



MHS 6420.901: Multicultural Counseling for Diverse Populations (3 cr. hours)

Spring 2026-Mondays 5-7:45pm (EDU 261)

Instructor: Eric S. Davis, PhD, NCC, SB-RPT

Office location: College of Education 158K

Office hours: Monday & Thursday (3:00-4:30pm) or by appointment

Phone:
813-974-0040

Email: esdavis1@usf.edu

Course Prerequisites (if any): MHS 6006

Required Text: Lee, W. M., Orozco, G. L., & Kwan, K. K. (2024). *Introduction to Multicultural Counseling for Helping Professionals* (4th ed.). Taylor & Francis.

ACA Multicultural and Social Justice Counseling Competencies (<https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/competencies/multicultural-and-social-justice-counseling-competencies.pdf?sfvrsn=20>)

ACA Code of Ethics (<https://www.counseling.org/resources/ethics>)

The School Counselor and Culutral Diversity (<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/Standards-Positions/Position-Statements/ASCA-Position-Statements/The-School-Counselor-and-Cultural-Diversity>)

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th. edition). Accessible through the

USF Library (<https://guides.lib.usf.edu/academicwriter>)

A copy of one of the books from the banned list provided which can be accessed through the instructor, your local public library, or purchased on your own.

Required Websites:

CANVAS: <http://my.usf.edu> (MHS 6420)

CACREP: <https://www.cacrep.org/section-2-professional-counseling-identity/>

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to familiarize the students with the concepts and paradigms used in counseling diverse populations, and the development of multicultural competencies. Students will study the main characteristics and needs of multicultural groups including Native Americans, African Americans, Latine Americans, Asian and Pacific Island Americans, Middle Eastern Americans, White and European Americans, Women, Men, Members of the LGBTQ+ community, older adults, persons with disabilities, multiracial people, and undocumented persons. We will also explore issues connected to poverty, special education, and religion. Completion of this course will provide the student an understanding of current theories, trends, and issues in counseling special populations; relevant skills to work with diverse populations; and strategies for studying and changing organizations and communities understanding, attitudes, and behaviors towards multicultural groups.

Course content and objectives relate primarily to COE conceptual framework CARE theme of Collaboration, Academic excellence, Research, and Ethical practice: *“Competent education professionals use their academic preparation and research skills to achieve positive outcomes among the diverse populations they serve. Ethical education professionals are advocates for social change who use cultural knowledge and sensitivity, and who work in and through systems toward equal access to high quality education and services for all citizens. Collaborative education professionals demonstrate democratic values as they interact with multiple communities (districts, schools, departments, professional societies, caregivers, and policy makers) in inclusive, egalitarian ways to achieve high quality instructional and service outcomes.”*

Course Objectives: Course Objectives (CACREP):

Based on the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2024 competencies for all programs as well as specific to School Counseling, students will be able to the following upon completion of the course:

1. the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of and with individuals receiving counseling services to address systemic, institutional, architectural, attitudinal, disability, and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success **(CACREP: Section III.A.4)**
2. self-care, self-awareness, and self-evaluation strategies for ethical and effective practice **(CACREP: Section III.A.11)**
3. theories and models of multicultural counseling, social justice, and advocacy **(CACREP: Section III.B.1)**
4. the influence of heritage, cultural identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, understandings, within-group differences, and acculturative experiences on individuals' worldviews **(CACREP: Section III.B.2)**
5. the effects of historical events, multigenerational trauma, and current issues on diverse cultural groups in the U.S. and globally **(CACREP: Section III.B.4)**
6. the effects of stereotypes, overt and covert discrimination, racism, power, oppression, privilege, marginalization, microaggressions, and violence on counselors and clients **(CACREP: Section III.B.5)**
7. the effects of various socio-cultural influences, including public policies, social movements, and cultural values, on mental and physical health and wellness **(CACREP: Section III.B.6)**
8. disproportional effects of poverty, income disparities, and health disparities toward people with marginalized identities **(CACREP: Section III.B.7)**
9. principles of independence, inclusion, choice and self-empowerment, and access to services within and outside the counseling relationship **(CACREP: Section III.B.8)**
10. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination **(CACREP: Section III.B.9)**
11. guidelines developed by professional counseling organizations related to social justice, advocacy, and working with individuals with diverse cultural identities **(CACREP: Section III.B.10)**
12. the role of religion and spirituality in clients' and counselors' psychological functioning **(CACREP: Section III.B.11)**
13. school counselor roles as leaders, advocates, and systems change agents in PK-12 schools **(CACREP: Section V.H.6)**
14. skills to critically examine the connections of social, cultural, familial, emotional, and behavioral factors to academic achievement **(CACREP: Section V.H.11)**
15. strategies to promote equity in student achievement and access to postsecondary education opportunities **(CACREP: Section V.H.19)**

Description of Class Activities, Assignments, Responsibilities & Schedule:

Class Format:

Class format will include a variety of teaching formats including lecture, class discussion, live demonstrations, as well as the opportunity for student to practice skills on a weekly basis. Learning will also be enhanced through the use of technology and virtually via Microsoft Teams as necessary. A wide variety of teaching methods will be utilized to facilitate student learning:

required reading, writing, demonstration projects, team based evaluation, discussion, and the use of various technologies will all serve to augment and support the acquisition of counseling skills. Please note that course requirements and/or assignments may be changed or altered to facilitate student learning and assist with meeting course objectives.

Campus Free Expression

It is fundamental to the University of South Florida's mission to support an environment where divergent ideas, theories, and philosophies can be openly exchanged and critically evaluated. Consistent with these principles, this course may involve discussion of ideas that you find uncomfortable, disagreeable, or even offensive. In our classroom, ideas are intended to be presented in an objective manner and not as an endorsement of what you should personally believe. Objective means that the idea(s) presented can be tested by critical peer review and rigorous debate, and that the idea(s) is supported by credible research. Not all ideas can be supported by objective methods or criteria. Regardless, you may decide that certain ideas are worthy of your personal belief. In this course, you may be asked to engage with complex ideas and demonstrate an understanding of the ideas. Understanding an idea does not mean that you are required to believe it or agree with it.

Course Evaluation & Assignments:

Cultural Self-Exploration Project (120 total points)

Write an APA-formatted paper exploring the following:

1. Your ethnic and cultural background.
 - a. Share a visual representation your ethnic/cultural history (e.g. genogram, table, family tree, etc.)
 - b. Discuss what aspects/qualities of your ethnic/cultural background are prominent in your life (e.g., language, religion, character traits) and the childhood experiences that reinforced them
 - c. Describe the life experiences or relationships that shaped your view of people who are culturally different than you. What is your current view of people who are culturally different than you?
2. The cultural values you currently hold.
 - a. What are some cultural values you currently hold (relationships, basic human nature, religion, cultural norms)?
 - b. Which of these values may be different from common values of other cultural groups (African American, Asian American, Latine, LGBTQ+, Christian, etc.)?
 - c. How do you plan to manage values conflicts with your clients?
3. Describe your process in cultural identity development.
 - a. Based in the most appropriate identity development model for yourself, which stage are you currently experiencing? Give examples.
 - b. What factors/experiences influenced your progression?
 - c. How do you plan to further facilitate your cultural identity development?

CACREP Objectives (2,4-9,12,14)

The Diverse Experience of Culturally Diverse People (60 total points)

The purpose of this project is to interact with a cultural group that is not your own (e.g., religious experience, cultural festival, advocacy event, etc.). For this assignment, students will write a 3 to 5 page description on the interaction. This is not simply a description of the interaction, but what you learned from the interaction. For example, what did you learn about this cultural group you did not know before the experience, how did the experience help you enhance your own cultural self-awareness, what aspects of your counseling skills/identity were increased by the experience, etc. There is also an example of an interview at the end of this syllabus that has questions that you might want answered during your interaction. (This interview IS NOT required). The experiences **MUST** be approved by the professor prior to interaction.

CACREP Objectives (2,4,5,6,7,12)

Cultural Identity Sandtray and Reflection (70 total points)

You will participate in a sandtray activity utilizing various diverse minatures to process your own cultural world knowledge and experiences. The creation of the sandtray will take place during class on two separate dates. Within 24 hours, you will submit a reflection statement on the experiences of creating the sandtray. The following statements will be used to complete your reflection:

1. What was your experience participating in the sandtray activity?
2. How did this activity help you understand your cultural knowledge and experiences?
3. What was beneficial about the activity?
4. What was not helpful about the activity?
5. How did this activity help you understand diverse cultures/populations?
6. How do you see this activity assisting you continuing to develop your multicultural counseling skills?

CACREP Objectives (1-15)

Banned Book Review (60 total points)

You will select one book from the provided banned book list to review. Provide a 3-5 page review addressing the following aspects:

1. Share a detailed overview of key elements from the book
2. Provide your personal reactions to the book
3. Comment on your rationale to include or remove the book from the school setting. Be sure to consider aspects such as student developmental level, potential reactions from stakeholders, and application of or alternative resources for the book in the school.

CACREP Objectives (1,2,4-9,12)

Final Exam (50 total points)

Students will take a final exam (**50 points**) that cover the content topics discussed in class and text. The format and length of these exams will be determined by the instructor but may include multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay items.

CACREP Objectives (1-14)

Generative AI is not allowed for any of the course assignments.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Grade: Grades in this class will be based on completion of the course requirements listed below.

50 points:	Final Exam
120 points:	Cultural Self Exploration Project
60 points:	Cultural Group Experience
70 points:	Cultural Research Presentation
60 points	Banned Book Review
360 points	TOTAL

Grading Scale (%)	
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0 - 59	F

Grade Dissemination:

Graded tests and materials in this course will be returned individually. Graded materials are typically returned within one week of submission date; however, this may vary depending upon the assignment and date of submission. You can access your scores at any time using "Grades" in Canvas. Please note that scores returned mid-semester are unofficial grades.

Earning a "B" in MHS 6420:

Students must successfully complete MHS 6420 with a grade of "B" or better in order to progress in the Counselor Education program. Students who do not earn a B or higher, may not register for any core Counselor Education courses until the course is successfully repeated with a

B or higher. This course covers basic counseling theories, and failure to demonstrate these fundamentals casts doubt on your ability to develop the more complex skills necessary to function as an effective professional counselor.

Course Policies:

1. **Attendance:** Missing class and/or leaving early will affect your ability to practice and develop crucial counseling skills. **Thus, attendance at all class meetings is mandatory. Please be advised that missing more than one class meeting will adversely affect your grade, unless it is a documented emergency. Students will lose 10 points from the final total grade for more than one non-emergency class absence. Additionally, for each unexcused late arrival or early departure (15 minutes), a student will receive a 1-point deduction from the final total grade.** As students are informed in advance of assignment due dates, they are still expected to complete and submit the work assigned for class when absent. To enhance the virtual experience of this course, students must have their cameras on during class, be dressed appropriately, and ensure a distraction-free environment.
2. **Late Work:** Late assignments will be accepted for 24 hours beyond the due date without penalty. **Assignments submitted after the 24 hours will receive a grade of 0 unless discussed with the professor.** Missed exams may be made up only if a documented emergency situation exists. Whether or not a situation constitutes an emergency will be determined by the instructor.
3. **Personal Device Usage:** The use of laptops, tablets, and smartphones is contingent on their use *solely* for class purposes. It is understood that these devices are a regular part of students' lives and academic experience. However, it is with the understanding that these devices will be used in a professional and an appropriate manner. Recording devices may be used only with the prior permission, any permitted recordings are for personal use only and may not be shared, and all recordings must be destroyed by the end of the semester.
4. **Professional Demeanor:** **Students are expected to behave in a professional manner at all times in all aspects of the program.** This includes adherence to all guidelines regarding professional demeanor, confidentiality etc. including those specified in this syllabus, departmental and universities policies, and the ACA code of ethics. Violations of professional conduct may result in serious consequences (e.g. failing course grade, recommendation for program dismissal) and will be handled in accordance with will department, university and professional ethical guidelines. Additionally, students are required to prepare adequately for each class meeting. Specifically, they are expected to complete required readings before class, submit assignments on time, and participate actively in both class discussions and practice sessions. Elements of professionalism include but are not limited to the following:
 - personal and academic integrity
 - responsibility for one's own behavior, tasks, assignments and life lessons
 - consideration, caring and sensitivity to peers
 - maturity, including the capacity to accept "no"
 - evidence of a continuous process of self-exploration, resulting in enhanced self-awareness
 - practice of ethical and moral professional behavior

- openness to constructive feedback
 - willingness to try new behaviors and to make suggested changes
5. Academic Integrity and plagiarism: Students are responsible for understanding all university policies related to academic integrity and the avoidance of plagiarism, and students are responsible for asking questions to clarify expectations in an individual section. The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows instructors and students to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. Faculty/instructors may request that assignments be submitted as electronic files to a Learning Management System module such as Turnitin (Canvas). Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student's paper overlaps material in the company's databases. For more information about USF's academic integrity policies, please see the current catalog (at <http://www.ugs.usf.edu/catalogs.htm> or <http://www.grad.usf.edu/catalog.php>).
 6. Communication expectations: Every newly enrolled USF student receives an official USF e-mail account that ends with "mail.usf.edu." Every official USF correspondence to students will be sent to that account. Go to the USF Information Technology website at <http://www.it.usf.edu/email> to learn more about email services and to activate their USF student email account. Additionally, this course utilizes Canvas and thus students are expected to access the system on a regular basis to keep abreast of additional course materials, communications, and grades. It is my goal to respond to email communications within 24 hours.
 7. Reasonable Accommodations: Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with the Office of Student Disabilities Services in order to receive special accommodations and services. Please notify the instructor during the first week of classes if a reasonable accommodation for a disability is needed for this course. Contact SDS at 974-4309 or www.sds.usf.edu. A letter from the USF Disability Services Office must accompany this request. Any class recordings approved as an accommodation for student needs are to be used solely for personal use and are not to be shared with other individuals or uploaded to any website. All other student recordings of class sessions are prohibited.
 8. USF Policy on Religious Observances: Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious day must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor in writing by the second class meeting or the end of the first week of the term, whichever date is later. Please see the Diversity Resources website (<https://www.diversityresources.com/diversity-calendar-2023/>) for a list of religious and ethnic dates.
 9. Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment Reporting: USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence (USF System Policy 0-004). The USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention is a confidential resource where you can talk about incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. This confidential resource can help you without having to report your situation to either the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO), unless you request that they make a report. Please be aware

that in compliance with Title IX and under the USF System Policy, educators must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. If you disclose any of these situations in class, in papers, or to me personally, I am required to report it to OSSR or DIEO for investigation. Contact the USF Center for Victim Advocacy and Violence Prevention: (813) 974-5757.

10. Campus Emergencies and Continuation Plans: In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USF to suspend normal operations. During this time, USF may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to Canvas, Blackboard, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor the online site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USF, College, and department websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information.
11. Name & Pronouns: Please let me know the name and pronouns I should use when I address you. I will be glad to honor your request.
12. Use of Generative AI Tools: Generative AI tools refer to any artificial intelligence-powered software, program, or application that can generate content, including but not limited to text, visuals, music, and other creative outputs. Examples of these tools include AI text generators, AI content rewriters, AI graphic generators, etc. In this course, the use of generative AI tools is permitted only for the purpose listed in the assignment description. However, students must responsibly use these tools, adhering to the guidelines outlined in this policy. Students are responsible for appropriately using generative AI tools in their work. This includes:
 - Citing all AI-generated content used in their submissions. [See the USF Library Resources on proper citations.](#)
 - Demonstrating a deep understanding of the subject matter, not solely relying on AI-generated content. Cross-referencing claims and statements with original sources and providing appropriate citations are expected.
 - Using AI tools as a supplemental resource (i.e., as an editor), not as the primary means of completing assignments.
 - Understanding that generative AI tools, while powerful, are not infallible and can produce misinformation or inaccurate results. Students are responsible for the accuracy of their submissions and must cross-verify the information produced by these tools with reliable sources.

Campus Resources:

1. USF Writing Studio: The Studio offers free synchronous and asynchronous writing assistance with experienced writing tutors to all currently-enrolled USF undergraduate and graduate students. The Writing Studio is here to support students as they find their writing voice and develop their projects at any stage of the writing process. For more information or to make an appointment, visit the USF Writing Study website at <https://www.usf.edu/undergrad/academic-success-center/writing-studio/>
2. Counseling Center: The Counseling Center offers comprehensive psychological services designed to enhance the personal, social, educational, and career development of University students. All registered USF students who have paid the Tampa campus student health fee are

eligible for Counseling Center services for the semester in which they are registered. Counseling Center services are available Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Counseling Center is open year-round, except for university holidays. The Center is located on the second floor of the Student Services building (SVC 2124). For more information, call 974-2831, or visit the website at: www.usf.edu/counsel.

3. The Office of Multicultural Affairs: The Office of Multicultural Affairs coordinates educational, cultural, and social programs to foster experiences which create interculturally mature global citizens who are prepared to thrive in diverse environments. While promoting intercultural dialogue, awareness, advocacy and respect for diversity, OMA helps students understand and appreciate a multitude of identities. Through programming, trainings, and direct connections with our staff and services, OMA creates an inclusive environment enabling students to become conscientious global citizens. For more information and services, contact OMA via phone at 813-974-5111 or visit their website at <https://www.usf.edu/student-affairs/multicultural-affairs/about-oma/contact-us.aspx>

Note: This document, including the syllabus, is available in alternative formats upon request. Please notify instructor if you need special accommodations.

The syllabus and course schedule are tentative and is subject to change throughout the semester. You will be contacted with any changes that may occur.

MHS 6420: Multicultural Counseling for Diverse Populations
Course Schedule-Spring 2026

Date	Readings	Assignments	CACREP Objective
1/12/26	Chapter 1-Social Justice Context of Multicultural Counseling Chapter 2-Understanding and Appreciating		1-12
1/19/26	MLK Day		
1/26/26	Chapter 3-Testing and Assessment in Multicultural Counseling Chapter 4-Acculturation and Racial/Ethnic/Cultural Identity Development		1-12
2/2/26	Chapter 5-Native Americans in Counseling Bonus-Counseling Jewish Americans	Cultural Identity Sandtray & Reflection	1-12
2/9/26	Chapter 6-African Americans in Counseling		1-12
2/16/26	Chapter 7-Latine People in Counseling		1-12
2/23/26	Chapter 8-Counseling Asian and Pacific Islander Americans		1-12
3/2/26	Chapter 9-Middle Eastern American in Counseling		1-12
3/9/26	Chapter 10-Counseling White and European Americans		1-12
3/16/26	Spring Break		
3/23/26	Chapter 11-Counseling Women Chapter 12-Counseling Men		1-12
3/30/26	Chapter 13-Counseling LGBTQ+ People		
4/6/26	Chapter 14-Counseling Older Adults Bonus-Counseling Individuals Living in Poverty	Banned Book Review	1-12

4/13/26	Chapter 15-Counseling Persons with a Disability Chapter 16-Counseling Multiracial People	Cultural Group Experience Cultural Identity Sandtray & Reflection	1-12
4/20/26	Off		
4/27/26	Chapter 17-Counseling Undocumented Persons	Cultural Self Exploration	1-12
5/4/26	Finals Week	Final Exam	1-12

The Diverse Experience of Culturally Diverse People Interview Questions

- 1. Please describe the most important values and beliefs of your culture.**
- 2. Please describe important cultural events, celebrations, and practices in your culture.**
- 3. What reading materials, films, or videos can help us learn about your culture?**
- 4. How do you think others outside your culture view your culture?**
- 5. Have you ever experienced prejudice or discrimination? Please elaborate.**
- 6. How do people from your culture perceive education and counseling?**
- 7. What issues or concerns do you think people from your culture would bring to counseling?**
- 8. When it comes to counseling, what approach or interventions do you think would help people from your cultural group the most?**
- 9. Is there anything else that you would like to add to help me understand your culture better?**

Banned Book Selection List

<u>Book</u>	<u>Author(s)</u>
MAUS I & II	Art Spiegelman
Beloved	Toni Morrison
Two Boys Kissing	David Leviathan
The Kite Runner	Khaled Hosseini
Thirteen Reasons Why	Jay Asher
Nineteen Minutes	Jodi Picoult
The Truth About Alice	Jennifer Mathieu
The House on Mango Street	Sandra Cisneros
All American Boys	Jason Reynolds & Brendan Kiely
Gender Queer	Maia Kobabe
How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents	Julia Alvarez
Lawn Boy	Jonathan Evison
All Boys Aren't Blue	George M. Johnson
The Hate You Give	Angie Thomas
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian	Sherman Alexie
Out of Darkness	Ashley Hope Perez
Melissa (Previous Published as George)	Alex Gino
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, & You	Jason Reynolds & Ibram X. Kendi
Being Jazz: My Life as a Transgender Teen	Jazz Jennings
More Happy Than Not	Adam Silvera
This Book is Gay	Juno Dawson
1984	George Orwell

Eric S. Davis

MHS 6420 Syllabus

To Kill a Mockingbird
A Boy Like Me

Harper Lee
Jennie Wood

Cultural Self Exploration Rubric

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (14-20 points)	Meets Expectations (6-13 points)	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-5 points)
Visual representation of cultural/ ethnic history	Project contains creative and comprehensive visual representation of cultural/ethnic history.	Project contains an adequate visual representation of cultural/ethnic history	Project fails to provide an adequate visual representation of cultural/ethnic history
Cultural/ ethnic background and experiences	Project contains meaningful process of student's cultural/ ethnic background and experiences.	Project contains an adequate process of student's cultural/ ethnic background and experiences	Project fails to provide an adequate process of student's cultural/ethnic background and
Current cultural values and potential conflicts	Project contains a thorough and clear process of current cultural values and potential conflicts.	Project contains an adequate process of current cultural values and potential conflicts	Project fails to provide an adequate process of current cultural values and potential conflicts
Current cultural/ethnic identity development	Project contains a detailed and insightful discussion of the student's current cultural/ethnic identity development.	Project contains an adequate discussion of the student's current cultural/ethnic identity development	Project fails to contain an adequate discussion of the student's current cultural/ethnic identity development
Plan for continued ethnic/cultural development	Project contains a purposeful overview of the student's plans for continued cultural/ ethnic development.	Project contains an adequate overview of the student's plans for continued cultural/ ethnic development.	Project fails to contain an adequate overview of the student's plans for continued cultural/ ethnic development.
APA format	Project is written in proper APA format.	Project is written in adequate APA format.	Project fails to follow adequate APA format.
Grade			

