

Honors Seminar: Psychological Skills for Everyday Life

UHON 351 — Fall 2026

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Office hours: Mondays 8:00–11:00am, Life Science II, Room 268

I respond to student emails within 48 working hours.

Reading Material

Tolin, D. F. (2023). *Doing CBT: A comprehensive guide to working with behaviors, thoughts, and emotions*. Guilford Publications.

All other readings will be provided on D2L.

Course Objectives

This seminar provides a unique opportunity for students to delve into the principles and practical applications of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) and apply them to their own lives. CBT is a widely recognized and evidence-based approach that focuses on understanding how our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors are interconnected and influence our well-being. Throughout this course, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of CBT theory and techniques and learn how to use them to promote personal growth, enhance mental well-being, and overcome challenges. The course emphasizes self-reflection, self-awareness, and self-application as students explore their own cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns.

Learning objectives for this semester:

Gain knowledge of CBT principles and applications

- Understand basic CBT theory.
- Understand how to conceptualize problems and their relation to psychological phenomena.
- Learn to apply behavioral, cognitive, and emotional interventions to personal target behaviors.

Make significant progress toward your personal target behavior

- Properly define and conceptualize a personal target.
- Effectively track changes in your personal target over time.
- Flexibly apply CBT strategies to your personal target as needed.

The Personal Target Project

The heart of this course is a semester-long, hands-on project: you will choose one personal target to work on and apply the CBT skills we learn to it as we go. Your target is a behavior in your own life you would like to change.

Early in the semester you will select and clearly define a target that is specific, measurable, meaningful to you, and trackable across the semester. You will then gather baseline data

before you start intervening, so you can see your own change over time. Choosing a good target is one of the most important steps in the course, and we will work on it together. A note: this course is for everyday self-improvement, not treatment. If the issue you have in mind is something serious (for example, significant depression or anxiety, disordered eating, self-harm, or substance problems), please talk with me and consider the free, confidential support at SIU Counseling and Psychological Services. We will choose a target that is a good fit for a self-application course.

Weekly Journal

You will keep a journal as you work through the course each week. Make the journal your own (take notes, draw diagrams, add pictures, links, etc.). Document anything that is interesting to you: reflections on the reading or the skills you are practicing, your own critiques, questions for the class, information from other sources, and your ongoing personal-target tracking. Worksheets used during the course should be incorporated into your journal.

Journals are due each **Tuesday at midnight**. They must be uploaded to your personal blog to receive credit. Bring your journal to class each week and use it to contribute to our discussion. Come prepared with questions, insights, and anything you found worth sharing.

There are no formatting requirements, but the journal should be legible and clearly enhance your learning with insights, questions, and thoughtful content. You will not receive credit for simply copying text or diagrams from the readings.

Your **final journal** is a reflection on what you learned over the semester: what you discovered about your own behavior, thoughts, and emotions and how they interact, and your progress (or lack thereof) toward your personal target. Include a look back at your target data.

Attendance and Participation

Because of the seminar format, this class cannot function without the presence and engagement of its members. Much of the practical learning comes from class discussion.

Read the assigned material each week. Without a thorough reading, you will be unable to develop your journal or engage meaningfully. Participation is necessary, not optional. You are not expected to understand everything; we learn best as a group when students bring the parts they found confusing. Be mindful of your fellow students and make room for everyone to contribute.

Grading

Assignment	Points
Weekly journal	130 (10 points × 13 journals)
Attendance	13 (1 point × 13; 14 classes – 1 free)
Participation	65 (5 points × 13; 14 classes – 1 free)
Final journal reflection	20
Total	228

Your Personal Target Worksheet and baseline tracking are completed within your weekly journals (see the calendar) and count toward journal credit.

Grades are earned on the following scale: 93–100 A · 90–92.9 A– · 87–89.9 B+ · 83–86.9 B · 80–82.9 B– · 77–79.9 C+ · 73–76.9 C · 70–72.9 C– · 67–69.9 D+ · 65–66.9 D · 0–64.9 F.

Honors credit: Because this is a UHON seminar, students must earn a C or above to receive Honors credit.

Course Calendar — Fall 2026

Week	Topic and Reading
1 · Aug 17	Laying out the basics: an introduction to CBT; course overview; targets
2 · Aug 24	Oh, behave! The behavioral system and how it can go wrong (Ch. 1–2)
3 · Aug 31	Stinkin' thinkin': the cognitive system and how it can go wrong (Ch. 3)
4 · Sep 14	I got a bad feeling about this: the emotional system and how it can go wrong (Ch. 4)
5 · Sep 21	Creating meaty conceptualizations, the therapy assessment and case formulation, & CBT finesse (Ch. 5–7)
6 · Sep 28	Adjusting the triggers: situation selection and stimulus control (Ch. 8)
7 · Oct 5	Direct behavioral prescriptions and graded task assignment; contingency management (Ch. 9–10)
8 · Oct 12	Exposure and behavioral skill training (Ch. 11–12)
9 · Oct 19	What's the client thinking? & Restructuring thoughts (Ch. 13–14)
10 · Oct 26	Leave them thoughts alone (Ch. 15)
11 · Nov 2	Going deeper with core beliefs & addressing information-processing biases (Ch. 16–17)
— · Nov 9	Veterans Day — no class
12 · Nov 16	Intervening at the emotional level: modulating emotion & distress tolerance (Ch. 18–19)
— · Nov 23	Thanksgiving Break — no class
13 · Nov 30	Wrap-up, review, and evaluation
14 · Dec 7	Finals week — final journal due

Syllabus Attachment

Fall 2026

MISSION STATEMENT FOR SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE

SIU embraces a unique tradition of access and opportunity, inclusive excellence, innovation in research and creativity, and outstanding teaching focused on nurturing student success. As a nationally ranked public research university and regional economic catalyst, we create and exchange knowledge to shape future leaders, improve our communities, and transform lives.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Semester Classes Begin:08/17/2026
Last day to add full-term course (without Dean's signature):08/21/2026
Last day to withdraw from the University with a full refund:08/28/2026
Last day to drop a full-term course for a credit/refund:09/18/2026
Last day to drop a full-term course (W grade, no refund):.....10/23/2026
Final examinations:12/07/2026–12/11/2026

Note: Please verify the above dates with the Registrar calendar and find more detailed information on deadlines at <http://registrar.siu.edu/calendars>. For add/drop dates that apply to shorter-than-full-term courses, please look at the Schedule of Classes search results at <http://registrar.siu.edu/schedclass/index.php>

FALL SEMESTER HOLIDAYS:

Labor Day 09/07/2026
Fall Break 10/02/2026
Veterans Day 11/11/2026
Thanksgiving Break 11/21/2026 - 11/29/2026

DIVERSITY: Southern Illinois University Carbondale's goal is to provide a welcoming campus where all of our students, faculty and staff can study and work in a respectful, positive environment free from racism and intimidation. For more information visit: <http://diversity.siu.edu>.

OFFICE FOR ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATIONS: SIU Carbondale is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible experience for all students with disabilities. Office for Access and Accommodations coordinates the implementation of accommodations. If you think you may be eligible for accommodations but have not yet obtained approval please contact OAA immediately at (618) 453-5738 or <https://access.siu.edu>. You may request accommodations at any time, but timely requests help to ensure accommodations are in place when needed. Accommodations and services are determined through an interactive process with students and may involve consideration of specific course design and learning objectives in consultation with faculty.

MILITARY COMMUNITY: There are complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student, and military and veteran related developments can complicate academic life. If you are a member of the military community and in need of accommodations please visit Veterans Services at <http://veterans.siu.edu/>.

STUDENT MULTICULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER: The Student Multicultural Resource Center serves as a catalyst for inclusion, diversity and innovation. As the Center continues its work, we are here to ensure that you think, grow and succeed. We encourage you to stop by the Center, located in the Student Services Building Room 140, to see the resources available and discover ways you can get involved on the campus. Visit us at <https://smrc.siu.edu/>.

SALUKI CARES: The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students and their families, SIUC will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For information on Saluki Cares: Call (618) 453-2461, email siucares@siu.edu, or <http://salukicare.siu.edu/>.

SAFETY AWARENESS FACTS AND EDUCATION: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender is a Civil Rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here: <http://safe.siu.edu>.

PREGNANCY: Title IX makes it clear that students who are pregnant or have a related condition may contact the Title IX Coordinator to request accommodations or to report any allegations of discrimination. The Title IX Coordinator may be contacted at: Nick Wortman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 0135 Woody Hall, 900 S. Normal Avenue, Mail Code 6520, Carbondale, IL 62901, (618) 453-6667, equity@siu.edu.

SIU COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES (CAPS): Mental health counseling services are available by calling CAPS at (618) 453-5371. CAPS offers confidential same-day services and ongoing counseling. For after hours crisis care, students are encouraged to call 988, 911, or present to their nearest emergency room.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY (Undergraduate Only): Students who officially register for a session must officially withdraw from that registration in a timely manner to avoid being charged as well as receiving a failing grade for those classes. An official withdrawal must be initiated by the student, or on behalf of the student through the academic unit, and be processed by the Registrar's office. For the proper procedures to follow when dropping courses and when withdrawing from SIUC visit: <https://registrar.siu.edu/students/withdrawal-petitions/>.

SIUC'S EARLY WARNING INTERVENTION PROGRAM (EWIP): Students enrolled in courses participating in SIUC's Early Warning Intervention Program might be contacted by University staff during a semester. More information can be found at the University Core Curriculum's Overview webpage: <https://corecurriculum.siu.edu/for-faculty/>.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: We ask that you become familiar with Emergency Preparedness at SIU. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, on the Emergency Preparedness at SIU website, and through text and email alerts. To register for alerts visit: <http://emergency.siu.edu/>.

CATALOGS:

catalog.siu.edu
gradcatalog.siu.edu - Graduate policies often vary from Undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, please refer to the graduate catalog.

CENTER FOR LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES:

Tutoring: <https://clss.siu.edu/>
Math Labs: <http://math.siu.edu/courses/course-help.php>

WRITING CENTER: <http://write.siu.edu/>

PLAGIARISM: See the Student Conduct Code: <http://srr.siu.edu/student-conduct-code/>

INCOMPLETE POLICY (Undergraduate Only): <http://catalog.siu.edu/grading/>

REPEAT POLICY: <http://catalog.siu.edu/grading/repeat-policy-gpa-scholastic-standing.php>

MORRIS LIBRARY HOURS: <https://libcal.lib.siu.edu/hours/>

ADVISEMENT: <http://advisement.siu.edu/>

SIU ONLINE: <https://online.siu.edu/>