

***Clinical Mental Health Counseling***

***Master's Program***

# **Student Handbook**



**School of Counseling**  
College of Health and Human Sciences  
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Akron, OH 44325-5007

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## **Part I**

# **Clinical Mental Health Counseling Master's Program**

## **Program Handbook**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The School of Counseling at The University of Akron houses master's degrees in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Marriage and Family Therapy, and School Counseling.

**This student handbook governs only the Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree students' educational program.**

Students interested in obtaining information about other programs are encouraged to visit the School of Counseling website at <https://www.uakron.edu/soc/>.

This handbook is intended to provide Clinical Mental Health Counseling students with program information and guidelines that will be useful for successful completion of the master's degree. Although every effort has been made to provide accurate information throughout this handbook, the enclosed materials are minimal guidelines toward a comprehensive and integrated educational program. Therefore, students may receive educational and training materials while enrolled in the program beyond those covered in this handbook.

**Beginning with the first semester of enrollment and throughout the program, it is critical that students work closely with and direct personal and educational questions to their Faculty Advisor, Program Coordinator, and/or Clinical Coordinator.**

A Faculty Advisor's role is primarily focused on academic and professional consultation aimed toward helping students learn about and acquire skills/training necessary for success in both the program and as a future professional counselor.

**However, completion of all graduation requirements, while an ongoing concern of the program faculty, is ultimately the responsibility of each student.**

### **Student Handbook Updates**

It is important to note that the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program undergoes periodic reviews by program faculty. These reviews are primarily focused on program improvements related to coursework, policies, and contemporary educational standards. In addition, as a comprehensive master's degree program, programmatic changes are sometimes required to conform to national accreditation standards, state licensure guidelines, College or University rules and policies, or advances in the broader counseling profession.

Before implementation, programmatic changes will be thoroughly reviewed by program faculty members (and university administration and community professionals as needed). Any program-related changes will therefore represent collective and informed judgment.

**Some programmatic changes may apply only to newly admitted students starting the Program during the semester admitted (i.e., with the new student handbook active that**

**semester). However, when deemed necessary for Program integrity and student success, some programmatic changes may apply to all current/active students in the Program regardless of admission date. If programmatic changes are implemented after a student has already been admitted into the Program, Program faculty will attempt to inform all students of programmatic changes applicable to them. When possible and appropriate, Program faculty will also make a reasonable attempt to provide the option of following new Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program requirements or prior requirements.**

If an academic/programmatic issue arises that is not addressed in this manual, or an extraordinary change in policy is needed immediately (i.e., before a new student handbook is disseminated) to help ensure a student's academic success, Program faculty shall deliberate about the issue on a case-by-case basis.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program faculty encourage all students to participate in the Program's academic and training process. The Program's success is predicated upon students and faculty working together for students' success, clients' mental health, programmatic improvements, and societal advancement. Student contributions are therefore expected, welcomed, and appreciated throughout the Program via active student surveys, completer/exit surveys, and graduate surveys.

## **SCHOOL OF COUNSELING MISSION STATEMENT**

The School of Counseling adheres to the following mission statement, which also applies to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program:

The faculty has as its mission the goal of training students who display a respect for human dignity, exhibit a commitment to fulfillment of their individual potential, show an understanding of educational and counseling processes with knowledge in their specific field of endeavor, apply ethical and competent behavior in the use of counseling skills, acquire and use knowledge of the roles and functions of others working in related fields, possess and display personal maturity/self-development, and who understand issues and trends of a multicultural and diverse society. In order to achieve these goals, the program faculty themselves will attempt to exhibit the above attitudes, behaviors, and competencies to serve as models of appropriate behavior for students.

## **PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

**The Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's program's mission is to prepare ethically and culturally informed professional counselors who competently diagnose and treat a variety of life concerns including but not limited to mental disorders using ethical and evidence-based interventions.**

Clinical Mental Health Counselors offer a full range of services including:

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- Assessment and diagnosis
- Treatment planning and utilization review
- Longer-term psychotherapy
- Brief and solution-focused therapy
- Substance and other addiction-related treatment
- Psychoeducational and prevention programs
- Crisis management

In today's managed care environment, Clinical Mental Health Counselors are uniquely qualified to meet the challenges of providing high quality care in a cost-effective manner. Clinical Mental Health Counselors practice in a variety of settings, including independent practice, community agencies, managed behavioral health care organizations, integrated delivery systems, hospitals, employee assistance programs, and substance abuse treatment centers.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program aims to prepare students as effective professional counselors using a Clinical Mental Health Counseling philosophy/identity. Upon completion of the program students should be able to show knowledge and skills in the following two program-specific objectives. These objectives will be assessed each semester and will be used for both program and individual student improvement and remediation, respectively.

**Program-Specific Objective #1: Demonstrate ethical and evidence-based diagnosis knowledge and skills using culturally appropriate interventions with diverse populations.**

**Program-Specific Objective #2: Demonstrate ethical and evidence-based treatment intervention knowledge and skills using culturally appropriate interventions with diverse populations.**

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Upon completion of the Program, students should be able to show knowledge and skills based on the following key performance indicators. These key performance indicators will be assessed each semester and will be used for both program and individual student improvement and remediation, respectively.

**Key Performance Indicator #1:** Ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling across service delivery modalities and specialized practice areas (CACREP Standard Section 3, A.10)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 600 Professional Orientation & Ethics final examination (multiple choice, true/false, case vignette test; 80% or higher)

- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 675 Practicum performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #2:** The influence of heritage, cultural identities, attitudes, values, beliefs, understandings, within-group differences, and acculturative experiences on individuals' worldviews and help seeking and coping behaviors (CACREP Standard Section 3, B.2 and B.3)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 646 Multicultural Counseling cultural immersion project (minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 675 Practicum performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #3:** Systemic, cultural, and environmental factors that affect lifespan development, functioning, behavior, resilience, and overall wellness (CACREP Standard Section 3, C.11)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 648 Individual & Family Development Across the Lifespan developmental paper and resource guide (paper; minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 675 Practicum performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #4:** Theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision-making (CACREP Standard Section 3, D.1)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 647 Career Development & Counseling Across the Lifespan career development project (presentation; minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 685 Internship performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #5:** Interviewing, attending, and listening skills in the counseling process (CACREP Standard Section 3, E.9)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 651 Techniques of Counseling mock interview (recording and transcription; minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 675 Practicum performance evaluation (direct experience;

minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #6:** Approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members (CACREP Standard Section 3, F.5)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 653 Group Counseling group proposal presentation (presentation; minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 685 Internship performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #7:** Ethical and legal considerations for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessments (CACREP Standard Section 3, G.6)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 645 Testing & Appraisal in Counseling case applications 1 and 2 (written papers; minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 685 Internship performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #8:** Identification and evaluation of the evidence base for counseling theories, interventions, and practices (CACREP Standard Section 3, H.2)

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 601 Research & Program Evaluation in Counseling journal article critique assignment (written paper; minimum average rubric grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 685 Internship performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #9:** Etiology, nomenclature, diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental, behavioral, and neurodevelopmental disorders (CACREP Standard Section 5, C.1).

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 662 Diagnosis in Counseling final examination (multiple choice test; minimum grade = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 685 Internship performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

**Key Performance Indicator #10:** Techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues (CACREP Standard Section 5, C.5).

- Evaluation method 1 = COUN 666 Treatment in Clinical Counseling final case study (essay; instructor grading rubric minimum score = 80% or higher)
- Evaluation method 2 = COUN 685 Internship performance evaluation (direct experience; minimum rating = 3 [competent] or higher on a 1-5 scale on all relevant performance areas)

The first eight key performance indicators listed above (Key Performance Indicators #1 to #8) measure the CACREP eight common core areas including professional counseling orientation and ethical practice, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, career development, counseling and helping relationships, group counseling and group work, assessment and testing, and research and program evaluation. The last two key performance indicators listed above (Key Performance Indicators #9 and #10) measure the CACREP Clinical Mental Health Counseling specialty area.

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND STUDENT INVOLVEMENT**

**The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program will require all students to participate in professional counseling organizations. This is incorporated as part of the COUN 600 Professional Orientation & Ethics course requirements.**

**Students will be required to show evidence of involvement in the profession through documenting additional memberships, voluntary service, workshop attendance, professional conferences, and/or other opportunities for involvement.**

Program faculty will share personal experiences and encourage student involvement in classes. The Alpha Upsilon Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota will also encourage involvement through meetings and mentoring activities.

Among many other important benefits, involvement in the profession, such as but not limited to, joining professional organization(s) includes:

- Promotes professional skill development
- Increases knowledge from leaders in the counseling profession
- Provides non-university-related networking opportunities
- Offers additional professional endorsement possibilities
- Helps build one's resume
- Provides continuing education units
- Increases excitement for and devotion to the counseling profession

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The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program encourages membership and active participation in both umbrella and specialty organizations. In particular, the Program encourages student membership and involvement in the following four professional organizations:

### **1. American Counseling Association**

Main website = <https://www.counseling.org/>

Membership website = <https://www.counseling.org/membership/join-now>

### **2. American Mental Health Counselors Association**

Main website = <https://www.amhca.org/home>

Membership website = <https://www.amhca.org/joinamhca>

### **3. Ohio Counseling Association**

Main website = <https://www.ohiocounseling.org/>

Membership website = <https://www.ohiocounseling.org/join>

### **4. Chi Sigma Iota (Alpha Upsilon Chapter)**

Main website = <https://www.csi-net.org/>

Membership website = <https://www.csi-net.org/page/Membership>

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND ACCOMMODATION POLICIES**

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The University of Akron is an equal education and employment institution which operates under:

- nondiscrimination provisions of Titles VI, VII, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended and IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 as amended.
- Executive Order 11246, Vocational Rehabilitation Act Section 504, Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Act, and Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as related to admissions, treatment of students, and employment practices.

It is the policy of the institution that there shall be no unlawful discrimination against any individual because of race, color, creed, sex, age, national origin, handicap/disability or status as a veteran.

### **Sexual Harassment Policy**

The University of Akron will not tolerate sexual harassment of any form in its programs and activities and prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment and

admissions. The nondiscrimination policy applies to all students, faculty, staff, employees and applicants.

The University of Akron is committed to providing an environment free of all forms sexual violence and sexual harassment. This includes instances of attempted and/or completed sexual assault, domestic and dating violence, gender-based stalking, and sexual harassment. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences sexual violence or sexual harassment, know that you are not alone. Help is available, regardless of when the violence or harassment occurred, and even if the person who did this is not a student, faculty or staff member.

Confidential help is available. If you wish to speak to a professional, in confidence, please contact:

- Rape Crisis Center – [www.rccmsc.org](http://www.rccmsc.org) – 24 Hour Hotline: 877-906-RAPE Office located in the Student Recreation and Wellness Center 246 and the office number is: 330-972-6328
- University Counseling and Testing Center – [www.uakron.edu/counseling](http://www.uakron.edu/counseling), 330-972-7082
- University Health Services – [www.uakron.edu/healthservices](http://www.uakron.edu/healthservices), 330-972-7808

Please know the majority of other University of Akron employees, including faculty members, are considered to be “responsible employees” under the law and are required to report sexual harassment and sexual violence. If you tell me about a situation, I will be required to report it to the Title IX Coordinator and possibly the police. You will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a law enforcement or complaint process. You have a range of options available and we want to ensure you have access to the resources you need. Additional information, resources, support and the University of Akron protocols for responding to sexual violence are available at [### \*\*Accommodation Policy\*\*](http://uakron.edu>Title-IX</a>.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Academic accommodations and services at the Office of Accessibility are determined by using a collaborative process that considers documentation from the diagnosing professional, the disability specialist’s perspective and student input.

Accommodations are designed to ensure access to an academic career at The University of Akron.

Any student in need of an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Accessibility at (330) 972-7928 or [www.uakron.edu/access](http://www.uakron.edu/access). The office is located in Simmons Hall 105.

### **PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

**Dr. Yue Dang, Associate Professor of Instruction (Program Coordinator)**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (The University of Akron)
- Office Phone: 330-972-7118
- Email Address: [yd13@uakron.edu](mailto:yd13@uakron.edu)

**Dr. Jessica Wiener, Assistant Professor of Instruction (Clinical Coordinator)**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (The University of the Cumberlands)
- Office Phone: 330-972-4351
- Email Address: [jwiener@uakron.edu](mailto:jwiener@uakron.edu)

**NOTE: The Program Coordinator's defined duties include:** (1) oversight of the program's mission and objectives; (2) provision of program-related course instructor recommendations to School Director, including outreach to facilitate additional instructors when requested; (3) oversight of program-related curricula management, including program-specific course syllabi, accreditation, and professional standards compliance and updates; (4) service as originator on curriculum proposals when appropriate; (5) revisions to and program-wide dissemination of student handbook; (6) coordination of the student interview and admission process; (7) service as liaison to prospective students and respond to inquiries regarding the overall program; (8) service as liaison to university non-program faculty, staff, and administration; (9) oversight and management of program's organizational policies and procedures; (10) management of accuracy and updates to program website; (11) leadership and facilitation regarding program marketing and related materials; (12) oversight of and compliance with national accreditation guidelines including program-related written reports/self-studies; (13) oversight of and compliance with state licensure procedures/laws and professional standards; (14) service as program representative to community academic/professionals; (15) organize program meetings with program faculty regularly; and (16) organize an annual student review with program faculty and students (when applicable)

**NOTE: The Clinical Coordinator's defined duties include:** (1) oversight of the program's practicum and internship student application and approval process, (2) revisions to the structure and requirements for completion of clinical courses, (3) modifications to supervisor qualifications and dissemination of relevant clinical course information (e.g., practicum and internship syllabi), (4) representation of the program to community clinical placements/professionals, and (5) responding to inquiries regarding practicum and internship.

**CORE PROGRAM FACULTY**

**The following are core faculty associated with the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.** Names are listed alphabetically:

**Amanda Cole, Assistant Professor of Instruction**

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- Degree: Master of Arts in Community Counseling (The University of Akron)
- Professional Licenses: Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor/Supervising Counselor (LPCC-S)
- Office Phone: 330-972-6851
- Email Address: [aac24@uakron.edu](mailto:aac24@uakron.edu)

### **Dr. Yue Dang, Associate Professor of Instruction**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (The University of Akron)
- Professional Licenses: Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Office Phone: 330-972-7118
- Email Address: [yd13@uakron.edu](mailto:yd13@uakron.edu)

### **Dr. Melanie Kautzman, Assistant Professor**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (The University of Akron)
- Professional Licenses: Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor/Supervising Counselor (LPCC-S)
- Office Phone: 330-972-4736
- Email Address: [mkautzma@uakron.edu](mailto:mkautzma@uakron.edu)

### **Dr. Varunee Faii Sangganjanavanich, Professor**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (University of Northern Colorado)
- Professional Licenses: Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor/Supervising Counselor (LPCC-S)
- Office Phone: 330-972-6851
- Email Address: [vs45@uakron.edu](mailto:vs45@uakron.edu)

### **Dr. Darla Slagh, Assistant Professor of Instruction**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (Lindsey Wilson University)
- Professional Licenses: Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor/Supervising Counselor (LPCC-S)
- Email Address: [dslagh@uakron.edu](mailto:dslagh@uakron.edu)

### **Dr. Jessica Wiener, Assistant Professor of Instruction**

- Degree: Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision (The University of the Cumberlands)
- Professional Licenses: Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor/Supervising Counselor (LPCC-S)
- Office Phone: 330-972-4351
- Email Address: [jwiener@uakron.edu](mailto:jwiener@uakron.edu)

## **WHERE TO TURN FOR QUESTIONS/RESOURCES**

The following persons/offices should be contacted as resources for the common questions/issues below:

- *Tips for program success, sample course sequence, additional copies of the student handbook* = Program ‘current students’ website (see <https://www.uakron.edu/soc/masters/cmhc/current-students.dot>)
- *Clinical Mental Health Counseling required coursework or planned program* = Program ‘required coursework’ website (see <https://www.uakron.edu/soc/masters/cmhc>), your Faculty Advisor, or the Program Coordinator as a secondary resource
- *Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree requirements* = Your Faculty Advisor, or the Program Coordinator as a secondary resource
- *Program-related issues/concerns* = Your Faculty Advisor, or the Program Coordinator as a secondary resource
- *Graduation procedures/forms/requirements* = Graduate School website (see <https://www.uakron.edu/graduate/index.dot>)
- *Counselor licensure* = Counselor, Social Worker, Marriage and Family Therapist Board (see <https://cswmft.ohio.gov>), or the Clinical Coordinator as a secondary resource
- *Comprehensive examination* = Student handbook, Faculty Advisor as a secondary resources, or the Program Coordinator as a tertiary resource
- *Practicum or Internship* = Student handbook’s Practicum and Internship Guidelines, or Clinical Coordinator as a secondary resource
- *Course schedule* = Workday, the Office of the Registrar (see <https://www.uakron.edu/registrar>) as a secondary source, or the School Administrative Assistant as a tertiary resource
- *Course registration problems* = School Administrative Assistant, or the Office of the Registrar (see <https://www.uakron.edu/registrar>) as a secondary resource
- *Computer problems* = Computing help desk website (see <https://www.uakron.edu/helpdesk> or call 330-972-6888)
- *Brightspace problems* = Brightspace website (see Student Support on Brightspace)

## **PROGRAM ACCREDITATION**

**The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA), has conferred Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program accreditation until March 2033.**

Students are encouraged to visit the CACREP website to learn more about counseling accreditation guidelines: <https://www.cacrep.org>.

The Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapy Board (OCSWMFTB) has approved the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program as meeting all course-related and clinical requirements for students' eligibility as Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs). After completion of required coursework and supervised clinical experiences, students must pass the State licensure examination (National Counselor Examination) in order to receive the LPC credential. After receiving additional supervised training during a clinical residency period, students may be eligible for the Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) license.

Students are encouraged to visit the OCSWMFTB website to learn more about counselor licensure guidelines: <https://cswmft.ohio.gov>.

## **PROGRAM APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

All Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program application materials, procedures, and forms are available at <https://www.uakron.edu/soc/masters/how-to-apply.dot>. Persons interested in applying for admission to this program are encouraged to read all directions thoroughly before submitting materials.

**An applicant may be admitted to only one master's degree program.** Before beginning a master's degree program, the student must have earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. Applicants are required to have at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average (GPA) or higher for all undergraduate coursework.

Applicants should visit the Graduate School website for more detailed information about The University of Akron Graduate School application requirements: <https://www.uakron.edu/graduate/index.dot>. International applicants are also encouraged to visit the International Center website in order to gain more information about university resources and international application procedures: <https://www.uakron.edu/international>.

The following materials must be included in application packets, regardless of which program the student is applying for: (1) a completed The University of Akron online Graduate School application form, (2) official undergraduate transcripts (and graduate transcripts, if applicable), (3) a School of Counseling application supplement form, and (4) three letters of reference (use of Graduate School online reference form preferable).

International applicants must also submit (5) evidence of meeting minimum English proficiency standards, as outlined by the University, with application materials. See <https://www.uakron.edu/international/apply/> for specific guidelines and evidence-related options.

## **ADMISSION AND SCREENING PROCEDURES**

After applications have been received, personal interviews will be scheduled with applicants who meet the minimum application qualifications until the next admission cohort has been filled. The following criteria will be considered during Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program admissions decisions:

1. Relevance of career goals, including current understanding of the profession and fit of the profession with post-graduation goals.
2. Undergraduate grade point average.
3. Graduate grade point average, if graduate coursework has been completed.
4. External feedback related to letters of reference, including quantitative and qualitative information about potential to success in a graduate program, prior professional and/or academic success, and ability to manage chief liabilities or weaknesses.
5. Written communication ability, including communicating ideas effectively, demonstrating organization of thought, and showing grammatical correctness when writing.
6. Potential success in forming effective counseling relationships, including displaying poise, genuineness, empathy, and interpersonal skills.
7. Respect for cultural differences, including showing an understanding and appreciation of diverse and marginalized populations, and an understanding of psychosocial challenges faced by diverse populations.

Admissions may also be limited to those applicants who answer “no” on all items of the Application Supplement Form Statement of Good Moral Character. If an applicant answers “yes” on any item, the applicant must provide a written rationale to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program faculty; additional documentation, such as an FBI or BCI check, may also be required.

- **Felony and Other Criminal History Policy**

Applicants are required to disclose any current or past criminal charges or convictions, or pending charges that might result in a conviction, when applying for admission to a School of Counseling Program. Failure to report a criminal history may result in denial and/or dismissal from the School of Counseling and the program. It is the prerogative of the School of Counseling faculty and administration to request additional information about the criminal history, and based on the information provided, to deny admission (and/or for School of Counseling students, to be dismissed), as students in all School programs are preparing to work with a vulnerable population and must apply for background checks prior to internship and licensure.

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Admission decisions are made by one or more faculty after applications are reviewed considering the criteria above. Applicants are rank-ordered as applicable and are then admitted on a rolling basis until the next admission cohort has been filled (currently approximately 30-35 students each Fall and Spring semester).

**Applicants should note that successful completion of all admission criteria above does not guarantee admission into the program. Enrollment is limited in order to ensure small class sizes, appropriate student-faculty ratios as dictated by accreditation guidelines, and availability of Practicum/Internship placement sites.**

Once an applicant is admitted into the program, the student's file will be forwarded to The University of Akron Graduate School for approval. Once approved, the Graduate School will send an official acceptance letter to the applicant. A Faculty Advisor will be assigned immediately once a new student is admitted to the program. Thus, a new student will be able to obtain academic advising even before beginning program coursework.

**The Graduate School allows a maximum of 6 years to complete the Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree. This six-year time limit begins the semester a student first enrolls in classes. This time frame will be reduced if transfer credits are substituted for any coursework for the Program requirements. The six-year time frame will begin on the date when the first course transferred was completed.**

### **Graduate School Non-Degree Seeking Admissions**

The Graduate School directly admits students for general graduate coursework on a non-degree basis under certain circumstances. This option is usually available for students who already hold a bachelor's or graduate degree. Students admitted under this classification must complete non-degree coursework but are not eligible for a master's degree (although non-degree coursework may transfer into a UA master's program if a separate admission is granted). **Applications for non-degree status are approved under the jurisdiction of the Graduate School (not the School of Counseling).**

Applicants are encouraged to visit the Graduate School website to learn more about non-degree seeking admissions: <https://www.uakron.edu/graduate/admissions/apply>.

**Students admitted by the Graduate School for general coursework on a non-degree basis should note that this does not guarantee future admission to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. In addition, students admitted under non-degree status will have second priority (after fully admitted students) for registration of School of Counseling courses with limited enrollments.**

In order to obtain admission into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, non-degree seeking students must complete the entire program application process (see Program Application Procedures above). Should a non-degree seeking student ultimately be admitted to the Program, classes successfully completed as a non-degree student may potentially be applied to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree if all transfer credit criteria have been satisfied.

**NOTE: Only students fully admitted to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program may complete a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum or Internship. Non-degree students shall not be approved for a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Practicum or Internship.**

### **TRANSFER OF CREDITS FROM ANOTHER PROGRAM**

After receiving full admission into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program and after completion of at least 12 semester credits of required coursework, students may be eligible to transfer up to 1/3 of their required credits (up to 20 semester credits) from another program/institution if all of the following minimum criteria are met.

However, transfer of credits is at the discretion of each student's Faculty Advisor and the Graduate School. Therefore, students wishing to transfer credits from another program/institution should meet with their Faculty Advisor as soon as possible after formal admission into the program:

- The course must directly substitute for a required course that is part of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program curriculum
- The course must have been at the graduate level (i.e., not an undergraduate course)
- The course must be a graded course (i.e., not pass/fail)
- The student must have received a grade of 'B' or better in the course
- The course must have been completed within the past six years
- All transfer courses, and all non-University of Akron degrees and academic statuses, must be in good standing as defined by the Graduate School

Students should be aware that transfer of credits will reduce the six-year time limit required for graduation. This time limit will be decreased proportionately according to when the transferred course was completed – for example, if a transferred course was completed three years prior to admission into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, the student would only have three years remaining to complete all requirements for their degree.

NOTE: Students are encouraged to attend the University on a full-time basis in order to complete their degree in the most expeditious manner. The Graduate School allows up to six years for completion of the master's degree.

### **REQUESTS TO CHANGE PROGRAMS AFTER ADMISSION**

Fully admitted students who wish to change master's degree programs (e.g., changing from the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program to the Marriage and Family Therapy or School Counseling Program) must follow the steps below:

1. Schedule a meeting with one's Faculty Advisor to discuss this issue and reach consensus;
2. Following Faculty Advisor approval, petition in written format to Clinical Mental Health Program Coordinator. Include a rationale for switching programs. The petition will be presented to Program faculty for consideration. Program faculty reserve the right to approve or deny the request;
3. If the request for changing programs is approved by the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program faculty, petition in written format to the new (i.e., Marriage and Family Therapy or School Counseling) Program faculty.
4. If the request for changing programs is approved by the new Program faculty, a new Faculty Advisor (affiliated with the new master's Program) will be assigned by the new Program, and the new Program faculty will notify the Graduate School of the degree and Faculty Advisor changes.

**Students will not be approved to change programs after they have begun Practicum.** In order to minimize disruption to course programs, professional identity, and licensure possibilities, any student who is enrolled in or who has completed Practicum during any master's degree program will not be permitted to change programs.

## **PROGRAM CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling master's degree is comprised of a minimum of 60 semester credit hours of approved graduate-level coursework. The official curriculum guide (required coursework) can be found in the graduate bulletin at <https://bulletin.uakron.edu/graduate/colleges-programs/health-professions/counseling/clinical-mental-health-counseling-ma/#requirementstext>.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program curriculum consists of four broad areas of coursework: (a) Educational Foundations, (b) Required Counseling Core Courses, (c) Clinical Counseling Specialty Courses, and (d) Program Electives.

**Educational Foundations (9 semester credits total):** COUN 601 Research and Program Evaluation in Counseling, COUN 646 Multicultural Counseling, COUN 648 Individual & Family Development Across the Life-Span.

Educational Foundation coursework provides knowledge and skills related to understanding human functioning and diversity through a framework of research.

**Required Counseling Core Courses (20 semester credits total):** COUN 600 Professional Orientation & Ethics, COUN 635 Introduction to Clinical Counseling, COUN 643 Counseling: Theory & Philosophy, COUN 645 Tests & Appraisal in Counseling, COUN 647 Career Development & Counseling Across the Lifespan, COUN 651 Techniques of Counseling, COUN 653 Group Counseling.

Required counseling core courses focus on an orientation to the counseling profession and basic core counseling skills that translate into professional practice.

**Clinical Counseling Specialty Courses (28 semester credits total):** COUN 662 Diagnosis in Counseling, COUN 664 Advanced Diagnosis in Counseling, COUN 666 Treatment in Clinical Counseling, COUN 674 Prepracticum in Counseling, COUN 675 Practicum in Counseling, COUN 714 Evaluation of Mental Status, COUN 732 Addiction Counseling I: Theory & Assessment, COUN 685 Master's Internship.

Clinical counseling specialty courses focus on knowledge and skills related to common conditions treated by professional counselors (e.g., psychopathology) and practical skills working with a clinical population.

**Program Electives (3 credits minimum):** COUN 620 Issues in Sexuality for Counselors, OR COUN 621 Counseling Youth at Risk, OR COUN 622 Introduction to Play Therapy, OR COUN 640 Counseling Adolescents, OR COUN 655 Marriage & Family Therapy, OR COUN 660 Counseling Children.

Program electives offer an opportunity for specialty knowledge beyond minimum foundational, core, and clinical program areas.

For more information about the Program curriculum, or descriptions of each course in the curriculum, please review the Graduate Bulletin at <https://bulletin.uakron.edu/graduate/colleges-programs/health-professions/counseling/clinical-mental-health-counseling-ma/#requirementstext>.

Students should consult with their Faculty Advisor before registering for coursework.

## **COURSE REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Course registration at The University of Akron is completed through the Workday for students online platform.

Before course registration can occur, students must first obtain a UA Net ID and Password from the UA computer center (Bierce Library, basement level). Students may also receive a private UA email address at this time. Next, students can check the School of Counseling's schedule of classes and register each semester through Workday for students.

Throughout one's graduate career, important forms, dates, and graduate information can be found at the Graduate School website: <https://www.uakron.edu/graduate/index.dot>.

Students are also encouraged to obtain a UA Zip Card from the Zip Card Office (Simmons Hall #103) as soon as possible after formal admission into the program. The Zip Card allows students to check out books from the library, make photocopies, order food on campus, etc.

## **SPECIAL REGISTRATION FOR CLOSED COURSES**

Certain clinical courses, including Practicum and Internship, have a closed registration policy for which School permission must be obtained. Some courses have prerequisites that must be completed prior to enrollment. Other courses require department consent for enrollment purposes.

**Students should complete the online [Registration Request Form](#) in order to register for closed courses or all other courses where ‘departmental consent’ is indicated.** Permission from one’s Faculty Advisor may be necessary before registration is approved.

## **COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION**

All Clinical Mental Health Counseling students are required to pass a comprehensive examination in order to graduate with the master’s degree. The comprehensive examination helps students solidify didactic knowledge, and prepares students for the State licensure examination (the National Counselor Exam or NCE).

**The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program uses the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) for this purpose. As of this student handbook a passing score on the CPCE is 1 standard deviation below the national average adjusted for each test administration.** Therefore, the passing score will vary slightly from test to test.

**Students will be responsible for registering for the CPCE through Pearson, and paying the cost of test administration (\$150 as of this student handbook’s publication date).**

According to the authors “Over 400 college and university counseling programs across the country use CCE’s Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE).” (<https://www.cce-global.org/org/cpce>). Students may visit the following website for more detailed information about the purpose, goals, and structure of the CPCE: <https://www.cce-global.org/org/cpce>.

The examination will be offered to all Program students once each semester on The University of Akron main campus or via Pearson Vue. **The examination is typically offered during October (for Fall semester), March (for Spring semester), and June (for Summer semester).**

**Students are required to register for and complete the comprehensive examination following the instructions provided by the Program during Practicum semester.**

**Comprehensive examination study resources can be found on the program’s current students website: <https://www.uakron.edu/soc/masters/cmhc/current-students.dot>**

## **Comprehensive Examination Grading Policy**

## Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Student Handbook

Students may complete the comprehensive examination a total of three times.

Students who fail the comprehensive examination (CPCE) the first time will be permitted to re-take the complete comprehensive examination one time the following semester. The same examination taken the first time (CPCE) must be re-taken during the second attempt. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their Faculty Advisor, in order to review their test results and strengths/weaknesses, before re-taking the examination.

Students who fail the comprehensive examination (CPCE) two times may petition the Program to complete the examination in a different format to be determined by the Program for the third and final time, scheduled the following semester by Program and student.

Students who fail the written examination three times, including the alternately formatted examination one time, will be dismissed from the Program.

### **Comprehensive Examination Study Materials**

According to the authors “While CCE does not offer an official study guide for the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE), we do provide a list of textbook resources frequently used in CACREP-accredited counselor preparation programs. The list of resources can be found at [CPCE Textbook Guide](#).”

In addition, since the CPCE and the National Counselor Examination (NCE) are based on similar knowledge areas, any study materials developed for the NCE should be useful for the CPCE. Students may visit the following website for more information about the NCE:  
<https://nbcc.org/resources/applicants/students>.

Although different questions are used for each administration of the examination, the following eight core content areas are always covered on the CPCE:

- Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice
- Social and Cultural Diversity
- Human Growth and Development
- Career Development
- Counseling and Helping Relationships
- Group Counseling and Group Work
- Assessment and Testing
- Research and Program Evaluation

**In particular, it is recommended that information from the following Clinical Mental Health Counseling coursework be used to study for the CPCE (and NCE):**

- COUN 600 Professional Orientation & Ethics
- COUN 601 Research & Program Evaluation in Counseling

- COUN 643 Counseling: Theory & Philosophy
- COUN 645 Tests and Appraisal in Counseling
- COUN 646 Multicultural Counseling
- COUN 647 Career Development & Counseling Across the Life-span
- COUN 648 Individual and Family Development Across the Life-span
- COUN 651 Techniques of Counseling
- COUN 653 Group Counseling

## **STUDENT AND PROGRAM REVIEW PROCESS**

In keeping with the learning objectives of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, formative and summative student and Program data will be evaluated by the Program to ensure quality control and successful student/Program development over time.

### **Student Evaluation Process (completed by Program faculty each Spring semester)**

The student annual review occurs each Spring semester, inclusive of data from the prior calendar year (i.e., January to December). The prior Spring, Summer, and Fall semester data are considered.

Each student is reviewed in all areas below to ensure they maintain appropriate academic achievement (e.g., GPA), individual course grades, overall degree progress, achievement on program-specific and core key performance indicators, as well as professional dispositions (openness to learning/feedback, flexibility, self-awareness, professional responsibility/conscientiousness, professional maturity, and ethics). Students must meet all review criteria below.

In the event that a student fails to meet one or more review criterion, the student retention, remediation, and dismissal policy outlined in the next section will be followed.

- Maintains a minimum 3.0 GPA or higher for overall graduate coursework.
  - Minimum continuous GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 grading scale required per Graduate School rules.
- Receives a minimum grade of B- for all individual graduate courses.
  - No more than six credits of C grades are permitted per Graduate School rules.
  - Note that D and F grades are considered failing and must be repeated per Graduate School rules. Six or more credits of D and/or F grades will result in mandatory dismissal from the program.
- Progressing within the timeline toward graduation.

- Maximum six years allowed for completion of all degree requirements per Graduate School rules.
- Achieves all key performance indicators outlined toward the beginning of the student handbook.
  - Key performance indicators are evaluated throughout the program in various courses through grades on specific assignments, examinations or supervisor ratings.
- Has no identified professional and ethical concerns.
- Has no identified interpersonal and behavioral concerns.
  - Both professional/ethical concerns and interpersonal/behavioral concerns are assessed in four ways at different points in the program:
    - During COUN 651 Techniques of Counseling, through a student professional disposition evaluation submitted by the course instructor for each student.
    - During COUN 653 Group Counseling, through a student professional disposition evaluation submitted by the course instructor for each student.
    - During COUN 675 Practicum, through a student professional disposition evaluation submitted by the course instructor for each student.
    - In addition, professional dispositions are evaluated each semester during any other program course through an instructor concern notice when needed (i.e., if professional disposition concerns are identified outside COUN 651, 653, 675) and in COUN 685 Internship using a supervisor rating form with dispositional skills areas.
- Receives a passing score on the comprehensive examination.
  - The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) is offered every semester. A passing score on the examination, or an alternative version after two non-passing CPCE scores, must be achieved. Examination policies and procedures are outlined in the student handbook.

### **Program Evaluation Process (complete by Program faculty each Spring semester)**

The program annual review occurs every Spring semester, inclusive of data from the prior calendar year (January to December). The prior Spring, Summer, and Fall semester data are considered. All of the following areas related to program success (e.g., learner outcomes) and stakeholder feedback are considered.

- Current student exit/completer survey results.
- Program graduate/alumni survey results.

- Program supervisors and employers survey results.
- Semester-by-semester outcomes on program-specific and core key performance indicators.
- Program-wide professional disposition evaluations in COUN 651, 653, and 675 along with other instructor fitness concern notices if applicable, taking student patterns into account.
- Global comprehensive examination (CPCE) result patterns.

## **STUDENT RETENTION, REMEDIATION, AND DISMISSAL POLICY**

The program policy concerning student retention, remediation, and dismissal is outlined below:

- 1. Not maintaining a minimum 3.0 GPA or higher for overall graduate coursework:**
  - A. First semester – Student will be placed on academic probation. Faculty Advisor will communicate GPA to student. Faculty Advisor and student will discuss academic and other issues impacting GPA.
  - B. Second semester - Student will remain on academic probation for second semester. Student must meet with Program faculty to discuss academic issues and generate remediation plan.
  - C. Third semester – Student may be subject to dismissal from Program.
- 2. Not receiving a minimum grade of B- for all individual graduate courses:**
  - A. First course - Faculty Advisor will communicate with student to discuss academic and other issues impacting GPA.
  - B. Second course - Faculty Advisor will communicate with student to discuss academic and other issues. Student will develop a remediation plan to address issues impacting academic success.
  - C. Third course – Student may be subject to dismissal from Program.
- 3. Evidence of insufficient progress indicating a potential inability to complete degree requirements in six years:**
  - A. Faculty Advisor will discuss timeline with student, options for Program completion, and option of Graduate School extension related to extenuating circumstances.
  - B. Graduate School will notify student in writing 1-2 semesters before the six-year timeline shall expire, with options for extension or dismissal.
- 4. Not achieving key performance indicators (outlined in the student handbook).**
  - A. First key performance indicator not achieved - Faculty Advisor will communicate with student to discuss academic and other issues impacting success.

- B. Second key performance indicator not achieved - Faculty Advisor will communicate with student to discuss academic and other issues impacting success. Student will develop an informal strength-based plan to address issues.
- C. Third key performance indicator not achieved - Faculty Advisor will communicate with student to discuss academic and other issues impacting success. Student will be placed on informal probation. A written remediation plan will be developed to address academic limitations and potential consequences for not achieving future key performance indicators (e.g., GPA, individual course grades, comprehensive examination risks).
- D. Forth key performance indicator not achieved – A full program-level faculty review will occur, including all other student retention criteria, and dismissal will be considered.

5. **Identified professional/ethical or interpersonal/behavioral concerns (including professional disposition concerns from COUN 651, COUN 653, COUN 675 or other course instructor concern notices):**

- A. First issue identified - Faculty Advisor and/or course instructor will communicate with student to discuss concerns. If issues are not resolved a proactive remediation plan will be developed.
- B. Second issue identified - Faculty Advisor and Program Coordinator will communicate with student to discuss concerns. A written remediation plan will be developed indicating a timeline for resolution of concerns and dismissal criteria.
- C. Third issue identified - A program-wide faculty meeting will occur to discuss the concerns. Student may be subject to dismissal from Program.

6. **Not receiving a passing score on the comprehensive examination (CPCE):**

- A. First non-passing score - Student must re-take the complete comprehensive examination one time the following semester. The same examination taken the first time must be re-taken during the second attempt.
- B. Second non-passing score - Student may petition the Program to complete the examination in an alternate format to be determined by the Program faculty, scheduled the following semester by Program faculty and student.
- C. Third non-passing score (including the alternate format) - Student will be dismissed from the Program.

7. **Not demonstrating of at least '3' (competent) or better in all relevant Practicum performance evaluation areas:**

- A. Practicum Instructor will meet with student to discuss competency issues impacting clinical work. Practicum Instructor and student will draft formal remediation plan. Practicum Instructor will consult with Faculty Advisor and Clinical Coordinator to discuss recommendation regarding continuation of clinical work (i.e., receiving In Progress in Practicum) and remediation plan.
- B. Lack of successful completion of remediation plan - Student must meet with Program faculty to discuss competency issues. Student will be placed on academic probation and

## Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Student Handbook

will not be approved for registration for additional clinical courses until remediation plan is achieved. Student will be reviewed for possible dismissal from Program.

- C. Lack of successful completion of remediation plan - Student may be subject to dismissal from Program.

**8. Not demonstrating of at least '3' (competent) or better on all relevant Internship performance evaluation areas:**

- A. Internship Instructor will meet with off-site supervisor and student to discuss competency issues impacting clinical work. Internship Instructor and student will draft formal remediation plan. Internship Instructor will discuss with off-site supervisor and Clinical Coordinator recommendation regarding continuation of clinical work (i.e., receiving In Progress in Practicum) and remediation plan.
- B. Lack of successful completion of remediation plan - Student must meet with Program faculty to discuss competency issues. Student will be placed on academic probation and will not be approved for registration for additional clinical courses until remediation plan is achieved. Student will be reviewed for possible dismissal from Program.
- C. Lack of successful completion of remediation plan - Student may be subject to dismissal from Program.

**9. Other situations/factors not noted in #1-#8 that contribute to and/or constitute academic, personal, interpersonal, and professional concerns.**

### **STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program complies with grievance procedures approved by the College of Health and Human Sciences, Graduate School, and University. Clinical Mental Health Counseling students have certain rights and responsibilities as stated in The University of Akron Bylaws (3359-42-01-C2, 3359-11-13, and 3359-41-01) and in the Student Code of Conduct. If students believe that they have valid grounds for appealing a faculty/Program/School decision, or have an academic-related issue/complaint, students must first attempt to resolve the issue at the lowest level possible.

Students must follow the procedures below in order when a grievance is sought:

1. Speak directly with the person (i.e., faculty member) most directly involved; then
2. Speak with one's Faculty Advisor; then
3. Speak with the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Coordinator; then
4. Contact the School of Counseling Director - the student should appeal, in writing, to the School of Counseling Director for resolution of an academic issue; then
5. Contact the College of Health and Human Sciences Dean's Office - the student must appeal, in writing, to the Dean for resolution.

For more detailed information about student appeals or complaint procedures, please contact the College of Health and Human Sciences, or read the ‘Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students’ section of the Graduate Bulletin.

## **GRADUATION APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

**All students must complete a Graduation Application before graduation is possible.** This application must be submitted through the student account prior to the due date, which is dependent upon the semester a student intends to graduate. Students are responsible for awareness of Graduation Application due dates, and online submission of the application.

**It is strongly recommended that this application be submitted during the very beginning of the first Internship semester.**

The Graduation Application must be submitted before very strict due dates set by the Graduate School. Graduate Application can be found online through MyAkron.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**In order to be eligible for graduation with a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, the following minimal requirements must be satisfied. Additional non-Program requirements may need to be satisfied per University rules (e.g., payment of fees, graduation application procedures, etc.):**

1. Successful completion of all coursework in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program within a six-year timeframe after the first course was completed toward the degree.
2. Attainment of a cumulative 3.0 GPA or better.
3. Successful passage of the comprehensive examination (CPCE).
4. Adherence to the School of Counseling Statement of Expectations throughout the Program.
5. Completion graduation application.
6. Completion of Graduate Exit Survey.

## **PROGRAM CODE OF ETHICS**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, its faculty, and its students adhere to the University Code of Conduct, State of Ohio licensure laws and regulations, and the American Counseling Association’s Code of Ethics. The program has a professional responsibility to ensure that all students display ethical, professional, and personal behaviors that comply with these guidelines.

## **SCHOOL OF COUNSELING STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS**

Programs in the School of Counseling are charged with the dual task of nurturing the development of counselors-in-training and ensuring the quality of client care. In order to fulfill these dual responsibilities, faculty must evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with being able to provide effective or ethical services to clients. For example, in order to ensure proper training and client care, a counselor-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, a professional attitude, and moral character. These factors are evaluated based on one's academic performance and one's ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should also demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, gain awareness of their impact on others, accept personal responsibility, and show effective and appropriate expression of emotions.

For further information about The University of Akron's policies regarding student ethics and conduct, please consult <https://www.uakron.edu/studentconduct/code-of-conduct.dot> (Code of Student Conduct). Any student in need of accommodations due to the impact of a disability, please consult <https://www.uakron.edu/access> or the Office of Accessibility at 330-972-7928.

## **PROGRAM ENDORSEMENT STATEMENT (for student recommendations)**

Program faculty, recognizing the uniqueness of each student, seek to identify and extend knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by effective professional counselors. It is hoped that this emphasis will transfer to students and enable them to meet the diverse needs of various clientele. Students are encouraged to visit the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program website to learn more about the program's mission and objectives: <https://www.uakron.edu/soc/masters/cmhc>.

Student requests for endorsements should be directed to the appropriate individual faculty, as deemed most relevant to each student. Common requests for endorsements for recommendations include:

- Course Instructor – Practicum or Internship placement recommendations
- Faculty Advisor – Practicum, Internship, or employment recommendations; extracurricular opportunities (e.g., professional organization membership)
- Program/Clinical Coordinator – Practicum, Internship, or employment recommendations; extracurricular opportunities (e.g., professional organization membership)
- Clinical (Practicum or Internship) supervisor - licensure or employment recommendations

**Decisions about the appropriateness of an endorsement for professional licensure and/or employment and/or extracurricular professional activity will be considered on an individual basis related to the specific endorsement being sought and the qualifications of**

**the student. Students will not be given letters of reference for employment outside of their area(s) of demonstrated competence.**

Program faculty endorsements decisions will primarily take into account information related to the Program's student retention criteria, including but not limited to:

- The student's academic performance thus far in the Program (i.e., individual course grades and cumulative GPA)
- The student's professional dispositions
- The student's performance evaluations in clinical courses (i.e., Practicum and/or Internship), as applicable
- The student's performance related to the comprehensive examination, as applicable
- School of Counseling faculty feedback related to adherence to the School of Counseling Statement of Expectations

## **Part II**

# **Clinical Mental Health Counseling Master's Program**

## **Clinical Handbook**

## **PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction to Practicum/Internship**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Master's Program requires that students complete five (5) semester credits of Practicum (COUN 675) and six semester credits of Internship (COUN 685). These two courses are considered capstone training experiences that require full participation and commitment. Quality of students' clinical work and professional behaviors are evaluated and valued as highly as quantity of clinical services provided during the experience.

**Students will be evaluated on the following areas, all of which must be demonstrated before the training experience ends and additional clinical training/work is permitted:**

- Ethical/legal knowledge and compliance
- Compliance with setting policies/procedures
- Clinical assessment skills
- Treatment planning skills
- Clinical interventions with individual and group counseling clientele needs
- Client referral/triage skills
- Preparedness for and participation in supervision sessions
- Ability to self-reflect and self-assess strengths/limitations and one's scope of competencies
- Overall professionalism in the workplace (with clients, colleagues, peers, supervisors)
- Clinical documentation skills

**NOTE: Clinical Mental Health Counseling students are responsible for knowing and adhering to all guidelines contained herein. Noncompliance with these guidelines may negatively impact successful completion of Practicum and/or Internship. Therefore, following the guidelines herein should be given careful attention throughout the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.**

**As a required part of Practicum and Internship work, Clinical Trainee (CT) status with the OCSWMFT Board is needed (unless waived by the Clinical Coordinator), including applying for and gaining approval of BCI/FBI check.**

**Students are responsible for paying the BCI/FBI check fee. If a student does not complete the BCI/FBI check and/or submit the report by a stated deadline and/or needs to complete an additional report, the student is responsible for any required additional fees. Failure to complete and gain approval of a BCI/FBI check by the program or clinical placement may result in the inability to progress toward degree completion.**

## **PRACTICUM OVERVIEW/GUIDELINES (COUN 675)**

Practicum is designed as a comprehensive pre-professional training experience. It includes both direct and indirect counseling services. As part of their Practicum requirements, students must obtain **100** total work-related hours (including direct service hours, documentation, supervision-related hours, and other work-related experiences per CACREP guidelines). Of these 100 total work-related hours, students must accumulate at least **40** direct service hours. Direct service hours include supervised use of counseling, consultation, or related professional skills with actual clients for the purpose of fostering social, cognitive, behavioral, and/or affective change per CACREP guidelines.

**When planning to register for Practicum, students should maintain an awareness of required prerequisites:**

**Prerequisites:**

COUN 600, 601, 635, 643, 645, 646, 647, 648, 651, 653, 662, 666, 674, 714

**All prerequisites must be completed prior to the start of Practicum.**

Completion of Practicum requires a long-term commitment of time and effort. **Students who work (whether on campus or off campus), or who have family/personal obligations outside of the University, will be asked to adjust their schedules accordingly in order to meet Practicum clinical/supervisory/academic requirements.** For example, if a student works off campus, the student may need to adjust work times, reduce the number of hours worked per week, or terminate employment and seek financial assistance in order to fulfill Practicum requirements.

Although the academic requirements will vary slightly from semester to semester, **Practicum students must usually devote about 12 hours/week to the experience. Individual counseling is required, and group counseling experience is optional, during Practicum. The following are examples of commitments that may be expected:**

- **Minimum of 6-8 hours/week individual client appointment times** – some flexibility is provided at the Clinic to help accommodate students' requests.
- **1-2 hours/week group counseling appointment times (Optional)** – group counseling appointment times, whether at the Clinic or an off-campus agency, are usually scheduled during specific days/times.
- **1.5 hours/week class time with the faculty instructor** (i.e., group supervision) – class time/group supervision is scheduled on a specific day/time per the University course schedule.
- **1 hour/week individual supervision with the faculty instructor** – individual supervision day/time shall be negotiated with the faculty instructor, but usually occurs the same day as the class time/group supervision.

- **1 hour/week supervision with the group counseling supervisor (Optional)** – group counseling supervision day/time shall be negotiated with the group counseling supervisor.
- **2-3 hours/week clinical documentation** – time used for completion of documentation is usually flexible, however documentation for a particular individual/group counseling session must usually be completed within one week, and often 1-3 days, after the session occurs.

**As a required part of Practicum work, Clinical Trainee (CT) status with the OCSWMFT Board is needed (unless waived by the Program/Clinical Coordinator), including applying for and gaining approval of BCI/FBI check.**

**Students are responsible for paying the BCI/FBI check fee. If a student does not complete the BCI/FBI check and/or submit the report by a stated deadline and/or needs to complete an additional report, the student is responsible for any required additional fees. Failure to complete and gain approval of a BCI/FBI check by the program or clinical placement may result in the inability to progress toward degree completion.**

## **PRACTICUM PLACEMENT**

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program students will be placed at the Clinic for Individual and Family Counseling for their Practicum experience.

## **PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**Faculty Instructor** – Practicum course instructors must fulfill the following qualifications:

Be eligible to serve as an OCSWMFT Board-approved Clinical Trainee supervisor.

**Site Supervisor (off-campus supervision)** – Site supervisors must fulfill ALL of the following qualifications:

(1) Have obtained a minimum of a master's degree in counseling or a related profession with equivalent qualifications, including an Ohio mental health professional license – **AND**

(2) Have obtained a minimum of two years of professional experience in the clinical area in which the student is enrolled – **AND**

(3) Have obtained relevant supervision training and experience (either professionally or through having obtained the Ohio Supervising Counselor designation).

## **PRACTICUM REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

Practicum is a 5-credit course, completed during one semester. Practicum is a closed course. Therefore, self-registration is not permitted. Students must be pre-approved by the Clinical Coordinator for candidacy.

**NOTE: Only students fully admitted to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program may complete a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum. Non-degree students shall not be approved for a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Practicum.**

**Three primary considerations are taken into account before registration for Practicum is permitted:**

1. Completion of all required course prerequisites:

COUN 600, 601, 635, 643, 645, 646, 647, 648, 651, 653, 662, 666, 674, 714

2. Approval for candidacy to begin clinical coursework, as evaluated by Program faculty through review of student retention guidelines.
3. Placement on the primary Practicum list (versus waiting list) for a specific semester.

Regarding #3 above, in order to maintain quality instruction/supervision a limited number of Practicum students are registered each semester. Students on the primary Practicum list will be offered registration in Practicum if criteria #1-2 above are completed.

Applicants on the primary list will be ranked in order of when each student was pre-approved for Practicum (i.e., “first come-first served” basis).

If the amount of Practicum applicants outnumbers the enrollment limit for a particular semester, a waiting list will be created. Those on the waiting list will be given priority the following semester, unless a student on the primary list disenrolls from Practicum, after which students on the waiting list will be contacted.

Therefore, a completed Practicum application does not guarantee placement in Practicum during a particular semester.

**The sequence below outlines steps taken during the Practicum registration process, and who is responsible for each step.**

**In order to be approved for Practicum, all students must follow the steps outlined below in order. Failure to follow these steps in order may jeopardize Practicum registration.**

Consultation with the Clinical Coordinator is recommended if questions/concerns arise.

1. **Meet with Faculty Advisor**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = First semester in the Program]**

All newly admitted students must meet with a Faculty Advisor during their first semester, either during new student orientation or a private meeting, to review the student handbook (including Practicum prerequisites).

**2. Plan Program coursework**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = First semester in the Program]**

During the first semester all newly admitted students must plan Program coursework in order to estimate when all Practicum prerequisites will be completed.

**Prerequisites:**

COUN 600, 601, 635, 643, 645, 646, 647, 648, 651, 653, 662, 666, 674, 714.

**Note:** all prerequisites must be completed prior to the start of Practicum unless an exception is approved by Program faculty under extraordinary circumstances.

**3. Apply for placement on the Practicum list beginning of semester before Practicum is desired (i.e., first day once courses begin)**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = Very beginning of semester before practicum is desired]**

**A. Students must confirm for themselves that all Practicum prerequisites will have been completed prior the semester Practicum will begin.**

**Prerequisites:**

COUN 600, 601, 635, 643, 645, 646, 647, 648, 651, 653, 662, 666, 674, 714.

**B. Immediately after courses begin the semester before Practicum is desired (i.e., the first day of classes of thereafter), complete the School of Counseling Practicum Application survey to request to be placed on the Practicum list:**

- Beginning Summer semester (first day of intersession) for Fall Practicum
- Beginning Fall semester (first day of classes) for Spring Practicum
- Beginning Spring semester (first day of classes) for Summer Practicum

**Note: placement on the Practicum list is on a first come, first served basis. Therefore, completing this step as early as possible once the first day of classes officially begin each semester is important.**

**4. Practicum list candidacy review**

**[Who is responsible = Program Faculty; When this step is completed = once all Practicum requests for following semester have been received]**

- A. Program faculty will review all Practicum candidates' academic and fitness records.
- B. Program faculty will then check all prerequisites for students on the primary Practicum list.
- C. Students who have not completed all prerequisites will be notified by the Clinical Coordinator that they will be removed from the primary Practicum list.
- D. Program faculty will determine the final approved primary Practicum and waiting lists.

**5. Practicum registration confirmation**

**[Who is responsible = Clinical Coordinator; When this step is completed = once primary Practicum list is finalized]**

Clinical Coordinator will notify all students approved for Practicum candidacy toward the middle of the semester before Practicum will begin. Students will also be registered for Practicum at the Clinical Coordinator's request.

**6. Apply to the Board for Clinical Trainee (CT) status once registered for COUN 675 Practicum**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = immediately once registered for COUN 675 Practicum]**

**Immediately after course registration**, apply to the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board for Clinical Trainee (CT) status.

**Students must obtain CT status prior to beginning Practicum.** For steps to complete CT status visit <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/preparing-for-a-license/counselors/CT-approval>.

Because the CT application process may take several weeks to complete (including official State forms and a criminal records check), students are encouraged to begin the CT application process as soon as possible.

**7. Obtain professional liability insurance**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = several weeks before Practicum semester begins, with guidance from the Clinical Coordinator]**

**Providing evidence of active professional liability insurance is a requirement before beginning clinical work.** Evidence of insurance coverage must be provided to the

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Practicum instructor. Insurance coverage is free for student members of the American Counseling Association and Ohio Counseling Association.

Apply to ACA or OCA as a student member, then obtain free liability insurance:

<https://www.counseling.org/membership/value-of-membership>

<https://www.ohiocounseling.org/join>

### **8. Complete mandatory Program orientation**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = soon after Practicum approval is received. A date will be provided by the Clinical Coordinator] –** complete mandatory program orientation after being contacted by the Clinical Coordinator.

### **9. Complete mandatory Clinic orientation**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = usually 1-2 weeks before Practicum semester begins] –** complete mandatory Clinic orientation after being contacted by the Clinic.

Approximately one month before Practicum semester begins the Clinic will send Clinic orientation materials to all Practicum students, including directions for completion of the face-to-face and online orientation process and group counseling placement materials/procedures.

New Practicum students will complete online Clinic orientation approximately 1-2 weeks before semester begins; complete face-to-face Clinic orientation process approximately 1-2 weeks before semester begins.

**Students must complete all orientation materials before beginning Clinic work.**

### **10. Begin Practicum experience (i.e., attend first Practicum class/group supervision)**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = First week that Practicum semester begins]**

Meet with Instructor during regularly scheduled class time (i.e., group supervision), obtain syllabus and supervision-related forms/materials, discuss Practicum process/requirements, and schedule individual supervision sessions and other meetings as required.

**Note: Only students fully admitted to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program may complete a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum. Non-degree students shall not be approved for a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Practicum.**

### **INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW/GUIDELINES (COUN 685)**

The objective of Internship is to provide an extensive on-the-job supervised experience beyond Practicum for the integration and application of knowledge and skills that the student has gained in didactic coursework. The Internship is a post-Practicum, on-the-job experience conducted in a setting as similar as possible to that in which a student may subsequently seek employment.

**Note: Internship placement is dependent on completion of Practicum** – Internship cannot begin until Practicum has been passed and clinical readiness for Internship has been determined. This requirement must be disclosed to potential Internship site hosts/supervisors when interviewing at potential sites.

**Internship must be completed part-time during at least two semesters (3 credits of COUN 685 each semester). One semester full-time Internships are not permitted for educational, client service, and provider placement reasons.** Internship students usually work approximately 20-25 hours/week.

As part of Internship requirements, students must obtain 600 total work-related hours (including direct service hours, documentation, supervision-related hours, and other work-related experiences). Of these 600 total work-related hours, students must accumulate at least 240 direct service hours. Direct service hours include supervised use of counseling, consultation, or related professional skills with actual clients for the purpose of fostering social, cognitive, behavioral, and/or affective change per CACREP guidelines.

**Students who do not fulfill their 600-hour and direct service hour requirements after registering for six semester credits must enroll for an additional 3 credit hours of Internship (COUN 685) each semester until the 600-hour requirement is completed.**

Beyond class meetings and individual supervision sessions, there is one main clinical requirement related to the 600 total work-related hours and 240 direct service hours outlined above:

**Students must work for an accredited or certified mental health agency providing professional counseling services, including indirect and direct services as outlined below.** Internship placement at private practices (e.g., LLCs) is not permitted for reasons including but not limited to the following:

- Accredited and certified mental health agencies must comply with, and are reviewed by, independent organizations (e.g., Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, CARF, Joint Commission) to ensure standardization and quality assurance.

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- Accredited and certified mental health agencies promote rigorous and quality services that align with the Program's mission.
- Accredited mental health agencies have a Board of Trustees which oversees administrators and helps ensure stakeholder input in the functioning of the organization.
- Accredited mental health agencies have a human resources unit as an access point for trainee concerns, organizational issues, and resolutions.
- Mental health agencies have staff always on the premises while workers (including interns) are present.
- Mental health agencies follow certain risk management, documentation, and privacy protocols which help ensure a broad and secure learning experience for interns.

Most private practices do not incorporate these standards and therefore may pose various risks for intern which the Program wishes to avoid. The Program reserves the right to approve or deny a site for internship placement.

Per Program, CACREP and Ohio Counselor, Social Worker & Marriage and Family Therapist Board requirements, clinical experiences must include on-the-job supervised training in professional counseling. The supervised Internship shall include a minimum of six hundred (600) hours of total work-related experiences, including both "direct service" and "indirect service." Of the six hundred (600) hours of total work-related experiences, at least two hundred forty (240) shall be in direct service to clients, which should include the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders through individual and group counseling.

**Direct service** refers to direct contact with clients providing counseling-related services including: individual, couple, family and/or group counseling, assessment, diagnosis, treatment planning. The intention of direct service is gaining supervised professional counseling skills, therefore non-participatory observation or non-counseling-related experiences (case management, documentation, etc.) do not count as direct service;

**Indirect service** refers to work-related experiences that are not direct counseling services with clients such as: supervision, staff meetings/trainings, documentation, preparation activities for counseling sessions, case management functions, being on the job site without client contact (e.g., no-shows, etc.).

**Both individual and group counseling skills are required learning as part of Internship, therefore at least some of the direct service must be related to individual counseling AND group counseling, in addition to testing, one-time assessments or other forms of direct service.**

**Note: When completing an in-state (Ohio) Internship (not out-of-state Internship), students must register with the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board as a Clinical Trainee (CT) for Internship, unless a waiver of this requirement has been preapproved by the Clinical Coordinator prior to the start of Internship under special circumstances. Visit <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/preparing-for-a-license/counselors/CT-approval> to find steps toward completing the CT application process.**

As a required part of Internship work, Clinical Trainee (CT) status with the OCSWMFT Board is needed (unless waived by the Clinical Coordinator), including applying for and gaining approval of BCI/FBI check.

**Students are responsible for paying the BCI/FBI check fee. If a student does not complete the BCI/FBI check and/or submit the report by a stated deadline and/or needs to complete an additional report, the student is responsible for any required additional fees. Failure to complete and gain approval of a BCI/FBI check by the program or clinical placement may result in the inability to progress toward degree completion.**

Completion of Internship requires a long-term commitment of time and effort. Students who work (whether on campus or off campus), or who have family/personal obligations outside of the University, will be asked to adjust their schedules accordingly in order to meet Internship clinical/supervisory/academic requirements. For example, if a student works off campus, the student may need to adjust work times, reduce the number of hours worked per week, or terminate employment and seek financial assistance in order to fulfill Internship requirements.

Although the academic requirements will vary slightly from semester to semester, **Internship students usually devote at least 20 hours/week to the experience. The following are examples of commitments that may be expected:**

- **Approximately 15-20 hours/week individual and group counseling indirect and direct service at a mental health agency** – some flexibility is usually provided by agencies to help accommodate students' requests.
- **2-4 hours/week clinical documentation** – time used for completion of documentation is usually flexible, however documentation for a particular individual/group counseling session must usually be completed within one week, and often 1-3 days, after the session occurs.
- **3 hours/bi-weekly class time with the faculty instructor** (i.e., group supervision) – class time is scheduled on a specific day/time per the University course schedule.
- **1 hour/week individual supervision with the site (agency) supervisor** – individual supervision day/time shall be negotiated with the site supervisor.

## **INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**Faculty Instructor** – Internship course instructors must fulfill ONE of the following qualifications:

- (1) Be a core Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program faculty member – **OR**
- (2) Have obtained a masters degree in Community Counseling or Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and have obtained an Ohio Professional Counselor or Professional Clinical Counselor license with relevant supervision training and experience (either professionally or through having obtained the Ohio Supervising Counselor designation) - **OR**

- (3) Have obtained a clinical masters degree substantially similar to a Community Counseling or Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree (which included diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders), and have obtained an Ohio Professional Clinical Counselor license with relevant supervision training and experience (either professionally or through having obtained the Ohio Supervising Counselor designation), and have completed at least three years of recent professional experience working in a community mental health agency.

**Site Supervisor (off-campus supervision)** – Site supervisors must fulfill ALL of the following qualifications:

- (1) Have obtained a minimum of a master's degree in counseling or a related profession with equivalent qualifications - AND
- (2) Have obtained an Ohio Professional Clinical Counselor license with Supervising Counselor designation – AND
- (3) Have completed at least three years of recent professional experience working in a community mental health agency.

## **OUT-OF-STATE (NON-OHIO) INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS**

**Out-of-state Internships must be pre-approved by the Clinical Coordinator. Out-of-state Internships are discouraged. It is strongly recommended that Internship be completed in Ohio** so the setting, supervisor, and overall clinical experience can be pre-approved and monitored closely by the course instructor and program faculty. Students who intend to complete Internship requirements out-of-state will be required to complete the same course/documentation requirements as students who are placed locally.

Because out-of-state Internship students may not be able to physically attend the required group supervision class at The University of Akron, and CACREP requires that students must attend an average of 1.5 hours per week of group supervision provided on a regular schedule throughout the Internship and performed by a program faculty member, **students may need to attend class virtually (through videoconference) throughout Internship.**

In the event that a student wishes to fulfill their Internship requirements out-of-state, the following should be considered. A meeting must be scheduled with the Clinical Coordinator to provide a rationale for the out-of-state placement. If the Clinical Coordinator approves the out-of-state placement, the student will be responsible for independently seeking an appropriate site. **An appropriate site is defined as one that can fulfill all in-state internship site/supervisor requirements above tailored to licensure requirements for the state in which Internship will take place.**

**Per CACREP accreditation requirements an appropriately licensed professional is one who holds a minimum of a master's degree in counseling or a related profession, has an active license in the state where the Internship will take place, and has competency in clinical**

**supervision. To be considered competent as a supervisor, an individual must have been licensed for at least two years and have acceptable supervisory training and experience.**

**When completing an out-of-state (non-Ohio) Internship students need not register with the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board as a Clinical Trainee (CT). CT status is an Ohio training-related requirement.**

Students who are planning to complete their Internship out-of-state should be prepared to visit the site and meet with agency personnel. Once a student has been accepted at a site, confirmation must be sent to the Clinical Coordinator regarding the student's acceptance, and the supervisor's name and professional license number. In addition, the supervisor should send their resume and a brief explanation of their supervisory training and experience.

**As stated above Clinical Mental Health Counseling interns may not be placed at a private practice setting during Internship.**

## **INTERNSHIP REGISTRATION PROCEDURES**

**Note: the following course/registration procedures are for in-state (Ohio) Internships.**

Note: Internship should be completed the semester(s) immediately following completion of Practicum.

**Internship requires registration permission. Students cannot register on their own and must be pre-approved by the Clinical Coordinator (i.e., self-registration is not possible).**

**NOTE: Only students fully admitted to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program may complete a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship. Non-degree students shall not be approved for a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Internship.**

**Two primary considerations are taken into account before registration for Internship is permitted:**

1. Completion of all requirements for Practicum (COUN 675).
2. Academic readiness to continue clinical coursework, as evaluated by Program faculty through review of Practicum knowledge/awareness/skills, student retention guidelines, the professional fitness evaluation, and compliance with the School of Counseling statement of expectations.

**The sequence below outlines steps taken during the Internship registration process, and who is responsible for certain steps in the sequence.**

**In order to be approved for Internship all students must follow the steps described below in the order. Failure to follow these steps in order may jeopardize Internship registration.**

**Note: Although not preferable in certain circumstances with pre-approval Internship may occur at more than one site. If this is the case the following steps should be followed, and the forms below must be completed, for each Internship site.**

Consultation with the Clinical Coordinator is recommended if questions/concerns arise.

## **Registration Procedures**

### **1. Obtain Internship site list**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = 2-4 weeks before Practicum semester begins, once approval of Practicum is obtained]**

Obtain Internship site list from the Program/Clinical Coordinator. Next, consider potential sites (3-4 recommended) as Internship placements.

Internship sites not on the site list may be considered for placement. If an Internship site of interest is not on the site list, the site must be pre-approved by the Clinical Coordinator before proceeding to the next step.

**Note: Clinical Mental Health Counseling students may not be placed at private practices during Internship. Internship must take place at a mental health agency.**

### **2. Seek Internship Site(s)**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = No later than the beginning of Practicum semester]**

Contact sites to seek out Internship placements for the following semester.

Treat the Internship search similarly to a professional job search. Review websites and other materials for information about the agency and its services before contacting potential sites.

Have the following information ready to present to site hosts/supervisors when discussing Internship opportunities:

- a. Your name
- b. Your phone and email address
- c. Your resume (including courses completed thus far)
- d. Your Program of study, and both the Clinical Coordinator's and Internship Instructor's names and contact information (should questions arise)
- e. Your part-time (20-25 hours/week) Internship work hours available
- f. Dates when Internship will begin/end

- g. Knowledge about the agency through web-based and other materials
- h. Specific client populations you wish to work with, specific skills you wish to learn, professional strengths, and areas for growth

**Make certain to discuss all of the following with the potential site host/supervisor before determining if the site is an appropriate placement, all of which are prerequisites for an appropriate Internship site:**

- i. **Student must receive an adequate number and type of clientele throughout the Internship experience** - The majority of direct service hours must include the diagnosis and treatment of mental and emotional disorders per Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board guidelines through both individual and group counseling.
- ii. **Ensure that individual and group counseling skills are part of Internship.**
- iii. **Student must be supervised (individually or triadic) weekly for an average of 1 hour/week by an appropriately licensed counselor** – the primary site host/supervisor of record with the School and Board must be a **Professional Clinical Counselor with Supervising Counselor credentials (LPCC-S)** who meets State of Ohio Clinical Trainee (CT) licensure requirements (unless other arrangements have been preapproved by the Program/Clinical Coordinator).

It is strongly recommended that, before proceeding to the next step, you verify that the site host/supervisor has an active LPCC-S. Go to <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/for-the-public/resources-for-the-public/search-for-a-licensed-professional>, enter the professional's name and other info, and verify licensure status online.

Although additional supervision may be received by other licensed professionals, licensed social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, and marriage/family therapists do not qualify as primary site hosts/supervisors of record for CTs seeking the Professional Counselor license.

- iv. **Student must be provided by the site with office space and resources (phone, supplies, etc.) needed for successful completion of clinical work.**
- v. **Student must be provided with the flexibility to audio and/or videotape interactions with clients for use in supervision, obtain live observation from site host(s), or co-counseling with supervisors.**
- vi. **Student must be provided with opportunities to learn the entire scope of clinical work** – should be provided with opportunities to learn chart documentation, attend staff meetings, attend agency-related trainings, consult with colleagues, and learn organizational/policy/business-related aspects of agency work.

vii. **Site host/supervisor must be willing to participate in the following during the Internship experience (in addition to supervision-related activities):**

1. Memorandum of Agreement (completed before Internship begins) – this form outlines the roles/responsibilities of the student, site host/supervisor, and course Instructor, must be signed by the student, site host/supervisor, and Instructor, and must be provided to the course instructor.

**Make certain to show the Memorandum of Agreement to the site host/supervisor during the interview process so the site host/supervisor can determine if the site host/supervisor is willing to complete the form (per step #8 below).**

2. Student Evaluation (end of Internship) – this rating form provides an evaluation of student's knowledge/skills throughout the Internship, and must be provided to the course instructor. Form will be provided during Internship semester.
3. Contact with the course Instructor when questions/issues arise (throughout the Internship).

viii. **Internship placement is dependent on completion of Practicum** – Internship cannot begin until Practicum has been passed and clinical readiness for Internship has been determined. Students/supervisors should know whether Internship has been approved toward the middle of Practicum semester (see steps #4-5 below).

**3. Secure site/supervisor**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = By first 1/3 of Practicum semester or as soon as possible]**

Attempt to have an Internship site/supervisor secured which complies with #2. i – vii above. Because Internship placements are increasingly competitive, students are strongly encouraged to begin the Internship selection/placement process early. It is recommended that students begin seeking Internship placements no later than the beginning of Practicum, and attempt to have the placement secured by the first 1/3 of Practicum semester.

**4. Submit Completed Internship Site Information/Registration Form To Clinical Coordinator**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = By middle 1/3 of Practicum semester or as soon as possible]**

Once an Internship site/supervisor are secured, complete the Internship Site Information/Registration Form and submit to the Clinical Coordinator for approval. You will then receive confirmation with next steps.

**5. Apply to the Board for Clinical Trainee (CT) status once registered for COUN 685 Internship**

[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = By last 1/3 of Practicum semester]

Only **after receiving site/supervisor approval from Clinical Coordinator** and being enrolled in COUN 685 Internship, apply to the Ohio Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board for Clinical Trainee (CT) status.

**Students must obtain CT status prior to beginning Internship unless a waiver of this requirement has been preapproved by the Clinical Coordinator prior to the start of Internship under special circumstances.** For steps to complete CT status visit <https://cswmft.ohio.gov/get-licensed/counselors/CT-license-instructions>.

Note: a site and supervisor (holding an active PCC-S license) must be secured before applying for CT status is possible because the CT application essentially asks the Board to approve a specific site/supervisor for a specific Internship.

Because the CT application process may take several weeks to complete (including official State forms and a criminal records check), students are encouraged to begin the CT application process toward the last 1/3 of Practicum.

**6. Internship Course Registration**

[Who is responsible = Clinical Coordinator; When this step is completed = Soon after course registration opens for the following semester]

The Clinical Coordinator will register all interns once a site/supervisor has been approved. Please do not complete the School of Counseling's online registration help form or contact the administrative assistant to register.

**7. Verify that professional liability insurance coverage received for Practicum will extend until completion of Internship**

[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = Last 1/3 of Practicum semester]

Maintaining active professional liability insurance is a requirement for all clinical work. Please renew insurance coverage as needed to make certain coverage will not expire before the end of Internship.

Insurance coverage is free for student members of the American Counseling Association and Ohio Counseling Association.

Insurance can also be obtained through other mental health organizations. Students are strongly encouraged to begin this process early.

**8. Complete the Memorandum of Agreement form**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = Before Internship semester begins]**

Meet with site host/supervisor and complete Memorandum of Agreement.

This form must be signed by both the student and site host/supervisor. The form should be turned in to the Internship course instructor during the first class meeting.

**9. Begin Internship (i.e., attend first Internship class)**

**[Who is responsible = Student; When to complete this step = The first week that Internship semester begins]**

Meet during regularly scheduled class time (i.e., group supervision), and discuss Internship process/requirements with Instructor; begin working at Internship site, meet with site host/supervisor and schedule individual supervision sessions and other meetings as required.

**Note: Only students fully admitted to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program may complete a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship. Non-degree students shall not be approved for a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Internship.**

## Appendix

### Tips for Program Success

These tips are designed to help you successfully navigate through the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. Please read them carefully:

1. **Receive and thoroughly review your Clinical Mental Health Counseling Student Handbook during your first semester in the program.**
2. **Throughout your program, please contact your Faculty Advisor for academic and professional consultation. Please contact the Program Coordinator regarding program-related questions/concerns/resources (e.g., policies, student handbook, course, graduation). Please contact the Clinical Coordinator for any clinical questions/concerns/resources (e.g., Practicum, Internship, licensure).**
3. **Throughout your program, maintain an awareness of courses that carry prerequisites and plan your curriculum carefully.** Program courses that carry prerequisites include:

**Prerequisites:** COUN 600, 601, 635, 643, 645, 646, 647, 648, 651, 653, 662, 666, 674, 714

4. **Register for classes as soon as your priority registration/enrollment appointment is open (classes fill up early).**
5. **Review and follow the Program's student evaluation and retention guidelines throughout the Program to ensure successful completion of the degree.**
6. **For part-time students, remember that the Graduate School allows a maximum of 6 years to complete a master's degree.** This six-year time limit begins the semester a student is officially admitted into the program.
7. **Plan to take the master's comprehensive examination during the semester you are enrolled in Practicum** (see Student Handbook for courses included on the exam and study resources).
8. **Because Internship placements are increasingly competitive, Practicum students are strongly encouraged to begin the Internship selection/placement process early.** It is recommended that students begin seeking Internship placements no later than the beginning of Practicum. An Internship site list is available from the Clinical Coordinator.
9. **Before beginning Practicum, students must register with the State Board as a Clinical Trainee (CT).** Because this process may take several weeks to complete and includes a criminal records check, students are encouraged to begin this process toward the last 1/2 of Practicum.
10. **During the beginning of the semester enrolled in Internship, submit an online graduation application.**
11. **Make sure to check graduation-related deadlines the semester before you will graduate.**
12. **Know and follow the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board Laws and Rules, and the University of Akron Code of Conduct.**
13. **If you have concerns during the Program, review the Student Grievance Procedures outlined in the Student Handbook so a resolution can be reached as efficiently and effectively as possible.**