

AMBERTON UNIVERSITY
e-COURSE SYLLABUS

CSL6798.E1 Child & Adolescent Psychopathology
Fall 2026

PROFESSOR INFORMATION:

Professor: Levi Armstrong, PsyD, MSCP
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Amberton Email: **LArmstrong@amberton.edu**

COURSE INFORMATION:

CSL6798.E1 Child & Adolescent Psychopathology
Level: Graduate
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, September 12, 2026
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, November 19, 2026

Student access available to the Student Portal: Saturday, September 12, 2026

Students enrolled in distance learning courses are not assessed any additional fees for security or identity verification.

PREREQUISITES:

CSL6801

TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Title: Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - 5th edition - Text Revision
Author: American Psychiatric Association
Publisher: American Psychiatric Association
Year Published: 2022
Edition: 5th Edition - Text Revision
ISBN: 13: 9780890425756
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Students should verify enrollment in course before purchasing textbooks. Textbook information and ordering options are available through the Amberton Virtual Bookstore. Since no books are sold on campus, students should plan accordingly and purchase their books in advance of the first day of class, allowing time for shipping.

LINKS TO COUNSELING HANDBOOKS

MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CMH-Handbook-1-5-26.pdf>

MA in Marriage and Family Therapy

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/MFT-Handbook-1-5-26.pdf>

MA in School Counseling

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/MA-SC-Handbook-June-2025.pdf>

APA REQUIREMENT:

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. This resource, revised according to the 7th edition, offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, in-text citations, endnotes/footnotes, and the reference page. For more information, please consult the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, (7th ed.). All coursework at Amberton University will comply with the standards contained in the APA Publication Manual.

SCHOOL COUNSELING PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE PROGRAM CHANGE

Beginning Fall 2019, there will be three practicums: CSL6870, CSL6875, AND CSL6880. The TExES (Texas Examination of Educator Standards) must be passed before enrolling in CSL6870. The TExES application form and practice tests are located in the TExES Review Course in Moodle. The Application and Contract are required at the first meeting of CSL6870 Practicum I and are in the Review Course. Effective September 1, 2019, the Master of Art in School Counseling degree will be a forty-eight (48) hour degree program for students entering the program.

COURSE COMPETENCIES:

This course presents the genetic, neurodevelopmental, biological, and systemic bases of psychopathology and abnormal behavior in children and adolescents as specifically defined by the American Psychiatric Association (APA, 2022) in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 5th Edition – Text Revision (DSM-5-TR). Students develop skills for conducting psychiatric interviews with parents/guardians and pediatric populations, appropriate use of psychodiagnostic tests and assessments, developing treatment plans, and providing developmentally appropriate, culturally aware, and systems-based psychotherapeutic interventions.

The course will also examine the unique symptom presentations and treatment approaches for pediatric populations with mental illnesses as mediated by exposure to drugs/diseases while in utero, perinatal complications, early childhood disease/injuries, parent/caretaker and peer-relationships, and trauma/chronic stress as it relates to normal versus abnormal neurodevelopment and psychological development. Additionally, this course will review the common primary medical etiologies of psychopathology and psychiatric comorbidities seen in pediatric populations, as well as contemporary theories and practice of clinical psychopharmacology in children and adolescents.

Additionally, students will gain foundational knowledge in emerging technologies and artificial intelligence applications in child and adolescent counseling. The course provides comprehensive training in child and adolescent counseling techniques enhanced by AI-assisted assessment tools, while examining ethical considerations in technology-assisted therapeutic interventions. Students will explore the integration of AI in counseling assessment techniques and evidence-based treatment planning, preparing them for the evolving landscape of contemporary professional counseling.

This course will satisfy the Texas State Board of Professional Counselors board rule §681.83 (c) (3). It is both ethically and clinically essential that students at Amberton University, who are pursuing a master's degree in professional counseling, and who wish to obtain licensure as an LPC in the state of Texas, possess knowledge and skills in the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of child and adolescent clients suffering from mental illnesses.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE, THE STUDENT WILL BE COMPETENT IN:

1. Understanding the importance of self-examination and critiquing self as an effective change agent in counseling relationships.
2. Comprehending and examining the developmental theories upon the manifestation and treatment of mental disorders in child and adolescent clients.
3. Understanding basic psychopharmacological intervention with regard to the treatment of mental disorders in child and adolescent clients.
4. Developing comprehensive skills with regard to effective collaboration and consultation with schools, parents, and caretakers of children and adolescents.
5. Conceptualizing and integrating classical, contemporary, and emerging research evidence, which highlight the importance of considering physical, social, neurodevelopmental, neuropsychological, and general psychological developmental theories in relation to both the assessment/diagnostic process and treatment of mental disorders in children and adolescents.
6. Demonstrating proficiency in utilizing the DSM-5-TR to apply accurate diagnostic labels to mental disorders.
7. Understanding fundamental normal and abnormal central nervous system function and brain neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and development in children and adolescents.

8. Performing a differential diagnosis while integrating an advanced understanding for the bases of neurodevelopment in relation to psychopathology in early/middle childhood, pre-adolescence, and adolescence.
9. Comprehending and assessing for the most commonly encountered medical etiologies vs. primary psychiatric illness, as well as the commonly encountered general medical, psychiatric, and neurological comorbidities of mental illness in children and teen.
10. Conceptualizing child and adolescent psychopathology using both DSM-5-TR diagnostic criteria and counseling theory(ies) to formulate evidenced-bases treatment plans utilizing both individual counseling interventions and systemic approach.
11. Understanding the ethical, legal, and clinical application of various psychological assessment instruments available for psychodiagnostics, educational diagnostics, and measurement of treatment progress and outcomes.
12. Understanding ethical, legal, and cultural factors related to psychiatric use of evidenced-based therapeutic interventions, prognostics, treatment planning, and treatment outcomes.
13. Comprehending and examining the role of prenatal, perinatal, early childhood, and general neurodevelopment as it pertains to mental illness in children and adolescents.
14. Synthesizing and integrating the general physical psychosocial, educational, systemic, cultural, and neuropsychological factors associated with the psychological and neurobiological pathophysiology of mental illness in children and adolescents.
15. Developing agility in clinical applications of evidence-based assessment and treatment modalities of psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents within the context of rapidly evolving and devolving micro- and macro-systems causing dramatic changes to accessing information, advancing technologies, exposure to societal stressors, and the modification of laws, ethics, and cultural and societal norms.
16. Understanding and ethically implementing AI-assisted assessment tools and therapeutic interventions in child and adolescent counseling while maintaining appropriate clinical boundaries and professional judgment in technology-enhanced differential diagnoses for mental disorders, treatment planning and delivery.

ACQUIRED SKILLS

1. Proficiency in utilizing the latest AI-enhanced assessment tools for child and adolescent diagnostic evaluation.
2. Integration of AI-assisted differential diagnosis and treatment planning while maintaining clinical expertise and ethical boundaries.
3. Critical evaluation of AI applications across all child and adolescent counseling contexts.

COURSE POLICIES:

All assignments are due by the due dates outlined in Moodle. Requests for deadline extensions to complete online tests are considered on a case-by-case basis and are not guaranteed. Dr. Armstrong reserves the right to modify any of the course assignments and will provide an updated syllabus if that occurs.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

This syllabus contains information, policies, and procedures for a specific course. By enrolling, the student agrees to read, understand, and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and ethical standards of Amberton University as contained in the current university catalog and schedule of classes.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular and punctual class attendance and engagement is expected at Amberton University. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor as soon as possible. If a student intends on withdrawing from a course, it is the student's responsibility to follow the university's policy on formally withdrawing from a course. **Ceasing to attend classes does not constitute an official withdrawal.**

Attendance in a lecture course is defined as punctual arrival to, and engagement in, a full lecture session. A Student in a lecture course missing more than 20% (two class periods for weekday classes or one class period for Saturday classes) of the class meetings may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Attendance in a distance learning course is defined as active participation in the weekly online class sessions. “Active participation” can be defined as: submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, engaging in an interactive tutorial, participating in an online discussion forum (or chat session), or initiating (or responding to) a communication with a faculty member about an academic assignment or the subject matter of the course. A student not meeting these requirements may be assigned a grade of an “F” or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

PLAGIARISM POLICY:

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else’s work as though it were your own. If you use another person’s words, ideas, or information; or if you use material from an outside source – whether a book, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism is a violation of the University’s code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operates on an honor system; therefore, honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology-based plagiarism detection services and applications at any time.

Self-plagiarism means reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve:

- Resubmitting an entire paper
- Copying or paraphrasing passages from your previous work

Self-plagiarism misleads your readers by presenting previous work as completely new and original. Students may not submit the same paper in substance in two or more classes without prior written permission of the instructors involved.

Amberton University students who use Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content must adhere to the following policies:

Originality: Students must avoid presenting AI generated content as their own original work. It is essential to acknowledge the involvement of AI in the content creation process in order to maintain academic and ethical standards.

Paraphrasing: When using AI generated content, students must rephrase and/or modify the generated text. Paraphrased AI generated content should also be properly cited.

Acknowledgement: When using AI generated content in any assignment, proper credit must be given to the AI system that generated the content. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Students agree that by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism and self-plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Turnitin is a writing improvement and plagiarism prevention tool which uses special algorithms, to compare text-based student submissions to the Turnitin database and other online sources. Turnitin produces a detailed **similarity report** that can be customized and viewed by instructors and students.

Turnitin “Draft Coach” is a Google based add-on to Turnitin which supports students in developing high-quality academic writing; and serves as an integrity coach. Draft Coach helps address errors and improve the quality of student’s writing by highlighting grammar mistakes, identifying incorrectly cited sources, and scanning for similarity across several databases. By providing formative feedback on how to address citation issues, incorrect grammar, and matches with the Turnitin database, Draft Coach provides explanations to help students become more confident writers, capable of producing higher quality work both in academics and in the workplace.

COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:

FIVE (5) OPTIONAL ZOOM LECTURES WILL BE OFFERED (and recorded for those who wish to watch them later and who cannot attend) ON THE FOLLOWING DATES/TIMES:

Monday 09/14 6PM

Monday 09/28 6PM

Monday 10/12 6PM

Monday 10/26 6PM

Monday 11/09 6PM

Topic: Child/Adolescent Psychopathology Fall 2026 Zoom Lecture

Meeting ID: 836 1747 3637

Passcode: 182251

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
1	Introduction to Psychiatric Diagnostics & Conducting Psychiatric Diagnostic Interviews / Performing Differential Diagnoses Review of Fundamental DSM-5-TR Nosology DSM-5 vs. DSM-5-TR: A Review of What Has Changed Introduction to Fundamental Principles of Disordered Neurodevelopment and Psychopathology in Children & Adolescents	Complete Week 1 Quiz Begin Reading DSM-5-TR Introductory Chapters (i.e., all sections prior to Neurodevelopmental Disorders in the DSM)	1, 3, 6, 8, 10	**IMPORTANT NOTE: WEEK 1 QUIZ MUST BE COMPLETED BY 09/24/2026 IN ORDER FOR STUDENTS TO BE COUNTED AS "ENROLLED" IN THE COURSE. ALL OTHER QUIZZES AND EXAMS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN THE LAST DAY OF CLASS 11/19/2026 12PM NOON AS NOTED ON PAGE 1 OF THIS SYLLABUS.
2	Contemporary Diagnostics & Treatment of: Intellectual Developmental Disorder (IDD), Language Disorders, Tics, & Learning Disabilities in Children and Adolescents	Complete Week 2 Quiz Read DSM-5-TR Chapter: Neurodevelopmental Disorders	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a
3	Contemporary Diagnostics & Psychotherapeutic Treatment of: ADHD in Children & Adolescents Fundamentals of	Complete Week 3 Quiz Finish Reading DSM-5-TR: Neurodevelopmental Disorders Begin Reading DSM-	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a

	Psychopharmacological Theory & Treatment of ADHD & Tourette's/Tics in Children and Adolescents	5-TR: Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders Bipolar and Related Disorders Depressive Disorders		
4	Contemporary Diagnostics and Psychotherapeutic Treatment of: Mood Dysregulation in Children and Adolescents: DMDD, Depression, and Pediatric Bipolar Disorder Fundamentals of Psychopharmacological Theory & Treatment of Mood Dysregulation and Explosive Anger in Children and Adolescents Risk Factors and Underlying Neurodevelopmental Pathophysiology Associated with Executive Dysfunction-related Mood/Behavioral Dysregulation in Children and Adolescents	Complete Week 4 Quiz Finish Reading DSM-5-TR: Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders Bipolar and Related Disorders Depressive Disorders	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a
5	MID-TERM EXAM NO IN PERSON CLASS THIS WEEK	MID-TERM EXAM ADMINISTERED IN MOODLE	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	MID-TERM EXAM IS DUE NO LATER THAN THE LAST DAY OF CLASS 11/19/2026 12PM NOON AS NOTED ON PAGE 1 OF THIS SYLLABUS.
6	Contemporary Diagnostics and Psychotherapeutic Treatment of: Anxiety, Trauma, and Compulsive Disorders in Children and Adolescents Fundamentals of	Complete Week 6 Quiz READ DSM-5-TR: Anxiety Disorders Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders Trauma- and Stressor-	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a

	Psychopharmacological Theory & Treatment of Anxiety/OCD/Stressor-Based Symptoms in Children and Adolescents Exposure to Psychological Stress, Physiological Stress, and Trauma and the Developing Brain	Related Disorders Feeding and Eating Disorders Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders		
7	Contemporary Diagnostics and Psychotherapeutic Treatment of: Addiction & Substance-Related Disorders in Children and Adolescents Differential Diagnosis of Substance-Related vs. Primary Etiologies of Mental Disorders Fundamentals of Psychopharmacological Theory & Treatment of Addiction	Complete Week 7 Quiz READ DSM-5-TR: Substance-Related Disorders	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a
8	Contemporary Diagnostics and Psychotherapeutic Treatment of: Dissociative Disorders Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders Sleep-Wake Disorders Childhood Temperament / Attachment Styles / & Personality Traits in the Developing Brain	Complete Week 8 Quiz READ DSM-5-TR: Dissociative Disorders Somatic Symptom Disorders Sleep-Wake Disorders Begin Reading DSM-5-TR: Personality Disorders	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a
9	Contemporary Diagnostics and Psychotherapeutic Treatment of: Emerging Disordered Personality Traits in Pre-Adolescence and Adolescence	Complete Week 9 Quiz Read DSM-5-TR: Personality Disorders Gender Dysphoria	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	n/a

	Gender Dysphoria in Children and Adolescents Evaluation and Treatment of the Psychosocial and Neurodevelopmental Sequelae Associated with Neurocognitive Disorders in Children and Adolescents	Neurocognitive Disorders		
10	FINAL EXAM NO IN PERSON CLASS THIS WEEK	FINAL EXAM ADMINISTERED IN MOODLE	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10	FINAL EXAM DUE BY THE LAST DAY OF CLASS 11/19/2026 12PM NOON AS NOTED ON PAGE 1 OF THIS SYLLABUS.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Weekly Quizzes x 8 (5 points each) = 40 points

Mid-Term Exam = 30 Points

Final Exam = 30 Points

Graduate

92 – 100 A

82 – 91 B

72 – 81 C

62 – 71 D

Below 62 F

GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:

Students should review instructor feedback provided through Moodle or Amberton CampusWeb Portal. Final grades are processed approximately one week after the session and may be viewed through the student portal. Grades will not be released by phone or through unsecured channels. University instructors will not leave a message with comments or grades in any type of media that is not secure.

For questions regarding grades after the semester has ended, students should use their university email account and contact the instructor at the faculty email address as provided above in Professor Information area.

INCOMPLETE GRADES:

An "I" (Incomplete) grade is granted only at the professor's discretion for emergencies or illness.

Students have 30 days from the end of the session to complete the course requirements. If the conditions are not met within this 30-day window, the "I" automatically converts to an "F".

HOW TO WITHDRAW FROM A COURSE:

To be official, the class withdrawal must be in writing and signed by the student requesting the withdrawal; no withdrawal is accepted verbally. Please review the "Schedule of Classes" (online or in-print) for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:

This course is delivered through Moodle. Students are expected to have reliable internet access, basic computer skills, the ability to upload/download files, use Amberton email, and submit assignments in the required format. Students needing assistance should use the Amberton SSO support/ticket process.

HOW TO ACCESS YOUR COURSE:**SINGLE SIGN-ON (SSO) INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMBERTON UNIVERSITY:**

Students should access Amberton systems through the Single Sign-On portal at <https://sso.amberton.edu>. After logging in, students can access Moodle, Amberton email, CampusWeb, and other assigned applications. Students who need help accessing SSO should submit a support request through the SSO support option or contact support@amberton.edu.

MOODLE TUTORIAL:

Upon successful log in and access to the Moodle learning platform, there is a Student Moodle Tutorial course available, to learn about the basics of Moodle. Simply click on the link for the Student Moodle Tutorial and read through the various learning topics: Navigating; Communicating; Assignments & Exams; Grades; and Student Resources.

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:

Students will communicate with faculty through the Moodle Learning Platform or the Amberton University email system.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION:

Students are expected to use their Amberton email account and Moodle for course communications. Students must use their official university email account for all university related communication and should check their Amberton emails regularly for course and university notices.

Upon completion of a session, all communication and course specific information is removed from the Moodle system. If a student needs to maintain a record of communications or assignments, the student is strongly encouraged to print out or download these items to a disk for their own records.

FORMAT AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments must be submitted through the appropriate Moodle assignment link unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Students are responsible for submitting files in the format required by the instructor.

INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:

Students will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous course and instructor evaluation near the end of the session. Instructions and dates will be provided through Moodle and/or Amberton email.

RESEARCH RESOURCES:

The Amberton Library provides access to full-text articles, peer-reviewed databases, and research tools, with options like Interlibrary Loan (ILL) and TexShare for items outside its collection. For research assistance, students can connect with library staff during operating hours via email (library@amberton.edu), phone (972-279-6511 ext. 185), "How-to" videos, live online chat, or in person at the Garland campus. The online library is available through Single Sign On (SSO).

MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 EDUCATION:

Amberton University students may access Microsoft 365 Education resources as provided by the university.

GOOGLE WORKSPACE FOR EDUCATION:

Amberton students are assigned a Google Workspace for Education account, including Amberton Gmail, Google Drive, Google Docs, Sheets, and Slides. Students should use their Amberton Google account for course-related work when required.