

# Syllabus-Spring 2026

## Course Information:

PSYC 5393.001 Clinical Skills II  
Clinical Ph.D. Students  
Spring 2026; Wednesday. 2:00-4:45  
HPR 235

## Instructor Information:

**Dennis R. Combs, PhD.**

**Professor of Psychology and Department Chair**

**Licensed Psychologist, TX Clinical #33687**

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**Office Phone: (903) 565-5880; 903-316-2280 (Cell Phone for emergencies only)**

**HPR 227**

**(Note: Email or Text Messaging is the most efficient way to contact me; however, please do not send CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION pertains to a client electronically (e.g., real name, DOB, SSN). Please text me immediately if there is a crisis situation or call other on-call instructors.**

*NOTE: A student at UT-Tyler is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from a university-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.*

## Catalog Description of PSYC 5393:

This course emphasizes the application of practical therapeutic techniques with clients. Video feedback and direct supervision is central to learning. Integration of clinical skills through closely supervised work with community clients at the departmental clinic. Goal setting, treatment planning, case conceptualization, outcome evaluation, and evidence-based practices are emphasized.

## SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Exhibit skills and competence in individual therapy with volunteer clients
2. Display the necessary techniques for accurate, ethical, and competent record-keeping
3. Display knowledge of empirically supported interventions found in clinical psychology practice
4. Demonstrate the ability to case conceptualize to enhance treatment outcomes
5. Demonstrate the ability to provide an accurate diagnosis and develop a treatment plan
6. Display knowledge of appropriate assessment instruments to be used with various client concerns including how to integrate assessment and treatment information
7. Evaluate personal philosophical and theoretical basis for therapy
8. Discuss current ethical and legal issues in the field of clinical psychology
9. Participate in direct supervision to enhance clinical skills (e.g. intervention skills, professionalism, multicultural competence, advocacy, wellness)
10. Be aware of the need to maintain confidentiality and to protect the rights of clients at all times
11. Understand the need to develop cultural self-awareness and cultural humility

## INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:

This course is designed to promote the development of clinical skills and intervention methods. During this semester students will engage in practical clinical experience where they will develop and strengthen their professional skills including intervention methods, treatment planning, goal setting, outcome evaluation, documentation, and theoretically informed and reflective practice.

Unlike purely academic courses, class meeting will entail group supervision where students will discuss their work with clients and receive constructive feedback from the instructor and their fellow classmates. Student will also receive individual supervision on their cases during the semester. Students will be expected to take an active role in class by reading the assigned readings, participating in discussion, and giving and receiving feedback concerning work with clients. Individual or group supervision of students' work with clients is also a requirement for this course. Students will arrange to meet with the instructor for weekly supervision. During supervision the student will have a chance to review and discuss client cases. In order to facilitate this process, students will need to bring videotaped therapy sessions with them to supervision.

## LEARNING AND EVALUATIVE ACTIVITIES

### 1. Supervision of Therapy Work /Direct Observation:

- For supervision purposes, each student will be observed and supervised for their therapy and assessment work. It is expected you will have 20-25 hours of intervention training by the end of the class. You will be placed in the UT Tyler Counseling

Center for this class seeing actual clients. Supervisors will rate your skill using the Student Clinical Skills Evaluation (SCSE-PhD) at the mid-term and at the end of the course to assess intervention competencies. It is expected that students “meet or exceed expectations” on skills rated. You will have 1 hour of supervision per week and the instructor will directly observe your work at least 1 time during the semester. For all cases, you must conduct an assessment prior to conducting therapy which will usually include the MMPI-3, PAI, or other diagnostic assessment measures. We have these measures in the assessment room or can be computer scored with your supervisor.

- Evaluation of your work will consist of written and/or verbal feedback from the instructor and supervisor. Evaluation will occur during individual and group supervision sessions. Videotaped session can be used if needed to directly observe clinical skills.

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## **2. Treatment Topics Presentation:**

For this presentation, students will present on an evidence-based treatment strategy for a specific mental disorder. Students will discuss a disorder and how to treat it in class using empirically supported treatments. Time will be 1 hour. Presentation will use power point format. You will share this information with the class so please bring copies of your speaking outline or PowerPoint handout for your classmates.

## **3. Best Practices in Telepsychology Modules:**

As part of the class you will complete the first 2 modules of APA’s Best Practices in Telepsychology and pass a quiz over the content of the modules. A passing score is 70+ on the quiz.

## **4. Required Attendance & Participation**

Learning in this course is based on interaction and participation. Students are expected to attend **all** class meetings, arrive on time, and remain for the entire class meeting. Students are also expected to be appropriately prepared for classes and to take an active role in discussion and activities. Students are also expected to attend all weekly supervision sessions. Please come prepared to each session with tapes to review, questions regarding your work with clients, and any logs that need signing. *Thank you for not checking emails, texting, surfing the internet, etc....during class time.*

## **5. Code of Conduct and Professionalism**

You will also be graded on how well you keep your client’s files up-to-date (e.g., progress notes, documents, assessments), as well as your interaction/communication with your clients. You are expected to follow the APA Code of Ethics and the Departmental Code of Conduct when acting as a student clinician.

## **• 5. Malpractice Insurance (required)**

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All Students will need a student malpractice insurance policy for the semester. Go to [www.trustinsurance.com](http://www.trustinsurance.com) to obtain coverage and I must have a copy of this before you see any clients. You will need for practicum so go ahead and purchase it now.

## **TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

1/14	<b>Class Overview and Assignments; Overview of need for services in college populations</b> Bourdon, J.L., et al. (2018). The Relationship Between On-Campus Service Utilization and Common Mental Health Concerns in Undergraduate College Students. <i>Psychological Services</i> , 17, 118-126. Auerbach, R.P., et al., (2018). WHO World Mental Health Surveys International College Student Project: Prevalence and Distribution of Mental Disorders. <i>Journal of Abnormal Psychology</i> , 127, 623-638.
1/21	<b>Diversity Issues in Clinical Practice/ Orientation to the Counseling Center; Review of Handbook</b> Frost, N.D., et al. (2020). Bridging the Gap: Address the Mental health Needs of Underrepresented Collegiate Students at Psychology Training Clinics. <i>Training and Education in Professional Psychology</i> , 14, 138-144. Perez-Rojas, A., et al. (2017). Presenting Concerns in Counseling Centers: The View from Clinicians on the Ground. <i>Psychological Services</i> , 14, 416-427.
1/28	<b>Goal Setting/Treatment Plans/Group Supervision</b> Cormier, W.H. & Cormier, L.S. (1991). Selecting and Defining Goals. In <i>Interviewing Strategies</i>

for Helpers (3<sup>rd</sup> edition) (pp.216-252). Brooks/Cole Publishing: Pacific Grove, California.

Cukcrowicz, K.C., et al. (2005). Improved Treatment Outcome Associated with the Shift to Empirically Supported Treatments in a Graduate Training Clinic. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 36, 330-337.

- 2/4 Handling Crisis Situations & Ethical Practices**  
Wise, R.A., et al. (2011). When HIPAA and FERPA Apply to University Training Clinics. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*, 5, 48-56.
- 2/11 Case Conceptualization/Progress Notes/ Group Supervision**  
Cameron, S & Turtle-Song, I. (2002). Learning to Write Effective SOAP Notes. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 80, 286-292.  
Kuyken, W., Padesky, C.A. & Dudley, R. (2008). The Science and Practice of Case Conceptualization. *Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 36, 757-768.
- 2/18 Use of Homework in Treatment**  
Tompkins, M.A. (2004). Step 2: Set Up the Homework Assignment and Secure Compliance. In *Using Homework in Psychotherapy: Strategies, Guidelines, and Forms* (pp. 25-48). Guilford Press: New York.
- 2/25 Best Practices in Telehealth and Telesupervision Module 1/Group Supervision**
- 3/4 Best Practices in Telehealth and Telesupervision Module 2/ Group Supervision**
- 3/11 No Class, Spring Break Week**
- 3/18 Case Presentations**
- 3/25 No Class, Dr. Combs out of town for Conference**
- 4/1 Case Presentations**
- 4/8 Case Presentations**
- 4/15 Outcome Evaluation/Termination/Referral Issues**  
Kazdin, A.E. (2021). Single Case Experimental Research Designs. In A. E. Kazdin (Ed.), *Research Design in Clinical Psychology* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition., pgs 192-222). Cambridge University Press.
- 4/22 File Review and Hours Due/ Final Evaluations Due**

### **University Policies and Information**

#### **Withdrawing from Class**

Students may withdraw (drop) from this course using the Withdrawal Portal. Withdrawing (dropping) this course can impact your Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veteran Benefits, Exemptions, Waivers, International Student Status, housing, and degree progress. Please speak with your instructors, consider your options, speak with your advisor, and visit the One-Stop Service Center (STE 230) or email [enroll@uttyler.edu](mailto:enroll@uttyler.edu) to get a complete review of your student account and the possible impacts to withdrawing. We want you to make an informed decision. UT Tyler faculty and staff are here for you and often can provide additional support options

or assistance. Make sure to carefully read the implications for withdrawing from a course and the instructions on using the [Withdrawal portal](#).

Texas law prohibits students from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career\*. The six courses dropped includes those from other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress and other areas, such as financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and Enrollment Services for additional guidance. **CAUTION #1:** Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the [Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule](#). **CAUTION #2:** All international students must check with the [Office of International Programs](#) before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms. **CAUTION #3:** All UT Tyler Athletes must check with the Athletic Academic Coordinator before withdrawing from a course. **CAUTION #4:** All veterans or military-affiliated students should consult with the [Military and Veterans Success Center](#).

\* Students who began college for the first time before 2007 are exempt from this law.

### **Artificial Intelligence Statement**

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

### **AI is not permitted in this course at all.**

- a. Example 1: I expect all work students submit for this course to be their own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.
- b. Example 2: To best support your learning, you must complete all graded assignments by yourself to assist in your learning. This exclusion of other resources to help complete assignments includes artificial intelligence (AI). Refrain from using AI tools to generate any course context (e.g., text, video, audio, images, code, etc.) for an assignment or classroom assignment.
- c. Example 3: The work submitted by students in this course will be generated by themselves. This includes all process work, drafts, brainstorming artifacts, editing, and final products. This extends to group assignments where students must collaboratively create the project. Any instance of the following constitutes a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code: a student has another person/entity do any portion of a graded assignment, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, using a previously submitted assignment and/or using AI tools (such as ChatGPT).

### **Final Exam Policy**

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the Dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members must maintain student

final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in place of a grade *only when **all of the following conditions are met***: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor, and (c) the student presents these reasons before the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average.

The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to meet all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has yet to be assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or NC. If the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis, this may adversely affect the student's academic standing.

### **Grade Appeal Policy**

Disputes regarding grades must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade by filing a Grade Appeal Form with the instructor who assigned the grade. A grade appeal should be used when the student thinks the final course grade awarded does not reflect the grades earned on assessments or follow the grading scale as documented in the syllabus. The student should provide the rationale for the grade appeal and attach supporting document about the grades earned. The form should be sent via email to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member reviews the rationale and supporting documentation and completes the instruction section of the form. The instructor should return the form to the student, even if a grade change is made at this level. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the department from which the grade was issued. In situations where there is an allegation of capricious grading, discrimination, or unlawful actions, appeals may go beyond the Chairperson to the Dean or the Dean's designee of the college from which the grade was issued, with that decision being final. The Grade Appeal form is found in the Registrar's Form Library.

NOTE: The Grade Appeal Form is different from the Application for Appeal form submitted to the Student Appeals Committee, which does not rule on grade disputes as described in this policy.

### **Disability/Accessibility Services**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical, and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <https://www.uttyler.edu/disability-services>, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email [saroffice@uttyler.edu](mailto:saroffice@uttyler.edu), or call 903.566.7079."

### **Military Affiliated Students**

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it

difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at [MVSC@uttyler.edu](mailto:MVSC@uttyler.edu) or via phone at 903.565.5972.

### **Students on an F-1 Visa**

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

- Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.
- Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.
- Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

### **Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct**

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

### **FERPA**

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy 5.2.3. The course instructor will follow all requirements to protect your confidential information.

### **Absence for Official University Events or Activities**

This course follows the practices related to Excused Absences for University Events or Activities as noted in the Catalog.

### **Absence for Religious Holidays**

This course follows the practices related to Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days as noted in the Catalog.

### **Absence for Pregnant Students**

This course follows the requirements of Texas Laws SB 412, SB 459, SB 597/HB 1361 to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. Part of the supports afforded pregnant students includes excused absences. Faculty who are informed by a student of needing this support should make a referral to the Parenting Student Liaison. NOTE: Students must work with the Parenting Student Liaison in order to receive these supports. Students should reach out to the Parenting Student Liaison at [parents@uttyler.edu](mailto:parents@uttyler.edu) and also complete the Pregnant and Parenting Self-Reporting Form.

### **Campus Carry**

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.

### **CEP Mission**

The mission of the CEP is to prepare competent and passionate professionals in the fields of

education, psychology, and counseling; to advance knowledge and expertise; and to impact these fields locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

#### **CEP Vision**

The CEP will be a global leader in responding to needs in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling, with a focus on the East Texas region, by creating innovative academic and scholarly pathways and partnerships.

#### **Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Program Mission:**

The University of Texas at Tyler's Ph.D. Program in Clinical Psychology strives to educate and provide high quality training to students in the science and practice of clinical psychology with an emphasis on the development of clinical and research skills to work with underserved populations. Students will be prepared to work in a variety of educational, research, and clinical settings. The program is based on the scientist-practitioner model of professional training and emphasizes evidence-based practices. Training in research and psychological science, intervention and assessment methods, ethics and professional dispositions, supervision and consultation, and a sensitivity to and awareness of issues culture and individual differences are embedded throughout the curriculum.