Texas A&M University-Texarkana Course Syllabus

SOCW 497-Crisis Intervention

Fall 2026

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Office Hours: By Appointment – Please email to schedule

Class Meeting Time: Online

Course Information: SOCW 497

Course Name and Course Credit: Special Topics: Crisis Intervention – 3SCH

Course Description:

Crisis intervention is designed to prepare students to address their response to crisis events by developing assessment, diagnostic and evidenced based interventions to assist those in critical need. A crisis is defined as an event that exceeds and overwhelms an individual's coping skills to the point where equilibrium is disrupted. Crises can act as a catalyst for growth or change. The critical events which lead to a crisis can vary greatly and their impact are often unique to the individual. Critical events can occur on a micro, (e.g., death of a loved one, loss of employment, end of a relationship), mezzo, (e.g., natural disasters, tornadoes, floods, school shootings) and macro, (e.g., events on 9/11, wars, global warming) level.

Course Delivery Method:

This course is delivered in a fully online format and incorporates **Cengage MindTap** as part of the learning experience. A variety of instructional approaches will be used throughout the course. Students will engage with assigned readings, MindTap activities, videos, online discussions, knowledge check quizzes, applied activities, and case-based exercises. A strong emphasis will be placed on students' active participation in their learning through the critical review of course materials, application of **crisis intervention theories and strategies**, and completion of assignments that connect course content to **crisis assessment, intervention, and professional social work practice**

Required Textbooks/Resources:

Kanel, K. (2019). *A guide to crisis intervention* 6th ed. Cengage Learning. ISBN:9781337566414

Additional Readings:
Additional readings are referenced in the "Weekly Modules" content link within your Canvas webpage. Readings will be assigned in advance for specific course topics. Students will be expected to come prepared for class having thoughtfully read the assigned readings or other materials prior to class. Reading and critically evaluating what you read is necessary to learn, actively participate in class discussions, discussion boards, and in-class activities, and

successfully complete written assignments. Some readings or additional exercise materials may also be handed out in class.

Student Learning Outcomes

Competency-Based Education Statement

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) adopted a competency-based education framework for its 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). As in related health and human service professions, the policy moved from a model of what students should be taught to one focused on what students should be able to do upon completion of the program. This means the BSW program is structured to ensure that students are able to demonstrate the integration and application of nine core competencies. This course addresses competencies that are identified by the Council on Social Work Education as necessary for professional social work practice. Each competency has specific practice behaviors. These practice behaviors determine the nature of the tasks and assignments for the course.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

1. Explain major concepts, theories, and models used in crisis intervention practice.
2. Identify common types of crises and examine how crisis situations may affect individuals, families, groups, and communities.
3. Apply crisis assessment principles to identify immediate concerns, available supports, strengths, risks, and intervention needs.
4. Compare crisis intervention strategies and determine appropriate approaches based on the presenting situation.
5. Develop appropriate intervention plans that address immediate needs, stabilization, safety, available resources, and follow-up services.
6. Apply critical thinking and professional decision-making skills when responding to complex crisis situations.
7. Demonstrate effective written communication through the assessment, analysis, and application of crisis intervention concepts.

Methods of Evaluation

Syllabus Acknowledgment Form (Required; No Points)
Students are required to review the course syllabus and submit the Syllabus Acknowledgment Form in Canvas by the posted deadline. Completion of this form confirms that the student has reviewed the course expectations, policies, assignments, and grading requirements.

Knowledge Check Quizzes (20 points each; 180 points total)
Nine course modules include a Knowledge Check Quiz designed to assess students' understanding and application of assigned readings, course resources, and crisis intervention concepts. Each quiz consists of multiple-choice questions and is worth 20 points. Questions

emphasize application, critical reasoning, professional judgment, and decision-making, with many questions written in a format similar to the ASWB social work licensure examination.

Knowledge Check Quizzes must be completed independently by the posted deadline. To support academic integrity, quizzes may require the use of Respondus LockDown Browser, webcam monitoring, and/or screen recording. Depending on the quiz, students may be required to use one or more of these testing features.

Cengage Applied Activities/Case Studies (10 points each; 40 points total)

Selected modules will include Cengage activities and/or case studies designed to reinforce course concepts and strengthen students' ability to apply crisis intervention knowledge to practice situations. Activities may include case analysis, application exercises, decision-making activities, or other interactive learning tasks available through Cengage.

Additional instructions and grading criteria will be provided in Canvas and/or Cengage.

Discussion Posts (110 points total)

Discussion board assignments provide opportunities to apply course concepts, engage in critical thinking, and learn from peers. Students are expected to submit an original response to the assigned prompt and provide thoughtful, substantive replies to at least two classmates. Posts should demonstrate understanding of course material, respectful engagement, and application of professional social work principles.

The discussion will include a **Suicide, Ethics, and Professional Self-Reflection** activity in which students examine personal perspectives, suicide prevention, mental health, ethical decision-making, and professional practice using assigned course materials.

Additional instructions and grading criteria will be provided in Canvas.

Major Assignment: Crisis Intervention Toolkit (200 points)

Students will design a digital **Crisis Intervention Toolkit** that serves as a practical, practice-ready resource for future social work settings. Rather than completing a traditional case analysis, students will curate, summarize, and organize essential tools related to crisis response, intervention models, communication and de-escalation strategies, stabilization techniques, referral resources, professional decision-making, and social worker wellness.

The toolkit will also include a **Crisis Worker Self-Care Guide** focused on recognizing stress, maintaining professional boundaries, utilizing supervision and consultation, and developing healthy strategies for managing the emotional demands of crisis work.

The completed toolkit should be designed for **quick reference and real-world usability**, with an emphasis on clarity, accessibility, organization, and professional presentation. Students are encouraged to create a resource they can continue to use and expand after the course ends.

Additional instructions, required components, and grading criteria will be provided in Canvas.

Final Exam (100 points)

The final exam is a comprehensive assessment covering key concepts, theories, and applications presented throughout the course. The exam will assess students' knowledge, application, and critical reasoning related to crisis intervention and professional social work practice. Students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of course content and their ability to apply key concepts to practice situations. To support academic integrity, the final will require the use of Respondus LockDown Browser, webcam monitoring, and/or screen recording.

Assignment	**Total Points**
Module Knowledge Check Quizzes (9 × 20 points)	180
Discussion Post: Suicide, Ethics, and Professional Self-Reflection	110
Cengage Applied Activities/Case Studies (4 × 10 points)	40
Crisis Intervention Toolkit	200
Final Exam	100
Total Points	**630 points**

Grading System (%)

Percentage	***Grade***
90-100	*A*
80-89	*B*
70-79	*C*
60-69	*D*
0-59	*F*

Grading Policy

- Previous course work and honor code violations: Assignments from previous courses/classes may not be resubmitted to fulfill assignments in this course. Students may not submit the work of others. Students submitting work done by another will be reported for violations of the University Honor Code.

- Unauthorized group work and honor code violations: During the course of the semester students may participate in class group exercises as directed by the instructor however written assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise noted by the instructor. Students involved in unauthorized group work will be reported for violations of the University Honor Code.
- Writing assignments must reflect undergraduate-level writing and university writing expectations and standards:
    - In general, written assignments will be evaluated based upon your fulfilling the requirements specified in the rubrics for each assignment.
    - All assignments should be well-written, well-edited for style, mechanics, and grammar, and use the current APA formatting. Please note that title pages, abstracts, and reference pages are not included in assignment page limits.
    - Page limits on all assignments must be followed; if the paper is below or above page limits, it will be penalized.
    - Failure to meet these expectations will negatively affect your grade on the assignment as outlined in the rubric.
- Lost assignments, electronic transmission problems: Students are responsible for keeping a copy of all written work submitted for his/her own records and for security against loss. It is suggested that the student keep all assignments until his/her final grade has been posted by the Registrar's Office. Students are responsible for ensuring that their assignment was successfully submitted to the **Canvas** site.

- **All assignments must be submitted in the format specified in Canvas.** Written assignments may require text entry, Word document upload (.doc or .docx), PDF upload, or another approved format depending on the assignment. The **Major Project: Crisis Intervention Toolkit** may be submitted as a working shareable link or as a complete PDF, or as outlined in the project instructions. Students are responsible for reviewing the submission requirements for each assignment and ensuring that files or links are accessible and submitted correctly by the deadline.

- All assignments are to be submitted electronically via the **Canvas** "Assignment" tab on our course website. Make sure that each assignment is submitted as a single document (i.e. pasting or inserting title page, figures, or references, etc. into a single Word file) to the appropriate titled assignment tab in **Canvas**. All written assignments are to be uploaded prior to or on the scheduled due date and time (unless another date and time has been arranged with instructor).

Course Policies

Attendance Policy

Attendance, Participation & Lateness Policy:
Students are expected to participate in the class regularly, read the text prior to class, and be prepared to participate in class discussions, group work, and in-class activities. Your

participation will be assessed based on four A's (Attendance, Accountability, Alertness, and Assertiveness).

1. **Attendance** – How many and what type of absences have you had, and how were they handled?
    a. In an online asynchronous course, attendance is demonstrated through regular participation in Canvas and completion of required course activities and assignments. Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. ***Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.***
2. **Accountability** – Consider your fidelity to the reading and/or outside class expectations that were necessary for rich in-class discussion and application. Consider your promptness and thoroughness with regard to class assignments, meetings, and other responsibilities.
3. **Alertness** – Consider your wakefulness; Did you remain awake and focused during class presentations, discussions, and other activities?
4. **Assertiveness** – Consider your interactions with the professor and your peers. Did your verbal and non-verbal contributions demonstrate that you owned your responsibility as a class contributor? Did you allow time and space for others to contribute, process and/or present at the pace that worked for them, and for the good of the class?

Late Work Policy

Students are expected to be organized, keep track of assignment due dates, and submit all coursework on time. **Late work will not be accepted.** Assignments, quizzes, discussions, activities, and other coursework submitted after the posted due date and time will receive a grade of zero.

Students are responsible for reviewing the course schedule and Canvas regularly and planning ahead to meet all deadlines. If an emergency or documented circumstance affects your ability to complete coursework by the deadline, you should contact the instructor as soon as possible.

Communication Policy

Communication with Instructor and Feedback:

- Please note that I make every effort to return email communication and phone calls within 24-48 hours.
- Please, prior to asking questions, review your syllabus and assignments descriptions to determine if the information has been provided.
- If students need to inform me of a personal concern regarding the course, please email me.
- Office hours are on the first page of this syllabus and are posted on the instructor's office door.

- I strive to provide feedback on all assignments in a timely manner. Written assignments may take up to **three-weeks** to return as extensive feedback is provided. It is my goal to provide feedback on these assignments within three weeks of the due date.

For Discussions:

- Please use polite, respectful behavior when posting your responses to prompts in the Discussion Boards.
- Be mindful of how you express your emotions and humor and be sensitive to cultural and ability differences of your online peers.
- Keep postings to the point, and make sure your comments are relevant to the topic of discussion.
- Avoid messages such as, "Wow," "Way to go," or "Ditto" and aim for comments that validate other members' ideas through careful explanation of why.
- When replying, give a short description in the subject line of what you are replying to, and use correct punctuation and spelling throughout your post.
- **No late discussion board submissions will be accepted**
- Original Discussion Board Posts and classmate responses are due on the assigned due date.

For Email Communication:

- For email, please respond to your instructor's and peers' messages within a 24-hour period.
- All communication related to this course should be sent through **Canvas**.
- This includes questions about assignments, quizzes, due dates, course content, grades, and other course-specific concerns
- I also serve as the **BSW Program Director**; communication that is not related to this course should be sent to my **official university email address**.
- Use a brief description in the subject line that outlines the topic of discussion.
- Avoid using slang or profane words.
- Use your instructor's correct title he or she prefers for communication.
- Avoid using emoticons, such as smiley faces, and maintain a professional demeanor.
- Sign your email messages using your full name.
- AVOID USING ALL CAPS. This makes the message visually difficult to read and is perceived by the reader as "shouting."
- Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation, just as you would for any communication.
- Ask yourself whether you would be comfortable if someone other than the intended receiver was to read it. Remember, email is not a completely secure form of communication.
- Refrain from "flaming," which is expressing a strongly held opinion without tact or regard for others. Don't assume that recipients will know the intent of the

message (e.g., "just kidding"). It reads differently when it's in print (electronic or not).

- Report any inappropriate communication considered to be of a serious nature to your instructor, as it may be a violation of University policy.
- Treat others with respect by making messages clear and succinct.

University Policies

For University policies on Academic Integrity**,** A&M-Texarkana Email Address, and the Drop Policy, please refer to the Syllabus Policies**.**

Information Technology (IT) Support

For questions on password reset, login issues, and application installation, please refer to IT Helpdesk or Submit a TeamDynamix ticket.

Learning Management System (Canvas) Support

This course utilizes Canvas, the university's Learning Management System (LMS), for all course materials, announcements, assignments, and communication. You can access Canvas through the university's website or by navigating to [link to university's Canvas portal] using your student credentials. For questions on *all web-enhanced and online courses*, please refer to Technology Innovation and Digital Education (TIDE).

Disability Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal non-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this law requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodations, please contact the Office of Student Life in UC room 125, or call (903) 223-1351. For additional information visit Disability Services.

Student Conduct and Complaints

The university is committed to maintaining a respectful and safe environment. The Student Code of Conduct outlines behavioral expectations and disciplinary procedures. If you encounter a concern or issue, you may submit a formal report through the Student Complaint Process. To report an issue related to academic misconduct, you can do so at the Academic Misconduct page.

Student Resources and Programs

The university enhances student education beyond academics through diverse programs. Students can join clubs (like SGA, Honors, Greek Life), participate in service, experience study abroad, and learn about career services, internships and job opportunities. Visit Student Resources and Programs to learn about clubs, organizations and student resources.

EXPECTATIONS/COURSE POLICIES

Student Responsibilities

- Each student is expected to read the required materials in a timely manner as class and group discussions will build on the readings. Readings are due prior to the class week. Be prepared.
- Each student is expected to read the required materials in a timely manner as class and group discussions will build on the readings. Readings are due prior to the class week. Be prepared.
- Students should log on to Canvas every day to check for course updates, respond to discussion board prompts, and reply to classmates.
- Students are expected to keep up with the class, engage with the course material (e.g., discussion boards), and submit assignment by due dates.
- Assignments and discussion boards responses are expected to be products of individual students as per the TAMUT Honor Policy students should not discuss any of the questions with each other before or during the actual assignments or discussion boards without instructor approval.
- To receive maximum points for assignments and discussion boards, students need to follow the instructions carefully, follow word limits as instructed, and use spell and grammar checking.
- To be successful in this course, students need to complete all required assignments and discussion boards.
- It is important for class members to feel safe in class discussions. As part of professional conduct students should respect their colleagues by not sharing personal information their classmates have revealed in the class and group discussions. Students are not required to share deeply personal information in class discussions but are encouraged to engage in self-examination as it relates to their professional development. In considering self-disclosure of personal information students should be aware that that the classroom is not bound by the same expectation of confidentiality as the profession of social work and there is potential for information to be disclosed outside of the classroom. It is up to each student to determine their own level of self-disclosure. When sharing about professional experiences clients' identifying information must not be revealed and confidentiality must be maintained.

You may challenge your classmates' ideas and opinions, but you must show respect for them and their individual differences.

Course Outline:
Tentative Statement

The course schedule may be subject to change in order to accommodate unforeseen events or course needs and to promote flexibility in learning and teaching. Students will be informed of any changes through Canvas announcements and/or course communication. An updated course schedule will be posted in Canvas when necessary.

All required textbook readings, articles, videos, and other course resources will be identified in the weekly Canvas modules. Students should complete assigned textbook chapters and other required materials before completing the related assignments, Cengage activities, and Knowledge Check Quizzes.

Fall 2026 Crisis Intervention Course Schedule

Week #	Topics	Readings / Assignments
Week 1 08/24–08/30	**Introduction & Foundations of Crisis Intervention** Course overview and expectations Review of syllabus, assignments, Canvas, and Cengage Overview and purpose of crisis intervention Characteristics and types of crises Crisis theory and response Role of the crisis intervention professional Introduction to the Crisis Intervention Toolkit	**Readings/Resources:** Course Syllabus Kanel: Chapter 1 Chapter 1 Overview **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 1 – Syllabus Quiz
Week 2 08/31–09/06	**Ethical, Legal & Professional Issues of Crisis Intervention** Involuntary commitment process Documentation Professional responsibilities and boundaries Clinical decision-making Legal considerations in crisis practice	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 2 Callahan, J. Emergency Intervention and Crisis Intervention. Involuntary Commitment Procedures provided in Canvas Texas Administrative Code: Rights of Persons Receiving Mental Health Services: Rights of Persons Voluntarily Admitted to Inpatient Services **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 2
Week 3 09/07–09/13	**Mental Status Examination & Crisis Assessment** Mental status examination Crisis assessment Observation and documentation Identifying immediate concerns Clinical observations and professional judgment	**Readings/Resources:** Morrison, The Mental Status Exam — Chapters 11 & 12 (Canvas) Clinician's Thesaurus: Mental Status Exam Guide (Canvas) Administering a Mini-Mental Exam video Remembering the Components of a Mental Status Exam video **Assignments Due:** No Knowledge Check Quiz
Week 4 09/14–09/20	**Models of Crisis Intervention** ABC Model Seven-Stage Crisis Intervention Model Solution-Focused approaches Cognitive Behavioral approaches Motivational Interviewing	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 3 Roberts & Ottens. The Seven-Stage Crisis Intervention Model. Motivational Interviewing: Definition, Principles & Approach Additional resources provided in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 3
Week 5	**Crisis of Lethality I: Suicide Assessment & Intervention**	**Readings/Resources:**

09/21–09/27	Crisis response planning — Part I Emergency intervention with suicidal clients Assessment of suicide risk Warning signs Risk and protective factors Immediate safety and stabilization	Kanel: Chapter 4 Nock et al. Rudd et al. Rudd et al. **Assignments Due:** Discussion Post: Suicide, Ethics, and Professional Self-Reflection — opens
Week 6 09/28–10/04	**Crisis of Lethality II: Harm to Self & Others** Crisis response planning — Part II Continued suicide intervention Assessing risk of harm to others Duty to warn/protect Inpatient and outpatient commitment Professional and ethical decision-making	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 4 Inpatient/Outpatient Commitment resources Duty to Warn — StatPearls Mental Health Professionals' Duty to Warn Managing a Client Who Is a Harm to Others materials Hsu et al. (2025). The Impact of Suicide Beliefs on Support for Suicide Prevention and Physician-Assisted Suicide. Ethical reflection questions adapted from Battin (2015) **Assignments Due:** Discussion Post: Suicide, Ethics, and Professional Self-Reflection — 100 points
Week 7 10/05–10/11	**Vicarious Trauma, Compassion Fatigue & Crisis Worker Wellness** Defining vicarious trauma Signs, symptoms, levels, and stages Compassion fatigue and burnout Vicarious resilience Prevention and professional wellness Self-care in crisis work	**Readings/Resources:** Ashley-Binge & Cousins (2020) Individual and Organisational Practices Addressing Social Workers' Experiences of Vicarious Trauma Vicarious Resilience, Vicarious Trauma, and Awareness of Equity in Trauma Work Burnout, Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma Assessment Comparison of Stress Disorders **Assignments Due:** No Knowledge Check Quiz
Week 8 10/12–10/18	**Crisis of Sexual Assault & Partner Violence** Dynamics of sexual assault Dynamics of partner violence Intervention strategies	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapters 9 & 10 Chapter 9 Overview/PowerPoint

	Safety and support Violence affecting human populations	Additional sexual assault and partner violence resources provided in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 4
Week 9 10/19–10/25	**Trauma & Post-Traumatic Stress** Trauma and traumatic stress Acute and post-traumatic responses PTSD Trauma response in emergency settings Veterans and trauma-related concerns Trauma-informed crisis intervention	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 8 Chapter 8 Overview/PowerPoint DSM-5-TR: PTSD **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 5
Week 10 10/26–11/01	**Community-Based Disasters, Critical Incidents & Resilience** Natural disasters Community crises Critical incidents Mass casualty events Community crisis response and recovery Resilience	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 7 Chapter 7 Overview/PowerPoint Community Disasters, Psychological Trauma, and Crisis Intervention Additional disaster, critical incident, and resilience resources provided in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 6
Week 11 11/02–11/08	**Crisis of Chemical Dependence & Substance Use** Review of common substances and intoxication Alcohol Opioids Stimulants Benzodiazepines Overdose, intervention, and referral	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 11 Chapter 11 Overview/PowerPoint The Polysubstance Overdose-Death Crisis The Changing Opioid Crisis **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 7
Week 12 11/09–11/15	**Crises Related to Aging, Serious Physical Illness, and Disabilities** Life-cycle crises Aging and later-life concerns Palliative care Chronic illness Disability	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapters 12 Chapter 12 Overview/PowerPoint Palliative Care and End-of-Life Considerations for the Frail Patient Additional resources provided in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 8

Week 13 11/16–11/22	**Crisis of Personal Loss, Bereavement & Grief** Types of loss Dynamics of grief and bereavement Intervention strategies Suicide loss Supporting individuals and families	**Readings/Resources:** Kanel: Chapter 6 Chapter 6 Overview/PowerPoint Perceived Social Support and Mental Health After Suicide Loss Additional grief and bereavement resources provided in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Knowledge Check Quiz 9
Week 14 11/23–11/29	**Thanksgiving Break** No required course activities	**Readings/Resources:** No required readings **Assignments Due:** No required assignments, discussions, or quizzes Students may continue working on the Crisis Intervention Toolkit
Week 15 11/30–12/02	**Course Integration & Professional Practice** Bringing crisis intervention concepts together Professional resource development Crisis worker wellness Preparing for future social work practice Final exam preparation	**Readings/Resources:** Review course materials Final Exam Study Guide Toolkit final checklist/resources provided in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Major Project: Crisis Intervention Toolkit — Due December 2, 2026 No Knowledge Check Quiz
Final Exam Window 12/03–12/09	**Comprehensive Final Examination** Application of crisis intervention concepts Professional judgment and decision-making Assessment and intervention ASWB-style question format	**Readings/Resources:** Final Exam Study Guide Course readings and materials in Canvas **Assignments Due:** Comprehensive Final Exam — Available December 3–9

Cengage Applied Activities/Case Studies: Four Cengage activities and/or case studies will be assigned within selected course modules throughout the semester. Specific activities and due dates will be identified in Canvas and Cengage.

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