

**Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi**  
CNEP 5390: Special Topics- Mexican American Counseling, Theory, & Research  
Department of Counseling and Educational Psychology  
Syllabus – Summer 2010

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**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course examines the current and historical status of Mexican Americans in the field of mental health. Counseling and psychological research and theory on the cultural, societal, and historical influences on the well-being and characteristics of Mexican Americans will be explored. Various counseling and psychological models and interventions responsive to this population will also be examined

**II. RATIONALE**

This course provides students with an elective that allows them to gain knowledge of mental health issues with a specific population. The information and experiences provided by this course will better prepare future counselors to engage in culturally responsive services with the growing Mexican American population.

**III. N/A**

**IV. COUNCIL FOR ACCREDITATION OF COUNSELING AND RELATED EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS (CACREP) COMPETENCIES**

The course objectives also fulfill the following CACREP Standards and provides an understanding of:

CACREP II, K, 2 (Social and Cultural Diversity)

- a. multicultural and pluralistic trends, including characteristics and concerns between and within diverse groups nationally and internationally;
- b. attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences, including specific experiential learning activities;
- c. individual, couple, family, group, and community strategies for working with diverse populations and ethnic groups;
- d. counselors' roles in social justice, advocacy and conflict resolution, cultural self-awareness, the nature of biases,
- e. prejudices, processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination, and other culturally supported behaviors that are detrimental to the growth of the human spirit, mind, or body;

- f. theories of multicultural counseling, theories of identity development, and multicultural competencies; and
- g. ethical and legal considerations.

## **V. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

1. Students will be familiar with historical/foundational aspects of Mexican American psychology.
2. Students will understand central concepts in Mexican American counseling and psychology. (e.g. family, education, acculturation).
3. Students will gain knowledge of particular psychosociocultural aspects that impact the quality of mental well being for Mexican Americans.
4. Students will be familiar with current research issues/topics for the Mexican American population in the mental health field.
5. Students will understand the current status of mental health services and interventions utilized with this population

## **VI. COURSE TOPICS**

- ❖ Background and history of Mexican American psychology and mental health
- ❖ Acculturation & Ethnic Identity
- ❖ Psychological, social, and political context of Mexican American psychology
- ❖ Family Functioning
- ❖ The Role of Gender
- ❖ Spirituality & Folk Healing
- ❖ Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual Identities
- ❖ Issues in Counseling Assessment
- ❖ Theoretical Frameworks for Counseling Interventions

## **VII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND ACTIVITIES:**

Instruction will be lecture, seminar format, and interactive class discussion & activities.

## **VIII. EVALUATION AND GRADE ASSIGNMENT**

Journal (20%): Students will keep a journal regarding their thoughts, reactions, and personal insights to the class material and class discussions/interactions. Viewpoints and opinions will not be graded. Checkmarks will indicate the completion of a journal entry. Entries should be no less than 1 ½ pages and not more than 3 pages. Students are only required to turn in seven journal entries throughout the semester, with the final entry being a summary of themes or insights gained throughout the semester. The final entry will be turned in at the end of the semester.

Cultural Autobiography (20%): This autobiography will focus on the influence culture has played in the development of identity, self-concept, and other life goals for students. Culture is a broad construct, thus it can incorporate ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and/or spirituality, family contexts, nationality, etc. Students will chose which aspect(s) of culture they would like to include in their autobiography.

Research Paper (20%): In groups of 3 or 4, students will collaborate to write a 6 – 8 page paper (not including title, abstract, and reference pages) on a current topic in Mexican American mental health. Topics should be approved by the instructor. All papers should be APA style.

Group Presentations (20%): Students will be assigned to groups and given one of the topics below. Each group will make a formal presentation no less than 30 minutes and no greater than 45minutes. Grades will be based on the quality of the content and the creativity of the presentation.

*Film/Media Representations*: Students will watch or collect media images and/or messages regarding Latinas/os in the U.S. and analyze how these may influence self-perceptions. Identify issues and concepts included in the class readings and discussions. Examples are: stereotypes, ethnic identity, acculturation, family functioning, and social attitudes toward Latinos. These examples are **not** exhaustive. What effect or impact could these messages have on the well being of Mexican Americans? Class concepts should be the basis of all analysis, integration and interpretations. The type of media included needs to be approved by the instructor prior to the presentation.

*Contemporary Mexican American/Latina/o mental health professionals*: Students will investigate the career of current Mexican American/Latina/o counselors, psychologists, and/or social workers in the mental health field. Included will be some information of their personal and academic background, and themes of the issues or topics they address in their work. The professionals chosen for this presentation should be approved by the instructor prior to the presentation.

*Family therapy with Mexican Americans*: Students will discuss the current research and use of family therapy with Mexican Americans beyond the material covered in the course.

*Bilingual Counseling*: Students will discuss the current research and use of bilingual therapy with Mexican Americans beyond the material covered in the course.

*Acculturation & Counseling*: Students will provide a more in-depth description of how issues of acculturation may affect the counseling process for Mexican American clients.

Class Participation (20%):

Students are expected to participate and engage during class. This includes, but is not limited to, participating in in-class assignments, group discussions & group exercises. Participation is also measured in attendance & punctuality to class. It should be noted that attendance and punctuality is expected and will be excused only under special circumstances as determined by the instructor. Given that true learning takes place in discussion and interaction with others where students express and articulate their ideas, participation is a crucial aspect of this course.

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 –79

D = 60 – 69

F = anything below a 60

## IX. COURSE SCHEDULE AND POLICIES

### A. Course Schedule

Professor: Manuel X. Zamarripa, Ph.D., LPC-S

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Office Hours:

Date	Topic	Assigned Readings & Activities
	Introduction to Course	Review course syllabus and class requirements
	Background and history of Mexican American Psychology and Mental Health <i>Video: Chicano! The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, part one – Searching for a Homeland</i>	<b>Handout:</b> Preface: Introduction to Chicano Psychology, Synopsis of the history of Chicano psychology; <b>Text:</b> Preface (xiii), <b>Chap. 1</b> - Mestiza/o and Chicana/o Psychology
	Acculturation & Ethnic Identity <i>Video: Zoot Suit Riots</i>	<b>Text:</b> <b>Chap. 2</b> - Acculturation: A psychological construct of continuing relevance for Chicana/o psychology <b>Handout:</b> The Homeland, Aztlán; The works of George I. Sánchez: An Appreciation;
	Acculturation & Ethnic Identity	<b>Text:</b> <b>Chap. 3</b> - Ethnic identity development in Chicana/o youth <b>Handout:</b> Chicana Identity Construction
	Family Roles and Functioning	<b>Text:</b> <b>Chap. 4</b> - Stereotypes of Chicanas & Chicanos: Impact on family functioning, individual expectations, goals, and behavior
	Family Roles and Functioning	<b>Chap. 15</b> - Family therapy with Chicanas/os

	Bilingual Counseling	<b>Handout:</b> Utilization of Services;How to tame a wild tongue; TBA
	Mexican American Education: Psychosocial issues  <i>Video: Chicano! The Mexican American Civil Rights Movement, part three - Taking Back the Schools</i>	<b>Handout:</b> Mexican-American high school students: Educational aspirations; Stress within a bicultural context for adolescents of Mexican descent
	Gender Roles and Counseling  <i>Cultural Autobiography Due</i>	<b>Text:</b> <u>Chap. 9</u> - Psychotherapy of Chicano men; <u>Chap. 12</u> - Psychotherapy with Chicanas
	Gay, Lesbian, Bi-sexual Identities and Issues	<b>Text:</b> <u>Chap. 10</u> - Psychotherapy with gay Chicanos <b>Handout:</b> Lesbian women of color: Therapeutic issues and challenges
	Spirituality	<b>Text:</b> <u>Chap. 6</u> - Folk healing and curanderismo within the contemporary Chicana/o community; <b>Handout:</b> Spirituality & family dynamics in psychotherapy with Latino children
	Clinical issues with Mexican Americans  <i>Research Paper Due</i>	<b>Text:</b> <u>Chap. 5</u> - Problem behaviors of Chicana/o & Latina/o adolescents; Acculturation & Depression among Hispanics
	Contemporary Counseling Approaches with Mexican Americans	<b>Handout:</b> SCMC article; SC ethnic minority (Zamarripa); Narrative Alter Making
	Contemporary Counseling Approaches with Mexican Americans	<b>Handout:</b> DSM-IV & Culture

	<i>Group Presentations</i>	
	Future directions  <i>Group Presentations</i>	<b>Handout:</b> Advancing the study of Chicana/o psychology; Directions & redirections in Chicana/o psychology
	<i>Final Journals Due</i>	

## B. Class Policies

All assignments should be typed. No handwritten work will be accepted. No late work will be accepted.

Attendance and punctuality are mandatory and the responsibility of the student. More than one absence will result in the lowering of a letter grade. More than 3 lapses in punctuality will be equivalent to an absence. Any excused absence is left to the discretion of the instructor.

**All cell phones must be turned off and remain off during class.**

### Syllabus Statement on Disabilities:

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Disability Services Office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made.

### Syllabus Disclaimer:

While the provisions of this syllabus are as accurate and complete as possible, the instructor reserves the right to change any provisions herein, with notice if circumstances so warrant. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes and information about such changes will be available at all times from the instructor. It is the responsibility of each student to know what changes, if any, have been made to the provisions of this syllabus and to successfully complete the requirements of this course. Questions regarding information on the syllabus and course requirements need to be addressed by students when the syllabus is received.

## X. TEXTBOOK

Velazquez, R.J., Arellano, L.M., & McNeill, B.W. (Eds.) (2004). *The handbook of Chicana/o psychology and mental health*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

## XI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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