SYLLABUS

Course Information:
PSYC 5328.001: Issues & Professional Ethics
Fall 2026
Mondays, 10-12:45p, BEP 213

Instructor Information:
Sarah M. Sass, Ph.D.
Office: HPR 215
Office hours: Mondays, 9-10a and 12:45-1:45p, Tuesdays, 2-3p, and by appointment
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Course Catalog Description: This course provides a survey of the practice of psychology and counseling from an ethical and professional viewpoint. Consideration is given to such things as the rules of the psychology and counseling boards, ethical case studies, and professional practices.

Student Learning Outcomes:
As a result of engaging in this course, a successful student will:

- Learn, interpret, and apply the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association
- Learn, interpret, and apply state and federal laws pertaining to the provision of mental health services
- Be familiar with state licensing requirements and issues
- Understand and be able to discuss major ethical/legal principles and issues
- Understand the importance of developing competencies in providing services to clients of all backgrounds
- Engage in the process of ethical decision making

Required Readings:

- Knapp, S. J., & Fingerhut, R. (2024). *Practical ethics for psychologists: A positive approach (4th edition)*. American Psychological Association. ISBN-10: 9781433827457
- Pope, K. S., Vasquez, M. J. T., Chavez-Dueñas, N. Y., & Adames, H. Y. (2021). *Ethics in psychotherapy and counseling: A practical guide (6th edition).* Wiley: ISBN-10: 119804299
- APA Ethics code https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf

Recommended Texts:

- Boilen, S. (2021). Ethics in rural psychology: Case studies and guidance for practice.

Teaching Strategies
Active participation in your learning leads to stronger long-term retention and understanding of the materials we review. The course will focus on both theory and practice, using assignments to reinforce learning. As graduate students, you will be expected to actively engage with both peers and the instructor.

Course evaluation is based on performance on the following components:
Participation and attendance: Students are expected to attend each class session having completed all required readings beforehand. One absence is permitted without penalty. Active participation is required including in all in-class activities, discussions, and experiential assignments, as well as in the between class assignments. You will be expected to contribute thoughtful comments, reflections, ideas, and questions to our in-class discussions.

Reflection Papers: These are short, approximately one paragraph reflections on two things: 1. something that impacted you and 2. a question you have about the readings for a given week. Specifically, based on your understanding of the reading, you could comment on what resonated with you and why? What issues or ideas do you have questions about and why? What points didn't land well with you or do you disagree with and why? Important: **Be sure to upload your reflections by 11:59p on Sundays <u>before</u>** each class.

Exam: An in-class full length exam will be given to test understanding of material.

Project Presentation: Small groups of approximately 3-4 students will research ethical considerations around a special topic that incorporates multiple resources (e.g., journal articles, chapters, books, APA organization resources, Texas Psychological Association resources, Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists resources, and other legal resources in Texas). Each group will give a presentation on their topic, highlighting important ethical considerations specific to their topic. Each group will assign a scholarly resource for fellow colleagues to read in advance of their presentation.

Project Presentation Reading Questions: Share at least 2 questions (at least 1 per presentation) that you have for each presentation group in the upcoming class presentations for the week.

Final Course Reflection: In this reflection you will synthesize what you have learned in the course.

<u>Summary of Grading</u>

Participation and attendance	10 points
Reflection Papers (6 possible, 5 count, 4 points each)	20 points
Exam	25 points
Project Presentation	25 points
Project Presentation Reading Questions (4 total, 2.5 points each)	10 points
Final Course Reflection	10 points
TOTAL:	**100 points**

A = 90-100 points; B = 80-89 points; C = 70-79 points