

Fitness for the Human Services Profession

UNLV – Human Services Program

Department of Counselor Education, School Psychology, and Human Services

The mission of the Human Services program in the Department of Counselor Education, School Psychology, and Human Services is to promote a rigorous program of study that helps students acquire the awareness, knowledge, and skills necessary to promote mental well-being and to advocate for the populations they serve. Human Services graduates will enter the workforce in paraprofessional counseling positions in mental health, addiction, child and adolescent services, and many other helping professions to advocate for diverse populations with various challenges and unique needs. Human Services educators, hence, are committed to providing feedback, consultation, and assessments of progress to facilitate students' professional development and personal growth through the journey of completing their program.

This document provides human services students with the expectations for professional conduct as part of ongoing evaluations of personal and professional development and growth. Students are provided descriptions of each area of professional and personal attributes that contribute to student success in the program and throughout their career as human services professionals. The following information is not an exhaustive list of expectations.

1. **Effective Communication and Interpersonal Skills:** Students are expected to convey respect and sensitivity in email messages, responses to instructor feedback, and interactions online or in person. Exhibiting appropriate and professional behaviors in class work and interactions with their colleagues, instructors, and field supervisors—either online or face-to-face – is essential. Unprofessional behavior towards others in class or professors is indicative of poor dispositions, which typically indicate that the students will not be successful in their chosen field. Some helpful guidelines for a few forms of communication are as follows:
 - a. Email correspondence – use proper salutations; always include the recipient's name, e.g., Dear Professor XYZ, Hello Dr. XYZ, Ms. XYZ, Hi Team/Everyone/All (if multiple individuals or names are unknown); be clear, concise, and courteous; use spelling/grammar check and proofread for writing errors and offensive content
 - b. Live interactions – be open, patient, respectful, and thoughtful in listening to others, asking questions, and expressing opinions without defensiveness
2. **Professional Responsibilities and Identity:** Students are expected to develop values that guide personal, professional, and ethical decisions and behavior. These dispositions include:
 - Respecting individual differences, working cooperatively, exploring alternative viewpoints, and appreciating the unique abilities of self and others, respecting various forms of self-expression, and accepting responsibility for their conduct and behavior.
 - Developing and committing to preserving the identity of an ethical, competent, and compassionate human services professional. Participation in student or professional organizations (e.g., [TUA Honor Society](#), Student Organization for

Addiction Professionals, [National Organization for Human Services](#), etc.) through membership, service, and scholarship helps students see beyond their circle, connect to a greater helping system locally, nationally, and globally, and strengthen their professional identity.

3. **Receptiveness toward Feedback and Critique** – Educators, supervisors, and mentors make time to provide feedback to students with a great desire to help them improve on skills, challenge critical thinking, or further their understanding of the subject matter. Academic, personal, and professional growth is not without a challenge. Students can benefit from feedback greatly without defensiveness.
4. **Academic and Field Experience Competencies** – Benchmarks in some human services courses (e.g., CED 300, CED 315, CED 400) are set to ensure proper preparation for current and future success with the next courses. Human Services students are expected to demonstrate integrity in academic and field work, use critical thinking skills, and exhibit the ability to work well with others by being dependable, receptive to feedback, professional, and ethical in their workplace behaviors.
5. **Self-Development and Intrapersonal Skills** – Students are expected to be self-directed, self-understanding, and continually self-evaluate areas of strength and needs for improvement. As part of self-awareness and professional awareness, students are asked to self-reflect and uncover and address implicit and explicit biases. Developing cognitive complexity and flexibility and tolerating ambiguity (or the lack of absolutes) increases acceptance and reduces negative criticism of self and others.
6. **Commitment to Lifelong learning** – Students are expected to continually stay abreast of new information, seek feedback and consultation, and commit to a lifetime of learning and growing in their career as human services professionals.
7. **Commitment to Wellness** – Students are expected to prioritize wellness and continually assess their areas of wellness, e.g., [the eight dimensions of the Wellness Wheel](#), that need to be addressed. Understanding the stressors or barriers that interfere with academic and professional growth and using healthy stress coping skills are vital to a student's wellness and success. Stress management strategies may include managing time effectively, problem-solving (i.e., self-advocacy, openness to communicating needs), and maintaining healthy personal and professional boundaries.

I _____ (Student's First and Last Name) have reviewed and agree to the Fitness for the Human Services Profession, on _____ (Date).