



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

Fall 2026

ADDS 4675.400

Addiction Counselor Competencies

3-hours

Online

Pre-requisite: None

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

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, students mastering content will be able to:

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

COURSE MATERIALS

Required

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

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.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System and

- Knowledge of or willing to learn how to use Canvas Learning Management System
- Access to and the ability to use Microsoft Word

If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at Learn Anywhere (<https://online.unt.edu/learn>).

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Professor Heller Garland

As an addiction professional since 1993, Professor Heller Garland has worked in multiple treatment milieu and has provided training throughout the world. She has served the Texas Association of Addiction Professionals at the local and state level, and served on the national board, as well. 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.

She is the Coordinator of the Addiction Studies Program. She was an instrumental faculty member who initiated and successfully implemented the UNT Collegiate Recovery Program, the first in the nation fully integrated between mental health and addiction recovery and welcoming of Many Pathways to Recovery.

In August 2016 she was inducted into the Texas Counselor Hall of Fame, an award recognizing the body of work of an individual in the field of addictions counseling that is awarded based on the many facets of contributions over an extended period, the varied scope of services provided, and the populations these services reached.

Professor Heller Garland is the co-host of the Life, Lived Better Podcast, a lifestyle podcast about living life well - body, mind, and spirit.

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

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

My approach to teaching is based on my regard for the counseling profession. I believe my role is to equip students with current and accurate information and role model ethical decision making. 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 decision-making opportunities and scenarios coupling theory with application. I believe students learn from a multi-faceted approach and practical application of information. The courses I teach aim to provide opportunities for active engagement through brainstorming new information and challenging fixed ideas.

INSTRUCTOR COMMUNICATION

To communicate with 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.
- If your course has a TA, please copy them.

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

Walk In

Walk in appointments on campus are available **Wednesdays** between **10:00 AM – 1:00 PM**.

- Chilton Hall, 218

Virtual

Virtual appointments are available **Monday – Friday** at a pre-arranged time. Message the instructor for virtual appointments.

CANVAS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vital 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignments and their due dates are found on the Course Schedule on Canvas.
- 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

Early in the course there will be content presented about the use of appropriate and expected language related to addiction. 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 often stirred in 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.

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

Message the 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 policy.

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

Deductions:

After due date/time	Time	% Deduction
24 hours	12:00 – 11:59 PM day 1	25% Deduction
48 hours	12:00 – 11:59 PM day 2	50% Deduction
72 hours	12:00 – 11:59 PM day 3	75% Deduction

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

Make-Up Work

There is no make-up work for this course. *Please do not ask for an exception.*

Extra Credit

One extra credit assignment will be provided and may be found in the Course Schedule. It will be due on the date listed and there will be no other extra credit options provided.

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.

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 the missed class or assignment submission meets UNT policy standards before messaging the instructor to ask for this modification.

Attendance for an online course can be concluded based on the last sign-in date when work is completed.

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.

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.*

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 by messaging their instructor about the issue and including 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 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 ACCOMODATION STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. To request accommodation, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodation at any time, but it's important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodation can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodation during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access>).

ADDS 4175 is an online course and does not require timed quizzes or assignments. Therefore, assignments are expected to be submitted on time.

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 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.