after a grade has been posted, it is assumed you have no dispute, and the grade will stand.

LATE WORK / EXTRA CREDIT / MAKE UP WORK

Work turned in after the due date and time is considered late, unless the student has an absence meeting university excused absence policies.

All work is due at 11:59 PM. Submissions at 12:00 are considered late.

Late Work is deducted:

-25% up to 24-hours

-50% 24 – 48 hours

-75% 49- 72 hours

Work turned in after the due date and time is considered late, unless the student has an absence meeting university excused absence policies.

Submissions will not be accepted after the third day past the due date/time.

There is one extra credit opportunity in this course, and it can be found on the Course Schedule and in Assignments.

Should you be concerned about your grade or fail to submit assignments, contact the instructor immediately. Do not wait until the last week of the semester. As outlined in the policy related to “Grade Disputes”, grades will stand after 7 days of being entered, including 0 for failing to submit an assignment.

Extra Credit

One Extra Credit assignment will be available within the course and can be found on the course schedule. There are no additional extra credit opportunities or make-up work for this course. Incomplete or late extra credit assignments are not accepted. Please do not ask for an exception.

Should you be concerned about your grade or fail to submit assignments, contact the instructor immediately. Do not wait until the last week of the semester. As outlined in the policy related to “Grade Disputes”, grades will stand after 7 days of being entered, including 0 for failing to submit an assignment.

TURNAROUND TIME

Grading - I aim to return the graded work to you within one week of the due date. If this is not possible, I will send an announcement to the class.

AI and CHAT GPT

ChatGPT, the AI-powered chatbot launched in fall 2022 has many uses. ChatGPT might be a helpful brainstorming platform or provide editing feedback for co-authored assignments. However, any assignment thought to have been written by ChatGPT and turned in by a student is considered plagiarism **and will be turned into UNT Office of Academic Integrity**. The offending submission will be given a 0 and students will not be allowed to make up the assignment. Second offenses will result in a 0 in the course.

UNT STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND AUTHORIZED ABSENCES POLICY

Please review [UNT Policy Number 06.039](#) to determine if missed class or assignment submission meets UNT policy standards before emailing the instructor to ask for this modification.

Attendance in an online course can be concluded based on the last sign-in date.

COLLABORATIVE WORK

When course work requires collaboration, you will be informed. Otherwise, please do your own work. Do not post course content on study sites, such as Quizlet or in student-initiated Group Me Chats. Action will be taken through the university if cheating is brought to the attention of the instructor.

WORKING AHEAD

When modules and assignments are open early, you are welcome to work ahead. This does not, however, afford you the opportunity to re-do or re-submit assignments if the score is less than you desire.

CITIZENSHIP

Senior level courses are an excellent place to practice professionalism. Interaction and exchange of ideas with people dissimilar to us is paramount to growth. Student interaction throughout this course is encouraged. However, there will be no tolerance for name-calling, condemnation, or other forms of aggression. *Please reach out to me if you have any issues in this area. I can only assist when I am aware.*

MINIMAL TECHNICAL SKILLS

This is an online course; therefore, you must have minimum technical skills and the ability to reach out to technical support when needed.

Students in this course must:

- Have ongoing access to the internet.
- Have familiarity with or be willing to become familiar with Canvas.
- Be able to create and attach Word Documents.
- Be able to create and attach jpegs.
- Be able to create and attach PowerPoint presentations.
- Be able to create original Discussions on Canvas.
- Be able to respond to Discussion on Canvas.
- Be able to insert images and write accurate Alt Text descriptions.

Accommodation

This is an online course with fixed assignments with given due dates. Therefore, additional time is not accommodated.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE WITH CANVAS

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

The University of North Texas provides student technical support. The student help desk may be reached by emailing helpdesk@unt.edu or by calling 940.565-2324

Canvas technical requirements: <https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>

Contact tech support immediately if you encounter issues submitting an assignment or taking a quiz. Follow up with an email to the instructor that includes the ticket number from tech support.

COPYRIGHT INFRINGEMENT

It is a violation of Copyright to reproduce information from this course, as well as upload the contents to a website that is not university sponsored. Should information be found online that originated in this course, cease and desist will be filed, followed by all legal options.

This includes posting material from the course onto “study” websites, such as Quizlet or on the student created course GroupMe.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Code of Student Conduct: provides Code of Student Conduct along with other useful links.

Office of Disability Access: exists to prevent discrimination based on disability and to help students reach a higher level of independence.

Counseling and Testing Services: provides counseling services to the UNT community, as well as testing services, such as admissions testing, computer-based testing, career testing, and other tests.

UNT Libraries

UNT Learning Center: provides a variety of services, including tutoring, to enhance the student academic experience.

UNT Writing Center: offers free writing tutoring to all UNT students, undergraduate and graduate, including online tutoring. Succeed at UNT: information regarding how to be a successful student at UNT.

UNT 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. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation.

UNT 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 accommodation 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 at disability.unt.edu.

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.

UNT 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.

UNIVERSITY ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICY

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. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer 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. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

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: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

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 [insert administration dates] 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 at <http://spot.unt.edu/> or email spot@unt.edu.

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.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. The instructor has the right to adjust the syllabus and course schedule at any time during the semester.