



Course Syllabus: COUN 6013: Human Relations

College of Education

12719 Section X10

Fall 25 and August 25th – October 19th

Contact Information

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Instructor Response Policy

I'm here to support you throughout this course, and I want you to feel comfortable reaching out whenever you have questions, concerns, or just want to share an idea. I check messages regularly during the week and do my best to respond within 24 to 48 hours. If you email me over the weekend, I'll typically get back to you by Monday evening. For assignments, I aim to provide thoughtful feedback within a week of submission so you can continue growing and improving. If something urgent comes up, feel free to flag it in your message subject line so I can prioritize it. I also hold weekly virtual support hours, think of them as a relaxed space to connect, ask questions, or chat about course topics. Whether you're thriving or struggling, I want you to know I'm here, and I genuinely care about your success in this class.

Course Description

Developing interpersonal and intrapersonal skills with particular attention to communication with diverse populations

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

This course is designed to cultivate interpersonal and intrapersonal competencies while integrating core leadership and administrative principles into the student's academic and professional discipline. Through reflective practice and applied learning, students will develop self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and communication strategies that support effective leadership in environments. Emphasis is placed on understanding organizational dynamics, decision-making, and communication as tools for navigating complex administrative contexts.

Students will learn to apply these skills within their field of study, preparing them to lead with integrity, collaborate across dynamics, and manage challenges with strategic insight and confidence.

Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance

The TASP offers a schedule of tutoring assistance for selected subjects. Please contact the TASP at (940) 397- 4684, or visit the ASC homepage for more information, [Tutoring & Academic Support Program](#)

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading/Assessment

ASSIGNMENT ONE: Leadership Challenge*

Demonstrate your ability to apply responsive leadership strategies to real-world challenges in organizational settings.

Instructions

Step 1: Choose a current challenge

- Select a current challenge in **ANY ORGANIZATION***
- Examples include:
 - Crisis Communication During PR Scandal
 - Remote Work Policy Overhaul
 - Navigating Toxic Workplace Situations
 - Hiring or retention of staff

Step 2: Analyze the Situation

Use course concepts and frameworks to examine:

- Root causes of the issue
- Stakeholders involved and their perspectives
- Organizational dynamics (e.g., power structures, communication patterns)

Step 3: Develop a Leadership Response

Craft a thoughtful, strategic response that includes:

- Legal & Ethical Considerations: Are there laws, policies, or ethical standards that guide your response?
- Administrative Strategies for Resolution & Engagement: How would you use resource tools (e.g., mediation, training, policy revision) to support staff and improve team dynamics?

Deliverable

Submit a **3–5 page paper*** (double-spaced, APA format) that includes:

1. Introduction to the case
2. Analysis of the issue
3. Proposed leadership response
4. Reflection on your leadership style
5. References to course materials and any external sources (at least 3)

Assignment Two: Policy Audit*

In this assignment, you will select an existing policy from an organization. Your task is to audit the policy for clarity, effectiveness, and alignment with current legal standards and professional best practices. You will then propose a revised version of the policy that better supports organizational goals and employee relations.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Select a Policy

Choose a from an organization. Examples include:

- Hiring and recruitment procedures
- Professional development guidelines
- Employee grievance or complaint processes
- Performance evaluation protocols
- Leave or attendance policies

You may use a publicly available policy or one from your workplace.

Step 2: Conduct a Policy Audit

Analyze the selected policy using the following lenses:

- Clarity and accessibility – Is the policy easy to understand and implement?
- Legal compliance – Does it align with relevant labor laws, education codes, and institutional regulations?
- Effectiveness – Does the policy support organizational goals and employee engagement?

You may optionally interview stakeholders (e.g., HR staff, educators, administrators) to gather insights on how the policy functions in practice.

Step 3: Redesign the Policy

Using your audit findings, revise the policy to improve its structure, language, and impact. Your redesigned version should:

- Address any gaps or weaknesses identified in your audit
- Reflect best practices
- Be realistic and implementable within the organization's context

Step 4: Write Your Policy Brief

Prepare a **3–5 page document*** that includes the following sections:

1. Policy Summary – Briefly describe the original policy and its purpose
2. Audit Findings – Present your analysis and key observations
3. Redesigned Policy – Include your revised version of the policy
4. Rationale – Explain the changes you made and why they matter
5. References – Cite any legal sources, Organizational frameworks, or course materials used

Use APA formatting and professional tone throughout.

ASSIGNMENT THREE: Field Note Comprehensive Analysis*

This assignment invites you to step into the role of an observer and analyst. You'll spend time in an Administrative-related setting, **(IN ANY ORGANIZATION) ***, and document what you see, hear, and learn. Your goal is to analyze how administrative functions operate in practice and draw meaningful connections to leadership, personnel management, and organizational development.

Step-by-Step Instructions

Step 1: Select Your Observation Site

Choose an administrative-related setting where you can observe or communicate with people in management positions.

If you're unable to observe in person, you may conduct a virtual interview/email correspondence or review documented administrative processes with permission.

Step 2: Conduct Your Observation

Spend at least **half a day (3–4 hours)*** observing or engaging with the administrative function. Take detailed field notes on:

- The roles and responsibilities of administrative personnel
- How decisions are made and communicated
- Interactions between administrative staff and leadership
- Any challenges, tensions, or successes you notice
- Tools, systems, or policies being used

Be respectful, discreet, and professional in your observation. If needed, obtain permission from your site supervisor.

Step 3: Analyze and Connect to your discipline.

Using your field notes, write a comprehensive analysis that includes:

- A summary of what you observed
- Key themes or patterns related to leadership, communication, or organizational dynamics
- Connections to your discipline strategies (e.g., staff development, conflict resolution, policy implementation)
- Reflections on how administrative practices influence the functioning of organizations
- Insights into how you, as a professional, might apply these lessons in your own context

Step 4: Submit Your Analysis

Prepare a **5–7 page paper*** (double-spaced, APA format) that includes:

1. Introduction – Brief overview of your observation site and purpose
2. Field Note Summary – Key details and moments from your observation
3. Analysis – Interpretation of what you observed using course concepts
4. Application to Education – How these insights relate to your current or future role
5. Conclusion – Final reflections and takeaways
6. References – Cite any course readings or external sources used (at least 3)

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Discussion Posts	5
Assignment One: Leadership Challenge	10
Assignment Two: Policy Audit	10
Assignment Three: Field Note Comprehensive Analysis	10
Participation	15
Total Points	50

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	45
B	40-44.9
C	35-39.9
D	30-34.9
F	0-29.9

Discussion Posts

Discussion posts are due during Weeks One, Two, Four, and Seven. Each post includes specific requirements that may vary by week, so please refer to D2L for the most accurate and up-to-date instructions. All course materials, updates, and expectations will be maintained in D2L. For detailed guidance on each assignment, navigate to the "Content" tab within the platform.

Working Ahead

You're encouraged to work ahead in this course if you wish; however, it's important to understand that this flexibility is a **privilege, not a guaranteed right**. While many materials may be available in advance, some assignments, discussions, and activities are intentionally released on a scheduled basis to support pacing, engagement, and instructional alignment. This means certain content may remain inaccessible until its designated release date, regardless of your progress.

Please plan accordingly and stay attentive to the course calendar and announcements. D2L will always reflect the most current updates to course materials, deadlines, and expectations. For further guidance on what's available and when, be sure to check the "Content" tab in D2L regularly. Staying engaged with the weekly schedule will help ensure you're prepared for all graded components and collaborative discussions as they unfold.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit opportunity in this course.

Late Work

Life happens, however deadlines do too. If you need extra time on an assignment, I encourage you to reach out as soon as possible so we can work together on a plan. Late work will be accepted up to one week after the original due date, with a 10% deduction per day (up to a maximum of 50%). After that, submissions may not be accepted unless we've discussed special circumstances in advance. My goal is to support your learning while keeping things fair for everyone, so please don't hesitate to contact me if you're running into challenges. I'm here to help.

Make Up Work/Tests

I understand that sometimes life throws curveballs, whether it's illness, family emergencies, or unexpected challenges. If you miss an assignment or assessment for a valid reason, make-up work is absolutely possible. Just reach out to me as soon as you can so we can talk through the situation and come up with a plan that works for both of us. My goal is to support your learning while keeping things fair and flexible. I'm always happy to help, just don't hesitate to get in touch.

Important Dates

Last day for term schedule changes: August 28, 2025 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Deadline to file for graduation: September 22, 2025 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" October 8, 2025 Check date on [Academic Calendar](#).

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

While we may not meet in a physical classroom, your presence and participation in our online space are just as important. Regular engagement—whether through discussion boards, live sessions, or timely assignment submissions—is expected and essential for your success. Attendance will be tracked through activity in course modules, contributions to discussions, and participation in scheduled virtual meetings. If you anticipate being offline for any reason, please let me know in advance so we can make arrangements. I'm here to support you, and staying connected helps us all get the most out of this learning experience.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to

have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

This course is designed to foster a respectful and professional learning environment. While formal dress is not required for online sessions, students are expected to present themselves appropriately when appearing on camera, casual, neat attire is encouraged. Regular attendance and active participation are essential, especially in live sessions and discussion forums, as they contribute to a richer learning experience for everyone. Students should communicate promptly if they anticipate being absent or need accommodations. Class etiquette includes arriving on time, minimizing distractions, using respectful language, and engaging thoughtfully with peers and the instructor. Together, we'll create a space where learning feels collaborative, supportive, and engaging.

Inclement Weather

Since this is an online course, campus closures due to inclement weather will not affect our class schedule. All course materials, assignments, and communications will remain accessible through our online platform. If severe weather impacts ability to participate (such as power outages or connectivity issues) please reach out as soon as you're able, and we'll work together to make sure you stay on track. Your safety and well-being come first, and flexibility will be offered as needed.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the [Schedule of Classes](#) each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Northwestern State University (NSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to NSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state)

exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond

to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

Obligation to Report Sex Discrimination under State and Federal Law

Midwestern State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. State and federal law require University employees to report sex discrimination and sexual misconduct to the University's Office of Title IX. As a faculty member, I am required to report to the Title IX Coordinator any allegations, personally observed behavior, or other direct or indirect knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, or stalking, involving a student or employee. After a report is made, the office of Title IX will reach out to the affected student or employee in an effort to connect such person(s) with resources and options in addressing the allegations made in the report. You are also encouraged to report any incidents to the office of Title IX. You may do so by contacting:

Laura Hetrick
Title IX Coordinator
Sunwatcher Village Clubhouse
940-397-4213
laura.hetrick@msutexas.edu

You may also file an online report 24/7 at [Online Reporting Form](#)

Should you wish to visit with someone about your experience in confidence, you may contact the MSU Counseling Center at 940-397-4618. For more information on the University's policy on Title IX or sexual misconduct, please visit [Title IX Website](#)

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

Notice

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule:

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 8/25 to 8/31	Course Introduction/Student Post Introduction Human Relations & The HR Professional	8/29
Week 2 9/1 to 9/7	Interpersonal Communication & Team Dynamics Discussion Post	9/8
Week 3 9/8 to 9/12	Competence & The Workplace Experience ASSIGNMENT ONE: Leadership Challenge *	9/14
Week 4 9/15 to 9/19	Employment Law & Ethics in HR Practice Discussion Post	9/19
Week 5 9/22 to 9/26	Conflict Management & Restorative Practices ASSIGNMENT TWO: Policy Audit*	9/28
Week 6 9/29 to 10/3	Talent Development & Organizational Communication	10/3
Week 7 10/6 to 10/10	Crisis Communication & Change Management Discussion Post ASSIGNMENT THREE: Field Note Comprehensive Analysis*	10/12
Week 8 10/13 to 10/17	Merging Administration, Communication, and your Discipline (Your personal Philosophy)	10/17