

CAEP5880 Clinical Skills in Context

Syllabus

Instructor Information

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Program: Applied Psychology Graduate Certificate

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Office Hours: Available by Appointment. Email instructor to schedule.

Teaching Support Information

Email: OnlineTA@Northeastern.edu

When emailing the teaching team, it is imperative students include the subject/number of the course, so it is routed as quickly as possible. In this course, students should include CAEP5880 in the subject of all emails they send.

TA Office Hours: To be scheduled

Course Description

Offers non-clinical professionals an opportunity to develop effective communication skills for working with individuals with mental health disorders and/or trauma histories. Provides opportunities to apply these skills in context via relevant, real-world scenarios and decision making situations. Covers key clinical communication techniques and how to integrate trauma-informed principles into their daily interactions. Focuses on effective communication and relationship-building skills with children, adolescents, and families or adults. Combines theoretical knowledge, evidence-based strategies, and practical applications to enhance interpersonal interactions.

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate the basics of clinical communication skills, including verbal and non-verbal techniques.
- Apply reflective listening, empathy, and trauma-informed principles in professional
- Recognize the impact of trauma on communication and behavior.
- Develop culturally responsive communication strategies to engage with diverse
- Identify practical ways to foster a safe and supportive environment in their work settings.

Required Course Materials

All required materials are linked on the pages in Canvas.

Course Structure and Activities

The course is fully asynchronous and hosted on Canvas. The Introduction module and syllabus will be available to view a week before the official term starts. There are seven learning modules in the course, and each module represents one week of learning. Each module begins with an overview that includes what you will learn and a list of tasks. **You are expected to log on to the course platform multiple times per week.**

Assignments are generally due at the end of the week (Sundays) unless otherwise noted. Be sure to check the course summary at the bottom of the syllabus and/or assignment pages for exact due dates. Learners are encouraged to look ahead at upcoming assignments to better manage their time. **Assignments, however, will only be available for upload 8 to 9 days before they are due.**

This course includes the following required activities:

- **Syllabus Quiz:** This quiz contains questions designed to ensure you have carefully read and understood key information in the course syllabus. While this quiz does not count toward your final grade, completion is required to proceed in the course. Please review this syllabus carefully.
- **Weekly Modules:** Videos, readings, and learning activities focusing on key communication skills.
- **Interactive Exercises:** Ungraded self-assessments, practice activities, and Check Your Knowledge quizzes to assess and reinforce learning.
- **Reflective Journals:** The weekly reflective journal assignment is designed to promote self-awareness and critical thinking about course content while encouraging you to integrate what you're learning into your personal and professional experience. The journal offers a space to explore your intellectual, emotional, and behavioral reactions to the material and provides an informal way for the instructor to better understand your perspective and learning process. While the tone may be informal and the writing does not need to be polished, entries should demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the material. The journal will not be graded on grammar or structure but will be reviewed periodically for completeness and depth of reflection.
- **Self-Reflection and Practice Scripts Assignments:** These writing assignments are designed to help you explore different concepts and/or practice skills that can shape your professional interactions. The course includes two of these assignments.
- **Recorded Video Role-Playing:** In these assignments, you will be paired with another student to complete four short recorded role-plays demonstrating effective communication in professional helping contexts. Partners alternate practicing clinical communication skills while the other plays a client, student, or patient. Each person receives individual role guidance that is not shared with their partner, so responses should reflect real-time observations and communication choices—just like in actual professional settings. These assignments provide

opportunities to apply verbal and nonverbal communication, empathy, and interpersonal effectiveness skills in realistic, low-stakes scenarios.

- **Conflict Repair Teaching Guide:** This is a group activity where you will create a short, practical teaching guide that translates your knowledge of trauma-informed, culturally responsive communication into actionable strategies for professionals. Your group will share its guide via the discussion board. Afterwards, you will complete a **Teammate Evaluation Survey** to provide feedback on group members' participation and contributions in the course's group projects. The Teammate Evaluation Survey is explained in the Introduction module on the [Group Work Process page](#).
- **Discussion Board:** This course includes five discussion board assignments that provide opportunities to engage with peers around weekly themes and topics. Each assignment requires an initial response to a discussion prompt, followed by thoughtful replies to one or two classmates' posts.
- **Final Recorded Reflection:** This final assignment invites you to reflect on your growth throughout the course and share how you will apply trauma-informed, reflective, and culturally responsive communication skills in your current or future professional role. This is your opportunity to synthesize what you've learned, celebrate your progress, and show how these skills will make a difference in the real world.

Discussion Board Guidelines

This course incorporates discussion board assignments which provide opportunities to engage with your peers in discussions around weekly themes and topics.

- **Initial Posts:** Address all prompt components in 200–400 words with thoughtful insights grounded in examples, personal experiences, or course readings. Support statements with specific evidence and use APA style for citations when referencing materials. Using generative AI as a tool on this assignment should not be necessary, but if you choose to utilize a tool for structuring or organizing your thoughts and proofreading, please cite the tool you used and for what purpose. For example, Grammarly for proofreading. Maintain a professional yet conversational tone and **post by Wednesday to allow time for peer engagement**.
- **Peer Responses:** Read classmates' posts and respond to one or two peers, sharing what resonated with you, connections to your experience, and additional insights or questions that deepen the conversation.

Group Work Process

This course emphasizes collaborative group work, facilitated through a structured Group Work Process. Adherence to Group Work Guidelines ensures professional collaboration. The Teammate Evaluation Survey empowers students to provide feedback on group members' contributions. These processes not only enhance your academic and professional skills but also impact individual grades based on contributions. For detailed information, explore the [Group Work Process page](#) in the Introduction Module.

Class Schedule and Grade Distribution

Please note: For more information about specific assignments and due dates, see instructions within the course site, and in every week.

Activity	% of Grade	Week Due
Academic Integrity Attestation	0%	Week 1
Syllabus Quiz	0%	Week 1
Discussion Board (Individual - 5 total)	48%	Weeks 1-5
Reflective Journals (Individual - 7 total)	11%	Weeks 1-7
Self-Reflection Assignment (Individual)	2%	Week 2
Practice Scripts Assignment (Individual)	2%	Week 3
Recorded Role-Plays (Paired Group)	26%	Weeks 3-6
Conflict Repair Teaching Guide (Group)	6%	Week 7
Teammate Evaluation Survey	0%	Week 7
Final Recorded Reflection (Individual)	5%	Week 7
Practice Activities	0%	Open Practice

Professional Conduct

Part of the student learning experience is to practice professional behavior. Given that skills in this certificate relates to interpersonal interactions and communication, students are expected to be on camera for assignments.

Grading Scale

At the discretion of the instructor, a weighted average across graded components may be calculated at the end of the course to determine the final grade earned. The standard Northeastern University grading system, with numeric GPA and the final letter grade correspondence, is as follows:

Grading Scale

Grade	Range	GPA
A	100-93.0%	4.000
A-	92.9-90%	3.667
B+	89.9-87%	3.333
B	86.9-83%	3.000
B-	82.9-80%	2.667
C+	79.9-77%	2.333
C	76.9-73%	2.000
C-	72.9-70%	1.667
F	69.9-0%	0.000

Please note that the calculated percentage that you see in Canvas may not correspond to the final letter grade you have earned. The final grade earned will be located in the official Northeastern Student Hub.

Extension Request Policy

Students should only request an extension in the event of an emergency or other extenuating circumstance that impacts academic progress. To make an extension request, students should contact the faculty via email and include a detailed explanation of the emergency or extenuating circumstance and how much additional time is being requested. When foreseeable, requests should occur before the assignment deadline.

Course Support

There are many people who will support you throughout your time at Northeastern. Within this first course, you will have a faculty member, teaching assistants (TA), and a success manager. Below is a brief description of the role each will play in your course experience.

- **Faculty:** Your faculty member is responsible for the instruction of both the synchronous and asynchronous portions of the course. They will be your primary contact for content and professional application of knowledge, as well as questions about project requirements and deliverables.
- **Teaching Assistant (TA):** The TA will assist with instructional responsibilities. They will facilitate group discussions and assist with office hours. They would be a good resource to reference with simple questions about course content or requirements.
- **Success Manager:** Your success manager will help you access the resources you need to be successful both inside and outside of your course at Northeastern.

To access 24 hour Canvas support, click on the Help icon in the Canvas menu (the menu in black and red) at the far left-hand of any Canvas screen.

Course Communication and Support

We have established three official communication channels:

- Course Announcements: For time sensitive updates from the teaching team.
- Discussions QA Forum: For questions about access, content, or assignments from students to the teaching team.
- onlineta@northeastern.edu for private inquiries. *When doing so, make sure to include the subject/number of the course, so it is routed as quickly as possible.*
- *Extensions should be handled using the process outlined in the syllabus.*

These three channels provide standardized and efficient communication. Regularly checking these platforms will keep you abreast of updates and announcements crucial to your academic journey.

Adherence to communication guidelines is vital for fostering a positive and collaborative learning environment. Please maintain a respectful tone in all interactions, utilize official channels exclusively, and exercise patience as our support staff ensures accurate and comprehensive responses.

Maintain a respectful and courteous tone in all communications. Always use official channels for course-related communication, avoiding MS Teams chat and personal emails. Be patient with response times, as support staff may need to consult resources to provide accurate answers.

Office Hours

Every week, instructors and teaching assistants will have dedicated scheduled office hours; a virtual open door that gives you the ability to connect directly with them in a meeting. You are encouraged to submit questions in advance of the session to allow the faculty time to prepare responses.

Office Hours Guideline:

Refer to the [Office Hours Guideline for Students](#) for frequently asked questions and answers regarding office hours and learn about the program's expectations.

Sync Canvas Calendar

Please sync your Canvas calendar with your other calendars at this point. If you need instructions on how to sync calendars, refer to the instructions below.

Instructions to Sync Calendar

There are two steps to sync the Canvas calendar to another calendar.

1. Get the Canvas Calendar feed link from Canvas
2. Add that feed link into your work/personal calendar.

Both steps are outlined in more detail below.

Get the calendar feed link from Canvas

Instructions from [Canvas Student Guide](#):

- Click on the **calendar icon** in the far left navigation bar in Canvas
- Click on “Calendar Feed” which you will see under the smaller calendar that opens on the right hand side.
- Copy the url from the Calendar feed

Add the Canvas calendar feed link to your calendar:

Add to Office 365/Outlook calendar:

- Go to Office 365 and open up Calendar
- In the left-hand navigation, click “Add Calendar”
- Click on “subscribe from web”
- Paste in the url you copied from Canvas
- Click “Import”
- You can specify name, color and charm/icon for this calendar

Add to Google Calendar:

- Open up Google calendar
- In the left-hand navigation, click the + found next to “Other Calendars”
- Click “from url”
- Paste in the url you copied from Canvas
- Click “Add Calendar”

- To rename the calendar
 - Click on the name of the new calendar that was created
 - Choose the 3 dots that appear
 - Click “Settings”
 - Type in a new name in the “Name” box
 - Refresh screen

Note: If your calendar is in “week” view, many of your assignment due dates will appear at the very bottom of the calendar screen because they are often set to 11:59 PM (Eastern Time). You will have to scroll to see them.

Course Tools

Canvas

Canvas is where academic discussions (if applicable) will take place and where course assignments are submitted.

To access 24-hour Canvas support, click on the **Help icon** in the menu (in black and red) and on the far left of any Canvas screen. Below are some guides you might find useful as you progress through the course.

- [Canvas Student Guides](#): This page contains a list of all the student help guides.
- **Question and Answer Discussion**: Use this discussion for all course related questions. Access this discussion from the button on the homepage or the left navigation menu.

Special Accommodations/ADA

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA 1990), Northeastern University seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities. If you will need accommodations in this class, please contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) as soon as possible to make appropriate arrangements, and please provide the course instructors with any necessary documentation. The University requires that you provide documentation of your disabilities to the DRC so that they may identify what accommodations are required, and arrange with the instructor to provide those on your behalf, as needed.

Academic Integrity and the Use of AI

All students must adhere to the university’s [Academic Integrity Policy](#), which is available on the website of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR). Please be particularly aware of the policy regarding plagiarism.

As you probably know, plagiarism involves representing anyone else’s words or ideas as your own. It doesn’t matter where you got these ideas—from a printed article or book, on the web, AI Chat, and related tools. In any of these cases, you must cite clearly and specifically the origin of this content.

Please consult an instructor if you have any confusion or concerns when preparing any of the assignments. You can also consult the [Avoiding Plagiarism](#) guide on the Northeastern University Library Website. If an academic integrity concern arises, one of the instructors will speak with you about it; if the discussion does not resolve the concern, we will refer the matter to OSCCR.

AI is an important part of the innovation landscape. We encourage you to use such tools when appropriate, but in no case, can you allow an AI Chatbot or related tool to do your writing for you, whether it is for an individual assignment or a group project. If you use AI tools of any kind, cite them appropriately. Please reference [An Insider's Guide to Learning with AI](#) for more information on best practices.

To safeguard the integrity of assignments and programs, your course may use systems such as TurnItIn, which checks written work, and an online exam proctoring system.

All learners will be asked to complete an academic integrity and AI attestation at the beginning of the course in order to access weekly module content.

Northeastern University Copyright Statement

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Technology Privacy and Accessibility Statements

This course integrates technology from additional vendors in addition to Instructure's Canvas Learning Management System. If you would like to read vendor privacy and accessibility statements, you may do so below:

Privacy Statements

- [H5P Privacy Policy](#)
- [Canvas Privacy Policy](#)
- [Panopto Privacy Policy](#)

Accessibility Statements

- [H5P Accessibility Statement](#)
- [Canvas Accessibility Standards](#)
- [Panopto Accessibility Statement](#)