



**CO 5650 Critical Issues in Schools
Fall 2021, 3 Credits**

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In-Person Class Location: Read Hall, Room 103

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Course Delivery

This course is taught using a hybrid model. In-person attendance is required on the following days:

- September 11, 2021 9:00-2:00 Samuel Read Hall, Room 103
- October 30, 2021 9:00-2:00 Samuel Read Hall, Room 103
- December 4, 2021 9:00-2:00 Samuel Read Hall, Room 103

Catalog Description

This course focuses on the role of the school counselor and school psychologist in schools and special education. Topics include special education processes, roles, laws, ethics, disability categories, the Individual Educational Plan (IEP), cultural factors, and school learning. Additional topics covered (depending on presentations and student interest) divorce, bullying, child abuse, death, illness, parents with disabilities, moving, school violence and disasters, suicide, substance abuse, sexuality, adolescent parenthood, parent-adolescent crises, rape and sexual assault, and eating disorders. Prerequisite or corequisite: CO 5010.

Content Areas Covered

1. Special education processes, roles, laws, ethics, disability categories, Section 504, transition planning, and the role of the school counselor and school psychologist in the IEP
2. Cultural aspects of crisis intervention
3. Crisis response team, roles and responsibilities
4. Substance abuse prevention and intervention
5. Suicide assessment and intervention
6. Implications of trauma on functioning
7. Behavior disorders
8. Bullying and violence prevention
9. Multi-tiered system of supports and school climate

Knowledge and Skill Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Describe special education roles and responsibilities
2. Explain special education terminology
3. Identify the 13 disability categories
4. Explain the pre-referral and referral processes within a multi-tiered system of supports framework
5. Discuss the processes and services for children from preschool to college
6. Discuss legal and ethical issues in special education
7. Explain the role of the school counselor and school psychologist in special education
8. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the school response team
9. Discuss general intervention goals and principles in crisis response
10. Explain appropriate interventions for various crises including school entry, school failure, learning disabilities, divorce, bullying, child abuse, death, illness, parents with disabilities, moving, school violence and disasters, substance abuse, suicide, LGBTQ, adolescent parenthood, rape and sexual assault, and eating disorders
11. Explain effective methods to working with youth with emotional and behavioral disorders
12. Identify how and why functional behavioral assessments (FBAs) should be completed
13. Discuss the impact of trauma on student learning and school performance

Methods of Instruction

Students will meet objectives through readings, lecture, large and small group discussion, in-class activities, online activities, relevant videos, and projects.

Suggested Text

McGinley, V. A. & Trolley, B. C. (2016). *Working with students with disabilities: Preparing school counselors*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

**** Please regularly review the course Canvas page for additional required resources and articles pertinent to the student learning outcomes and our work together.**

Student Performance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures

1. **Active participation and attendance.** Our course meets three times in-person; therefore, it is extremely important that students come to class and actively participate in activities and discussions. Each Saturday we meet face-to-face will count for 5% of your final grade, equaling 15% by the end of the course. If an illness, emergency, or other legitimate reason causes an absence or partial absence, a written reflection must be done covering all topics from that class. Active participation is explained in the *Active Participation and Attendance Rubric*. **15% of final grade.** CACREP Standard Covered: 1.c.
2. **Forum discussion posts.** Each week there will be an online discussion forum posted to the class. These forums are used to assess student understanding of the topics being covered. There are a total of six discussion posts over the term during online weeks. These forum

questions will be posted by Sunday of the online week. Students are expected to have posted their initial response by Wednesday and responded to at least two other peers by 6pm the following Saturday. These dates are outlined each week on the schedule. Posts will count towards 24% of your total grade (4% for each online week). Please review the *Online Discussion Forum Rubric* before posting online. **24% of final grade.** An additional written response to a question posted on Canvas will be due on the last day of class (12/11). Please review the *Written Response Rubric* for more details. **4% of final grade.** CACREP Standard Covered: 1.c., 3.g., 5.l., 5.m., 7.c.

3. **Presentation.** Students will work individually or in small groups to create a presentation covering a specific topic related to critical issues in schools. Material can be presented in a variety of ways, decided by each group. The idea is that students will have the ability to use this presentation to educate staff in their future schools. The time limit for the presentation will depend on the group size, class scheduling and how many topics will be covered by the class. All groups will present on **December 4**. Please review the *Group Presentation Rubric* for more details. **40% of final grade.** CACREP Standard Covered: 1.c., 7.c.
4. **Parent Project.** Students will create a brochure, binder, bulletin board, etc. to educate parents on a disability (specific learning disability, autism, depression, etc.) or pertinent issue in schools (substance use, transitions, laws, LGBTQI). This project is due **October 30**. Please review the *Parent Project Rubric* for more details. **15% of final grade.** CACREP Standard Covered: 1.c., 3.g.
5. **Course evaluation completed.** I value student feedback to help me gauge the effectiveness of my instructional tools and strategies. Once students have completed the online CourseEval please email me proof that you have done so. **2% of final grade.**

Grading

Grades in this course will be determined by:

Active participation/attendance	= 15% of final grade (5% each face-to-face class)
Forum discussion posts	= 24% of final grade (4% each online week)
Group Presentation	= 40% of final grade
Parent Project	= 15% of final grade
Written question (last class)	= 4% of final grade
Course evaluation completed	= 2% of final grade (submit proof)

Grading Scale

A	95-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	Below 70 = F
A-	90-94	B	83-86	C	73-76	
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	

All assignments must be completed and handed in in order to pass the course.

Plymouth State University Policies

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of the pursuit of knowledge. All members of the academic community are expected to be dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge in an honest, responsible,

respectful, and ethical manner. Every violation of academic integrity is an affront to the academic community. Violations of academic integrity make fair evaluation impossible and cast doubt upon the seriousness with which students accept the responsibility of acquiring an education. Members of the academic community are expected to report all violations that come to their attention. Both faculty and administration consider it their duty, as guardians of academic standards and intellectual honesty, to enforce the following policy by prosecuting all cases of violation of academic integrity to the fullest extent. Students are urged to consider that it is the toleration of violations of academic integrity, and not the reporting of it, which is dishonorable. Visit <https://coursecatalog.plymouth.edu/university-policies-procedures/> for more information on University policies and procedures regarding academic integrity. Additionally, see APA Style Guide guidelines and CESP PowerPoint on what constitutes plagiarism.

Accommodations of Student Needs

Plymouth State University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you should immediately contact the Disability Services Office (DSO) in the Center for Student Success in Mary Lyon (535-3065) to determine whether you are eligible for such accommodations. Academic accommodations will only be considered for students who have registered with DSO. If you have a Letter of Accommodation for this course from DSO, please provide the instructor with that information privately so that you and the instructor can review those accommodations.

Sensitive Material

Material in this course may be sensitive or emotionally provocative. As you review the syllabus, or at any time during the course, please let the instructor know if you anticipate, or are having, a problem with any assignment or classroom activity. The assignment or activity and its necessity for meeting course competencies can be considered, as well as whether an alternative assignment or activity may be used instead. Campus resources that may be helpful in dealing with concerns can also be discussed.

Counselor Education and School Psychology Department Policies

Plymouth State University's Counselor Education and School Psychology (CESP) Department is charged with the task of preparing individuals to become professional counselors and school psychologists in a variety of settings. In order to fulfill these responsibilities in positions of leadership in these respective fields, faculty evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. The PSU CESP Department attempts to establish a learning community where students can develop professionally. This is done by providing an environment in which student rights and responsibilities are respected, and by respecting the dignity and worth of each student.

Student Monitoring

A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with education/training and client care related to requirements for self and others. For example, in order to ensure proper training and client care, counselors/school psychologists-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal

skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. These factors are evaluated based on academic performance and the ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should be able to demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, accept personal responsibility, be able to express feelings appropriately, and evidence professional judgment in decision-making relative to issues and situations encountered in the program. See the student handbook for both the long and short versions of the student monitoring form.

Communications

Prompt and professional communication between students and professors is important and valued in the CESP department. To that end, it is the student's responsibility to regularly check their PSU email account. As stated in the CESP handbook, all university communications will be to that address. We aspire to be a community that responds to each other in a prompt and respectful way. To that end, we ask that you respond to professor or department emails within two business days. Likewise, faculty will aspire to respond to your emails within two business days. Note, we understand that there are circumstances in which students and faculty may be unable to respond in a timely manner. During these periods, we will inform others when we will be available to respond.

Student Responsibilities in Monitoring Peer Professional Competency

As a CESP student, it is important to learn how to support your fellow classmates and future colleagues. Professional codes of ethics highlight the importance of protecting the profession and those it serves by recognizing unethical behavior, consulting with colleagues, and reporting to institutional hierarchies if necessary. If you are concerned about a classmate's ethical conduct, counseling competency, or psychological stability, you are encouraged to follow the policy in the CESP student handbook to guide you in ethically dealing with these situations.

Late Assignments

Consistent with graduate level expectations, all assignments are expected on their due dates. However, exceptions to this rule may be made due to circumstances beyond the control of students such as family emergencies, illness, injury, power outages, computer malfunctions, accidents and other situations. Because of these possibilities, students are strongly advised to complete their assignments in advance of the due date. Also, students should back up their work so that computer crashes will not delay assignments. Unless impossible, all requests for extensions for assignments must be made before the assignment is due. If an extension is granted, the assignment should be submitted no later than one week from the due date. In cases where the reason for the delay may require a longer time period to complete, the decision to allow a longer extension will be made on a case-by-case basis. Students may be asked to provide documentation to verify their request for an extension. *Assignments that are handed in beyond the due date for which no extension is granted will not be accepted and will result in a failing grade for the assignment.*

Computers and Cell Phones Use in the Classroom

Computers and cell phones may be brought into the classroom but their use should be appropriate. Computers should be limited to academic class-related uses. During speaker presentations, videos, and student presentations, computers should remain closed. Cell phones

play an important role in emergency situations but should be kept on vibrate. It is inappropriate to read, receive, or send text messages during class meetings.

Writing

Please use Times Roman 12-point font, double spaced, and APA style for all papers and reports.

Canvas Assistance

For students who need help navigating Canvas, please contact the PSU Help Desk at helpdesk@plymouth.edu or call (603) 535-2929. You may also get in-person help at the Help Desk in Lamson Library.

Standards Covered & Assessed

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)

Domain 3: Interventions and Instructional Support to Develop Academic Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, and social influences on academic skills; human learning, cognitive, and developmental processes; and evidence-based curricula and instructional strategies.

Domain 4: Interventions and Mental Health Services to Develop Social and Life Skills

School psychologists have knowledge of biological, cultural, developmental, and social influences on behavior and mental health, behavioral and emotional impacts on learning and life skills, and evidence-based strategies to promote social-emotional functioning and mental health.

Domain 5: School-Wide Practices to Promote Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of school and systems structure, organization, and theory; general and special education; technology resources; and evidence-based school practices that promote learning and mental health.

Domain 6: Preventive and Responsive Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to resilience and risk factors in learning and mental health, services in schools and communities to support multi-tiered prevention, and evidence-based strategies for effective crisis response.

Domain 7: Family-School Collaboration Services

School psychologists have knowledge of principles and research related to family systems, strengths, needs, and culture; evidence-based strategies to support family influences on children's learning and mental health; and strategies to develop collaboration between families and schools.

Domain 8: Diversity in Development and Learning

School psychologists have knowledge of individual differences, abilities, disabilities, and other diverse student characteristics; principles and research related to diversity factors for children, families, and schools, including factors related to culture, context, and individual and role difference; and evidence-based strategies to enhance services and address potential influences related to diversity.

CACREP Standards

This course covers (C) and assesses (A) the following Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards:

1.c. Counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of interdisciplinary community outreach and emergency management response teams (A)

3.g. Effects of crisis, disasters, and trauma on diverse individuals across the lifespan (A)

5.l. Suicide prevention models and strategies (C)

5.m. Crisis intervention, trauma-informed, and community-based strategies, such as Psychological First Aid (A)

5.G.2.e School counselor roles and responsibilities in relation to the school emergency management plans, and crises, disasters, and trauma (C)

7.c. Procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide (A)

Standard	Assignments		Date Assessed
1.c.	Parent Project 9/12/2021, 10/3/2021		10/30/2021
3.g.	Presentation 9/26/2021, 10/3/2021, 10/31/2021		12/04/2021
5.l.	Parent Project 9/12/2021, 10/3/2021	Presentation 9/26/2021, 10/3/2021, 10/31/2021	10/30/2021, 12/4/2021
5.m.	Discussion Post 11/7/2021	Presentation 9/26/2021, 10/3/2021, 10/31/2021	11/13/2021, 12/4/2021
5.G.2.e	Discussion Post 10/31/2021, 11/7/2021, 11/14/2021	In-Person class 10/30	10/30/2021
7.c.	Discussion Post 9/19/2021, 10/3/2021	Presentation 9/26/2021, 10/3/2021, 10/31/2021	9/25/2021, 10/9/2021, 12/4/2021

Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment(s) Due
September 11 In-Person Learning Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review syllabus and assignments · Introductions · Due dates & expectations · Person/identity-first language · Common Core Standards · Disability categories · Laws and ethics · ASCA, CACREP & NASP · Select presentation topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review materials posted to Canvas · (Read McGinley & Trolley Ch. 1-3)
Week of September 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "Lost in Laconia" - treatment of persons with disabilities & Least Restrictive Environment · Inclusion · School Counselor/School Psychologist's involvement in IEPs · Professionals and IEPs & 504s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review materials posted on Canvas · Post to forum · (Read McGinley & Trolley Ch. 8, 9) <p style="text-align: center; color: green; font-weight: bold;">First posts by 9/15 Respond by 9/18</p>
Week of September 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Transition plans · Teaching self-advocacy · Delivery Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review materials posted on Canvas · Post to forum · (Read McGinley & Trolley Ch. 7, 10) <p style="text-align: center; color: green; font-weight: bold;">First posts by 9/22 Respond by 9/25</p>
Week of September 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · School Counselors and School Psychs working together · Culturally responsive counseling · Parent involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read materials posted on Canvas · Post to forum · (Read McGinley & Trolley Ch. 11) <p style="text-align: center; color: green; font-weight: bold;">First posts by 9/29 Respond by 10/2</p>
Week of October 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Collaborative Teams in schools · Multidisciplinary Team membership (roles and responsibilities) · Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and response to intervention (RTI) · Working with families and school staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Review materials posted on Canvas · Post to forum · (Read McGinley & Trolley Ch. 4-6) <p style="text-align: center; color: green; font-weight: bold;">First posts by 10/6 Respond by 10/9</p>

Week of October 10	Holiday Week- No Assignments	
Week of October 17	Work Time for Group and Individual Assignments	
October 30 <i>In-Person Learning Day</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Trauma in schools · Working with students with behavioral challenges · Mood disorders in children · Substance use & abuse · Best Practices in working with Emotional Behavioral Disorders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read materials posted on Canvas · Parent Project Due
Week of October 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Bullying · School climate · Gender in Schools · At-risk youth & mental health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read materials posted on Canvas · Post to forum First posts by 11/3 Respond by 11/6
Week of November 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Suicide prevention, risk factors and resources · School violence · Best Practices in armed assailants · School-to-prison pipeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read materials posted on Moodle · Post to forum First posts by 11/10 Respond by 11/13
Week of November 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Talking to youth in crisis · Improving mental health services in schools · Family involvement in mental health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Read materials posted on Canvas (Read McGinley & Trolley Ch. 12)
Week of November 21	Holiday Week- No Assignments	
December 4 <i>In-Person Learning Day</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Wrap up discussion topics · Group presentations on various critical issues in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Group Presentations Due
Week of December 5		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Written response due by 12/11 · Complete Course Evaluation

Online Discussion Forum Rubric

OBJECTIVE	EXPECTATION NOT MET 0	APPROACHING EXPECTATION 1	MEETS EXPECTATION 2-3	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION 4	COMMENTS
<p>Students will demonstrate their understanding of and ability to integrate the material read each week by answering forum questions and respectfully and thoughtfully responding to posts of their peers in online groups.</p>	<p>Student does not post to the week’s discussion forum.</p>	<p>Student’s initial post is past Wednesday; does not reference materials read that week; minimally demonstrates understanding of the concepts covered and may not completely answer the forum question posed.</p>	<p>Student posts by Wednesday and responds a peer’s post by the next class; post contains information from the readings and connections to material covered in class and/or real life related examples to answer the forum question posed.</p>	<p>Student posts by Wednesday and respectfully and thoughtfully responds to more than one peer’s post by the next class; student posts succinctly connect readings to real life examples and demonstrates that the student has not only read the material but understands the concepts and their relation to the question posed in the forum.</p>	<p>These discussion posts will be used by the instructor to assess your knowledge of the concepts covered in the course. Students are expected to post to the forum questions by Thursday of the online week and respond to peers by the start of the next online week (Sunday) or face-to-face meeting (Saturday).</p>

Active Participation and Attendance Rubric

OBJECTIVE	EXPECTATION NOT MET 0	APPROACHING EXPECTATION 1-2	MEETS EXPECTATION 3-4	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION 5
Students are expected to come to face-to-face classes on time and prepared to discuss the material read with peers through group activities and discussions.	Student does not come to face-to-face class and does not make up missed work.	Student misses all or part of face-to-face class and writes a reflection on all topics covered during his/her absence.	Student attends all face-to-face classes and actively participates in discussions and group activities, indicating that readings have been completed.	Student attends all face-to-face classes, actively participates in discussions and group activities, shows respect and active listening to peers, and shows an understanding of materials read by integrating readings into discussions.

Written Response Rubric

OBJECTIVE	EXPECTATION NOT MET 0	APPROACHING EXPECTATION 1	MEETS EXPECTATION 2-3	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION 4
Students will demonstrate their understanding of and ability to integrate the material read by answering questions posed related to the CACREP standards being assessed by the topic covered. Students will turn in their written responses to the questions posted on the dates required.	Student does not complete written response.	Student completes written response but shows minimal understanding of the topic being covered in the readings; written response is more than 1 day late being turned in.	Student completes written response and shows an understanding of the material covered through their response; response is turned in within one day of due date.	Student completes a written response that thoughtfully and succinctly incorporates information from the material read related to the standard; response is turned in on the day it is due.

(Group) Presentation Rubric

OBJECTIVE	EXPECTATION NOT MET 0	APPROACHING EXPECTATION 1-4	MEETS EXPECTATION 5-8	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION 9-10
Topic selected is related to a critical issue in schools and its importance is explained in the presentation.	Topic is not related to a critical issue in schools.	Topic loosely related to a critical issue in schools or vaguely defined by the group.	Topic related to a critical issue in schools and the group describes why it is important to know more about.	Group explains the relevance of the topic in relation to critical issues in schools and why it is important to know more about; topic is clearly identifiable at the beginning of the presentation.
Group presents in an engaging manner to get and keep the audience’s interest in the topic.	Group does not present in an engaging manner.	Group attempts to maintain the attention of the audience throughout their presentation.	Group is successful in getting and maintaining the audience’s attention to the presentation topic.	Group gets and maintains the audience’s attention throughout their presentation by using interactive methods.
The group describes the role of the school counselor and/or school psychologist in the critical issue being covered by the presentation.	No mention of the role played by the school counselor and/or school psychologist during the critical issue occurred during the presentation.	Brief mention was given to the role played by the school counselor and/or school psychologist during the critical issue described.	The group explained the role of the school counselor and/or school psychologist during the critical issue being discussed.	The group thoughtfully and succinctly explained how the school counselor and/or school psychologist might respond during the critical issue being discussed in the presentation.
The group encourages class participation and questions from the audience.	No effort to encourage comments or questions from peers	The group attempts to answer questions posed by peers but does not encourage comments, connections or reflections throughout presentation	The group offers opportunities for class engagement and allows time for conversation and questions. Questions are answered by most group members. Objectives are achieved within the provided time limit.	The group encourages class participation, opportunities to provide connections, ask questions and seek clarification. All members of the group are integral to inviting class participation. All objectives are achieved within the provided time limit

Parent Project Rubric

OBJECTIVE	EXPECTATION NOT MET 0	APPROACHING EXPECTATION 2-9	MEETS EXPECTATION 10-13	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION 13-15
Students will create a brochure, binder, bulletin board, etc. to educate parents on a disability (specific learning disability, autism, depression, etc.) or pertinent issue in Special Education (substance use, transitions, laws, blended families).	Student did not come to class prepared with a completed project for the Parent Project assignment.	Student partially completed the Parent Project though did not describe the diagnosis or issue in detail, with consideration of the audience (parents and families) and without references or resources. 1 source cited.	Student completed the Parent Project by creatively and empathetically providing information related to a diagnosis or issue. Information presented was engaging, relevant to the audience, strength-based and appropriately cited. 3 sources cited.	Student thoroughly completed the Parent Project by creating a source of information to educate parents and families on a diagnosis or issue relevant to Special Education. Information presented was engaging, relevant to the audience, strength-based, thorough, accurate and appropriately cited. The student demonstrated particular creativity and an empathic understanding of the audience. 4+ sources cited