

Crisis and Trauma Counseling

PSYC 260

Fall 2026 Section 01 In Person 3 Unit(s) 08/19/2026 to 12/07/2026 Modified 08/20/2026



Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Lester A Papa Ph.D., Ed.S.

Email: lester.papa@sjsu.edu

Office: DMH 323

Phone: 4089245671

Office Hours

Thursday, 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM, DMH 323



Course Information

Tuesday, 9:00 AM to 11:45 AM, DMH 308



Course Description and Requisites

Advanced course on trauma including strategies for assessing, managing, short and long term- treatment for acute and chronic stress reactions. Empirically supported risk and protective factors, and evidence-based treatments are covered. Resilience, personal, multidisciplinary, and community perspectives are emphasized.

Prerequisite: PSYC 203A and Graduate Standing in MS Psychology program

Letter Graded



Classroom Protocols

Course Format

Courses will be in-person and compliant with the most current university health and safety guidelines (for COVID-19). Course format may change to match with any health and safety guidelines.

Classroom Expectations

It is expected that students will come to class prepared. This means that students:

1. Will be in class, in their seats, and ready no later than 5 minutes after class starts.
2. Will have read any assigned material before class starts.
3. Will participate in in-class activities and discussions.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The development of your own clinical judgment, critical thinking, self-reflection, and professional communication is an essential part of graduate training in crisis and trauma counseling. The assignments and activities in this course are designed to help you develop and demonstrate these competencies through your own work.

For this reason, **the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools for coursework in this class is not permitted unless I have provided explicit prior approval.** This restriction applies to **all AI-assisted tools, whether generative or otherwise.** Students may not use AI to generate, draft, rewrite, edit, proofread, summarize, analyze, organize, or otherwise assist in completing work submitted for this course.

This includes, but is not limited to, using AI to generate or modify discussion posts, reflections, papers, presentations, or other course assignments. AI-generated or AI-assisted work should not be submitted as your own work, even if you subsequently revise or personalize the material.

Translation

I recognize that some students may benefit from translation tools in completing coursework. **If you need or would like to use an AI-powered tool for translation, you must seek my approval before using the tool for course-related work.** We can discuss an appropriate use that supports your access to the course while preserving the learning objectives and academic integrity of the assignment.

Professional Responsibility

In crisis and trauma counseling, developing the ability to think carefully and independently about complex, sensitive, and ethically significant situations is an important part of your professional preparation. This policy is intended to ensure that the work you submit reflects **your own reasoning, clinical judgment, understanding of course material, and developing professional voice.**

If you are uncertain whether a particular technology, feature, or tool uses AI or whether its use is permitted, **please ask me before using it.** When in doubt, do not use the tool until you have received clarification.

Use of AI in violation of this policy may be considered an academic integrity violation and will be addressed in accordance with applicable course, program, and institutional policies.

Program Information

Licensure Learning Outcomes (LLOs) indicate how each course meets the educational requirements as detailed by the CA Board of Behavioral Sciences. [The MS Clinical LLOs are detailed on our program website. \(https://sjsu.edu/psych/graduate-programs/masters-clinical-psych/learning-objectives.php\)](https://sjsu.edu/psych/graduate-programs/masters-clinical-psych/learning-objectives.php)

Program learning outcomes (PLOs) are skills and knowledge that students will have achieved upon completion of the MS in Clinical Psychology degree. Each course in our curriculum contributes to one or more of these PLOs. The PLOs for the degree are:

1. Interventions and evidence-based applications

1.1 Students will be able to apply, compare, and contrast a variety of psychotherapy theories and implement at least one chosen theory or intervention with clinical case material

1.2 Students will be able to evaluate, select, and implement empirically supported clinical interventions for clinical case material and clients

2. Communication and Case presentation

2.1 Students will be able to integrate and communicate clinical case material

2.2 Students will be able to synthesize contextual and cultural variables into their understanding of and presentation of client materials

2.3 Students will effectively respond to queries about clinical material and engage in discussions about their clients with supervisors and peers

2.4 Students will be able to analyze cases other than those they are treating, applying theories, principles, and relevant empirical findings to those cases

3. Competent Assessment and Evaluation

3.1 Students will be able to evaluate, select, and implement different assessment devices and strategies for assessing client outcomes and processes of change over the course of treatment including nomothetic and idiographic approaches

4. Professional clinical practice

4.1 Students will demonstrate competency consistent with professional standards of practice in areas including, but not limited to, psychotherapy theory, service delivery, ethics, assessment, research methods, family/couples therapy, cultural diversity and humility, risk management and safety planning, psychopharmacology, and issues relevant to adult and child clinical populations.

5. Preparation and meeting professional licensing requirements

5.1 Students will demonstrate fulfillment of coursework and other pre-degree licensing requirements outlined by the Board of Behavioral Sciences

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

The specific learning objectives for this course are as follows:

- CLO1. Appreciate and understand the nature and prevalence of crisis situations and traumatic events, and how individuals, families, and communities respond in unique and universal ways.
- CLO2. Recognize and conceptualize the impact of developmental, social, political, and cultural influences on the experience of trauma as well as the course of recovery.
- CLO3. Describe normal and pathological responses to crisis situations and traumatic events, including acute and chronic changes in cognitive, affective, behavioral, and neurochemical processes.
- CLO4. Utilize theoretical formulations to understand empirically supported interventions and treatments for acute and chronic trauma responses.
- CLO5. Develop diagnostic and assessment skills by recognizing and assessing the essential features of traumatic events and common stress disorders (e.g., PTSD).
- CLO6. Create a toolkit of resources (books, web-sites, mobile apps) for traumatized individuals and their support systems, including resources for mental health providers working with this population.

Course Materials

Handbook of PTSD: Science and practice

Author: Friedman, M.J., Schnurr, P.P. & Keane, T. M.

Publisher: Guilford Press

Edition: 3rd

Year: 2021

ISBN: 9781462553785

My grandmother's hands: Racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies

Author: Menkam, R.

Publisher: Central Recovery Press

Edition: 1st

Year: 2017

ISBN: 978-1942094470

Course Requirements and Assignments

"Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus."

The following assignments were designed to help students become professional learners and instructors. In other words, class time and class preparation will mirror what you will do as working professional. For example, most, but not all of the readings, will be based on provider need and interest, and most class

presentations will be like “in-service” trainings to other professionals. Because Licensed MFT’s are also required to complete a set number of continuing education hours for licensure renewal, students will complete and evaluate a number of such trainings as part of this class.

Final Examination or Evaluation

“Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment.”

Either a second CE course or self-help/workbook will serve as your final exam and will meet Class Objective #6. The assignment is due on the final exam day scheduled for this class.

You will need to provide me with the name of the second CEU course or self-help book prior to writing the critique. Here are a few popular self-help books/resources, but I am open to others. To get a list of many self-help resources, simply type “self-help trauma” into your browser.

General trauma/PTSD

Follette, V.M., & Pistorello, J. Finding life beyond trauma: Using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to heal from post-traumatic stress and trauma-related problems. New Harbinger Publications.

Matsakis, A. (1996). I can’t get over it: A handbook for trauma survivors (second edition). New Harbinger Publications.

Rothbaum, B., Foa, E., & Hembree, E. Reclaiming your life from a traumatic experience: A prolonged exposure treatment program workbook. Treatments That Work.

PTSD Coach – Mobile App – available in iOS and Android markets (free)

Posttraumatic Stress Module/Workbook chapters– available on afterdeployment.org

Disaster

Kehayan, V.A., Napoli, L.S., & Napoli, J.C. (2005). Resiliency in the face of disaster and terrorism: 10 things to do to survive. Personhood Press.

Combat/War

Hoge, C. Once a Warrior—Always a Warrior: Navigating the transition from combat to home—including combat stress, PTSD, and mTBI.

Whealin, J.M., DeCarvalho, L.T., & Vega, E.M., (2008). Strategies for managing stress after war: Veteran’s workbook and guide to wellness. John Wiley & Sons.

Suicide/homicide

Rynearson, E.K. (2001). Retelling violent death. Taylor & Francis.

Sexual/Physical Assault

Rothbaum, B.O., & Foa, E.B. (1999). Reclaiming your life after rape: Cognitive behavioral therapy for posttraumatic stress disorder. TherapyWorks.

Assignment: Online Questions & Responses

CLO: 1-5

PLO: 1.1, 1.2, 4.1

The Canvas Discussion platform will be used for online discussion about class topics.

There will be weekly submissions. To receive full credit, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

- 1 open-ended Question every week worth 5pts (Due Sunday at 11:59pm)
- 1 response every week worth 5pts (Due Friday at 11:59PM)

Thus, the point of this assignment is to ask questions and then be able to answer these questions using the discussions from class.

Participation: In-Class Discussions & Roleplays

Roleplays (Participation)

CLO: 1-5

PLO: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1-2.4, 3.1, 4.1

Discussions

All students are expected to participate in in-class discussions. The discussions provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate knowledge of the readings and incorporate their personal experiences, reflections, and synthesis of the material. Discussions are typically facilitated by the instructor or the Discussion Leaders (see next section). At the end of the discussion/seminar portion, students will be asked to complete a brief discussion form where they will report what they have learned and what questions remain. Students with a complete discussion form will receive full credit (10 points).

In-Class Discussion Leaders

You have all been randomly assigned to lead at least one discussion (see course schedule for when you have been assigned). When it is your week to lead discussions, you are expected to thoroughly read and understand the material. In addition, you will prepare by reading questions posed by your classmates on Canvas. Once class begins, it is expected that you and your partner(s) facilitate a discussion that addresses a few of the questions posed by your classmates. Your classmates will then answer the questions on Canvas.

In addition to leading the discussion, you will need to write a reflection on your experience as discussion leader. You will oversee facilitating such didactic conversations as practicing MFTs and this is a simulation of that. In your reflection, be sure to include an overview of preparing for the in-class discussion, the process of discussion in class, and what you learned after reviewing how your classmates answer the questions online.

OR

Book Chapter Reviews

There will be weeks when there is not a discussion leader but there will be assigned chapters that are randomly assigned to you. During those weeks, you and your group will be responsible for summarizing information to the class in about 5 minutes. The important concepts from that chapter will need to be shared with your colleagues during class. Your group may share notes or any other materials that will help with our review, but the point will be to answer this question:

- What do I need to know from this chapter to enrich my understanding of trauma, intervention, and/or assessment?

You will also be taking time to answer questions from your colleagues as well.

Role-plays

Experiential learning is one of the best evidence-based practices for learning a skill. There are many crucial skills that you will be learning in this class such as assessing risk, making a safety plan, safety actions, etc. Thus, you will each be engaging in role-plays throughout the semester. The point of the role-plays is to learn a skill either directly (in the role-play) or vicariously (as an observer). Role-plays are not graded, and each role-play will vary in length and involvement. You will not know what the role-play is about until you volunteer for it. Once you have finished your turn role-playing, you will not be expected to role-play again. If you have not volunteered for a role-play, you will be expected to volunteer for a future one.

Assignment: Cultural Adaptation of Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

CLO: 1-5

PLO: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1-2.4, 3.1, 4.1

As a licensed MFT/PC you will be required to complete 36 hours of continuing education every two years. The BBS recently changed so that all these hours can be completed in self-study if the course is from an approved CE provider. You will be asked to complete two online courses. The first course will be on Trauma-Focused Cognitive-Behavior Therapy. Completion of the TF-CBT on-line training is required (<https://tfcbt2.musc.edu/en> (<https://tfcbt2.musc.edu/en>)) and there is a \$35 fee for each learner. Please be aware that this training does take a lot of time! Account for your time wisely and get started early.

After completion of the training, you will be asked to apply your newly learned knowledge of TF-CBT to a case. You will create a 1 page, single-spaced, vignette of a child between the ages of 8 and 16 who has experienced some traumatic event. You will be asked to apply the TF-CBT treatment to this child and will be writing their treatment plan. You need to culturally adapt the treatment in some way to fit the child's needs. You will be citing at least 3 articles that can justify why and/or how you are adapting the treatment. Successful completion of this assignment will demonstrate that you know TF-CBT *and* how to adapt it for your child's specific needs.

Assignment: Difficult Dialogue

CLO: 1-6

PLO: 2.1-2.3, 3.1, 4.1

You will be expected to put the skills learned in this class into practice and be able to engage in challenging dialogues about topics that are uncomfortable and/or controversial.

To demonstrate your skills, you will be asked to schedule a meeting with a student from a different institution. The students are already aware that they will be engaging in dialogue with you. Your job will be to explore students' beliefs and be able to understand the etiology of those beliefs. Then you will provide information and ask questions to challenge their beliefs. You are NOT expected to *change* their beliefs but leave them with an understanding of where their beliefs come from and the awareness of the dissenting view (e.g., understanding where their anti-abortion beliefs come from and the dissenting view that abortions are often difficult medical decisions rather than murder).

By September 15th, you will be assigned a student and provided with their contact information. It will be your responsibility to communicate if there are any challenges or difficulties when it comes to scheduling. After a time is scheduled, you will be asked to record the difficult dialogue. You and the student will each need a copy of this recording to upload to your respective instructors. You will then be graded on how well you use your interviewing skills to obtain information, validate experiences, and address defensiveness (essential skills for trauma-informed work).

Final Presentation: In-Service Presentation

CLO: 1-6

PLO: 2.1-2.4, 3.1

Students will work in groups to present an in-service training on a special topic. We will select special topics together. In the past, topics included: disaster (work with first responders), school/mass violence (work with students/staff), war trauma (work with veterans), hate crimes (work with survivors), and motor vehicle accidents (prevention for teens). Student presenters will need to meet with me to review their selection of relevant readings.

Students will be required to develop a PowerPoint presentation that is specific to their topic and should include research citations on each slide. The point of the presentation is to train your peers in whatever topic you pick and prepare material to along with it. More information about this assignment is posted on Canvas.

Whereas the readings and discussions address CLO1 to CLO5 from a universal perspective, this assignment will cover the CLO's as it applies to a specific trauma. For example, one presentation will focus on research related to combat trauma, with specific emphasis on the phenomenology of combat

trauma (CLO1) and the role of context in moderating the experience and recovery from combat trauma (CLO2). This presentation might also assessment instruments unique to combat trauma (CLO5) and treatments for combat veterans (CLO4).

Final Paper: Critique of Online CEU Courses or Self-help Book/Workbook

CLO: 1-5

PLO: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1-2.4, 3.1, 4.1

For your second major assignment, you will be writing a review and critique of either a CEU course or of a self-help book/workbook. The focus of this exercise is for you reverse engineer the theory and model used in the course or book. Then, provide an informed appraisal of its usefulness for clinical practice. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of self-help books/manuals/workbooks for survivors of trauma, and the number of websites and mobile apps are growing daily. Please note that your CEU course or workbook needs to be approved by me *prior to* completion of this assignment. Inappropriate selection of CEU or workbook for this assignment will result in poor scores.

✓ Grading Information

Course Grade Breakdown

Assignments	Points	Percentage of Total Grade
<i>Discussion Questions/Responses</i>	12 x 10 = 120 points	15%
<i>Discussion Leader Reflection</i>	1 x 40 = 40 points	5%
<i>In-Class Participation</i>	14 x 10 = 140 points	17.5%
<i>Difficult Dialogue</i>	1 x 100 = 100 points	12.5%
<i>Cultural Adaptation of TF-CBT</i>	1 x 150 = 150 points	18.75%
<i>Self-Help Critique</i>	1 x 100 = 100 points	12.5%
<i>In-Service Training</i>	1 x 150 = 150 points	18.75%
<u>Totals</u>	800 Points	100%

Grading Scale

Grade	Points
A plus	760-800
A	744-759
A minus	720-743
B plus	680-719
B	664-679
B minus	640-663
	< 639

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 \(PDF\)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Course Schedule

PSYC 260, Crisis and Trauma Counseling, Fall 2026 Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Assignments Due
1	8/25	• Introduction to course and assignments • Competencies • Epidemiology of trauma • Role Play: Building Rapport	Cook, J. M., & Newman, E. (2014). A consensus statement on trauma mental health: The New Haven Competency Conference process and major findings. <i>Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, And Policy</i>, 6(4), 300-307. doi:10.1037/a0036747 Moh, Y. S., & Sperandio, K. R. (2022). The need to consider requiring trauma training in entry-level academic training programs in clinical mental health counseling. <i>Journal of Mental Health Counseling</i>, 44(1), 18-31.	Discussion Questions 1 due by Sunday at 11:59pm. Start TF-CBT Training. https://tfcbt2.musc.edu/en (https://tfcbt2.musc.edu/en)

2	9/01	• Historical study of PTSD • Sociopolitical climate and PTSD • Assessment: Stressful and Traumatic Life Events • ROLE PLAY: Intake & Risk Assessment	Handbook: Chapters 3, 4, & 5: Everyone Suicide Prevention Toolkit: https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SMA12-4669 (https://store.samhsa.gov/product/SMA12-4669) *You don't need to read the whole thing but be familiar with this resource.	Discussion Responses 1 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 2 Due by Sunday at 11:59pm.
3	9/08	• Cognitive, behavioral, and biological changes in response to trauma • ROLE PLAY: Problem Conceptualization	Handbook: Chapters 6: Everyone Chapter 7: Ashley, Yeşim, Annie Chapter 8: Janna, Teresa Chapter 9: Sariah, Katie, Bothayna Chapter 11: Michelle, Elizabeth, Tina Chapter 12: Mika, Carmen, Vivienne	Discussion Responses 2 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 3 due by Sunday at 11:59pm.
4	9/15	• Difficult dialogues Practice • ROLE PLAY: Contextualizing Problems	NONE	Discussion Responses 3 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 4 due by Sunday at 11:59pm. Assign Difficult Dialogues
5	9/22	• PTSD: Diagnosis and Assessment • ROLE PLAY: Assessment and Diagnosis	Handbook: Chapters 1 & 2; 16 & 17 Leaders: Michelle, Elizabeth, & Tina	Discussion Responses 4 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 5 due by Sunday at 11:59pm.
6	09/29	• Conceptualizing the Roots of Racial Trauma and the Body • ROLE PLAY: Cultural aspects interview	Menakem: Part 1 (Ch. 1-9) Leaders: Katie, Janna, & Sariah	Discussion Responses 5 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 6 due by Sunday at 11:59pm.

7	10/06	- Childhood trauma - Psychosocial Treatment for PTSD for children and adolescents - ROLE PLAY: Psychoducation for kids	Handbook: Ch. 14 & 20 Leader: Annie & Bothayna	Discussion Responses 6 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 7 due by Sunday at 11:59pm. Difficult Dialogues Due TF-CBT Assignment assigned
8	10/13	- Trauma-Focused CBT - Cultural adaptations of treatment - ROLE PLAY: Clinician Adaptation of treatment	Handbook: Chapter 26 Soto, A., Smith, T. B., Griner, D., Domenech Rodríguez, M., & Bernal, G. (2018). Cultural adaptations and therapist multicultural competence: Two meta-analytic reviews. <i>Journal of Clinical Psychology</i>, 74(11), 1907–1923. https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22679 (https://doi.org/10.1002/jclp.22679). Lange, B. C., Nelson, A., Lang, J. M., & Stirman, S. W. (2022). Adaptations of evidence-based trauma-focused interventions for children and adolescents: a systematic review. <i>Implementation Science Communications</i>, 3(1), 108.	Discussion Responses 7 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 8 due by Sunday at 11:59pm.
9	10/20	- Evidence-based treatments for PTSD - Role Play: Psychoeducation for Adult	Handbook: Chapter 19: Everyone Chapter 21: Katie, Vivienne, Elizabeth, Tina Chapter 22: Michelle, Janna, Sariah Chapter 23: Ashley, Carmen, Mika, Teresa Chapter 24: Yeşim, Teresa, Bothayna	Discussion Responses 8 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 9 due by Sunday at 11:59pm. TF-CBT Assignment Due
10	10/27	- Healing Self and Others - Role Play: Active Treatment	Menkam: Part 2 (Ch. 10-17) Leaders: Teresa, Bothayna, & Vivienne	Discussion Responses 9 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 10 due by Sunday at 11:59pm. Pick Topics for In-service Trainings!

11	11/03	• Vicarious Traumatization • Post-traumatic growth • Therapist supports • Role Play: Active Treatment	Finklestein, M., Stein, E., Greene, T., Bronstein, I., & Solomon, Z. (2015). Posttraumatic stress disorder and vicarious trauma in mental health professionals. <i>Health & Social Work, 40</i>(2), e25-e31. doi:10.1093/hsw/hlv026 Iqbal, A. (2015). The ethical considerations of counselling psychologists working with trauma: Is there a risk of vicarious traumatization?. <i>Counselling Psychology Review, 30</i>(1), 44-51. Lawson, G., & Myers, J. E. (2011). Wellness, professional quality of life, and career sustaining behaviors: What keeps us well?. <i>Journal Of Counseling & Development, 89</i>(2), 163-171. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00074.x Triplett, K. N., Tedeschi, R. G., Cann, A., Calhoun, L. G., & Reeve, C. L. (2012). Posttraumatic growth, meaning in life, and life satisfaction in response to trauma. <i>Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, And Policy, 4</i>(4), 400-410. doi:10.1037/a0024204 <u>Plus one of your choice!</u>	Discussion Responses 10 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 11 due by Sunday at 11:59pm. CE/Self-Help Book Critique Assigned (Pick your topic)
12	11/10	• Mending the Collective • Role Play: Termination	Menkam: Part 3 (Ch. 18-24) Leaders: Yeşim, Ashley, & Mika	Discussion Responses 11 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 12 due by Sunday at 11:59pm.
13	11/17	• CE/Self-help Workbook Critique Workday	NONE!	Discussion Responses 12 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. Discussion Questions 13 due by Sunday at 11:59pm.
14	11/25	• In-Service Training Workday	NONE	Discussion Responses 13 Due on Friday at 11:59pm. In-Service Training Due

15	12/02	In-Service Training Day 1	NONE	
Final Exam 8:30-10:30AM	12/11	In-Service Training Day 2	NONE	CE/Self-Help Book Critique Due at 11:59pm (FINAL)

Course schedule is subject to change and will updated to reflect any necessary changes.