

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**<sup>®</sup>

Department of Counseling,  
Educational Psychology and Research

**COUNSELING PROGRAM  
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **FACULTY LISTING**

### Core Counseling Program Faculty and Concentration Areas

Dr. Steve West, Department Chair, Professor

Dr. Michelle Welch Brasfield, Coordinator of School Counseling, Assistant Professor

Dr. Pamela Cogdal, Director of Counseling Programs / Practicum & Internship, Associate Professor

Dr. Eraina Schauss, Coordinator of Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Assistant Professor

Dr. Steve Zanskas, Coordinator of Rehabilitation Counseling, Associate Professor

Dr. Jennifer Drabowicz, Clinical Mental Health, Visiting Assistant Professor

Dr. Leigh Holman, Clinical Mental Health, Assistant Professor

Dr. Daniel Lustig, Rehabilitation Counseling, Professor

Dr. Patrick Murphy, Clinical Mental Health, Assistant Professor

Dr. Melanie Burgess, School Counseling, Assistant Professor

Dr. Chi Li, Clinical Mental Health, Assistant Professor

Five mission statements provide structure and purpose to the Counseling program at the University of Memphis. First, the Mission Statement of the University provides a framework for focusing on engaged scholarship, learner centered programs, and responsible stewardship. Second, the College of Education specifies the preparation of candidates to serve a diverse community. Third, the mission of the American Counseling Association (ACA) defines Professional Counseling and identifies the role of the Professional Counselor in various settings. Fourth, the mission statement of the counseling program connects the preceding mission statements to the art and science of educating Professional Counselors. Finally, each counseling concentration has developed a specific mission statement to further develop the precepts outlined by the counseling department mission statement. From these documents, the department faculty members have identified eight over-arching program objectives for student learning outcomes.

## **Mission**

The University of Memphis Counseling program is dedicated to:

- Providing a learner-centered environment for students to engage in experiential learning activities while also fostering the students' development of self-care and self-reflexive practices that will support their continued success as counselors beyond graduate school.
- Fostering multicultural competence and social justice through increasing self-awareness and respect for human dignity and diversity.
- Training ethical and competent counselors with a repertoire of skills grounded in evidence-based practice to engage in with the diverse communities in which they live.
- Assisting emerging counselors in developing a professional counselor identity that values a developmental, strengths-based, wellness approach to helping clients enhance their quality of life.

## **Objectives**

1. Students will develop a professional counselor identity consistent with respective credentialing for specialty area (e.g. licensure, certification) and demonstrate professional and ethical behavior consistent with professional codes of ethics in their interaction with fellow student/colleagues, faculty, and clients that values a developmental, strengths-based, wellness approach to helping clients enhance their quality of life.
2. Students will develop cultural knowledge, self-awareness, skills, and strategies for counseling and advocacy within a diverse community
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of theory and practice as they relate to diverse developmental experiences across the lifespan and in diverse contexts and settings.
4. Students will describe and apply a variety of career counseling theories, models, assessment, and techniques and how they apply to diverse populations in a global community.
5. Students will demonstrate an ability to create an environment conducive to developing counseling relationships consistent with client goals and evidence based skills in assessment, counseling, case conceptualization, treatment planning, and documentation.

6. The students will understand principles of group dynamics, including group processing components, developmental stage theories, group members' roles and behaviors, and therapeutic factors of group work that include group leadership or facilitation styles and approaches and characteristics of various types of groups.
7. The students will demonstrate ethically and culturally competent test and non-test assessment selection, administration, scoring, and interpretation skills related to academic/educational, career, personal, and social development, including risk assessment in a variety of settings.
8. The students will demonstrate the ability to identify, critically evaluate, and apply quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research to inform and evaluate counseling practice.

## **University of Memphis Strategic Plan: Defining Our Future**

### Vision

The University of Memphis will be recognized as one of America's great metropolitan research universities, noted for its comprehensive, innovative academic programs and for capitalizing on its urban setting and region to address the challenges of our global society.

### Mission

The University of Memphis is a learner-centered metropolitan research university providing high quality educational experiences while pursuing new knowledge through research, artistic expression, and interdisciplinary and engaged scholarship.

### Values

The University of Memphis, as an engaged learning community, celebrates:

The pursuit of excellence in teaching and research as the highest measures of successful achievement.

- Interdisciplinary collaboration, artistic expression, and research as vehicles for leveraging our resources, solving problems, and multiplying our accomplishments.
- The transfer and dissemination of knowledge with community stakeholders for the intellectual, economic, and social advancement of our community.
- Innovation and creativity in everything we do.
- Respect for diversity and individual worth.
- Integrity and transparency in all our actions.
- Responsible stewardship and conservation of resources.
- Stewardship of wisdom, knowledge, and information created by our predecessors.
- Leadership and involvement in the economic, social, and professional growth of Memphis, the state of Tennessee, and the nation.

### College of Education Mission

The mission of the College of Education is to provide high-quality education for undergraduate and graduate students, to conduct meaningful research designed to illuminate and solve problems, and to use our expertise to serve our community.

## College of Education Vision

The vision of the College of Education is to be an innovative national leader in preparing effective urban, suburban and rural professionals

### **ACA Mission**

The mission of the American Counseling Association is to enhance the quality of life in society by promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, and using the profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity. - See more at: <http://www.counseling.org/about-us/about-aca/our-mission#sthash.gCX7ZCZ4.dpuf>

### *ACA Code of Ethics* Preamble

The American Counseling Association (ACA) is an educational, scientific, and professional organization whose members work in a variety of settings and serve in multiple capacities. Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.

Professional values are an important way of living out an ethical commitment. The following are core professional values of the counseling profession:

1. enhancing human development throughout the life span;
2. honoring diversity and embracing a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of people within their social and cultural contexts;
3. promoting social justice;
4. safeguarding the integrity of the counselor–client relationship; and
5. practicing in a competent and ethical manner.

These professional values provide a conceptual basis for the ethical principles enumerated below. These principles are the foundation for ethical behavior and decision making. The fundamental principles of professional ethical behavior are

- *autonomy*, or fostering the right to control the direction of one’s life;
- *nonmaleficence*, or avoiding actions that cause harm;
- *beneficence*, or working for the good of the individual and society by promoting mental health and well-being;
- *justice*, or treating individuals equitably and fostering fairness and equality;
- *fidelity*, or honoring commitments and keeping promises, including fulfilling one’s responsibilities of trust in professional relationships; and
- *veracity*, or dealing truthfully with individuals with whom counselors come into professional contact.

## **THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

### Statement on Ethical Conduct

Each student is expected to be knowledgeable of the current American Counseling Association ethical standards for the counseling profession, in general, and the particular subspecialty of her/his program emphasis (e.g., American Mental Health Counselors Association, American Rehabilitation Counseling

Association, American School Counselor Association, American College Counseling Association, and the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification). Affirmed with this knowledge, each student is expected to behave in an ethical manner and support ethical practices of fellow students and faculty.

### Support of Diversity

The University of Memphis counseling programs capitalize on the institutions urban setting to address the mental health and developmental challenges of our region and society through respect for diversity, individual worth, and pluralistic opportunities for well-being during the training experience.

The Counseling program aspires to create a safe and diversity-sensitive learning environment that respects the rights, dignity, and welfare of students, faculty, and staff. Diversity means the fair representation of all groups of individuals, the inclusion of multicultural perspectives and voices, and appreciation of different cultural and socioeconomic group practices. We aspire to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Departmental courses are formulated and taught in a manner that provides opportunities for all students to discuss issues of diversity including, but not limited to, age, ethnicity, gender, disability, and sexual orientation.

### Harassment and Discrimination

It is against University policy and is also illegal to harass and or discriminate against any member of the University community on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disabling condition, and/or veteran status. Additional information is available in the graduate catalog and the respective syllabi for each semester's courses. More specific information regarding university policies can be found at: <http://umwa.memphis.edu/umpolicies/index.php>

## **COUNSELING PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

### Course of Study

The Counseling Program offers the Master of Science degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling, Rehabilitation Counseling, and School Counseling. Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling are sixty (60) semester hour programs. The Rehabilitation Counseling and School Counseling degree programs are a minimum of forty-eight (48) semester hours in length. Each degree program includes a core of studies in professional development, human growth and development, counseling theory, counseling techniques, group leadership and facilitation, assessment skills, lifestyle and career development, research, and supervised clinical experiences, with additional specialty courses and electives.

The program also offers the Doctor of Education in Counseling degree. This degree is a minimum of 60 hours. Any applicant to the doctoral counseling program must have a Master's degree from a CACREP/CORE accredited program or the equivalent. The doctoral program includes advanced studies in individual and group counseling theory and techniques, counselor supervision, consultation, legal and ethical issues, statistics and research methodology. It also requires additional supervised practice as an advanced counseling professional.

### Full-time or Part-time Study

The required and elective courses in the program, department, college, and university are offered in various time frames to accommodate the varied schedules of our full- and part-time students. Classes are typically three hours long and meet once weekly during fall and spring semesters. The semesters are typically about

15 weeks long. Full-time students typically enroll for 9-12 hours per semester, whereas part-time students enroll for 3-6 hours per semester. Whether you attend school full or part-time, you should be thoughtful regarding the timing and sequencing of courses by ensuring you take all pre-requisite courses prior to the semester you enroll in practicum.

## **PROGRAM SEQUENCE**

### Advising Procedures

You have been assigned to an advisor whose interests and expertise are relevant to your counseling concentration (clinical mental health, rehabilitation, or school). You are expected to develop a working "Program Plan", including a general plan for the sequence of completion of all required courses and those selected specialty courses and/or electives most appropriate to your career goals. This program plan should be developed during your first term of graduate study, approved by your advisor and the Director of Counseling Programs, and turned into BH 100 to be placed in your student file.

You are responsible for making regular and timely advising appointments. In order to be cleared to register you must return a completed and signed advising form to BH 100. If your university issued U Number and the course information including CRN is not listed on the form your form will not be processed. The advising worksheet can be found on the University website: <http://www.memphis.edu/registrar/pdf-docs/forms/advising.pdf>

### Registration/Priority Registration

Given the university's registration schedule and procedures, you should plan on using your "student" tab on your "MyMemphis" page to register each semester. Each semester the university posts a "Schedule of Classes" which indicates dates and deadlines for registration. Again, you should find this information through your student tab on "MyMemphis" prior to meeting with an advisor.

Practica, internships and special problems are "restricted" to majors only who have fulfilled the prerequisites for these courses. These classes also require additional paper work, namely an application to be filed with the Practicum/Internship Coordinator a semester in advance of the term in which you plan to enroll in the practicum or internship.

The special problems course requires a plan of action defining the problem area and your plan for analysis or research with the signature of the faculty who will supervise your study of the problem.

### Program Approval

Your "Program Plan" mentioned above must be approved in writing by you, your advisor, and the Director of Counseling Programs. The Program Plan form has designated spaces for the three signatures. This serves as a form of contract between you and the Counseling program. Program Plan forms for each concentration are available at <http://www.memphis.edu/cepr/>

### Practicum/Internships

Upon completion of core courses in the area of one's concentration and prior to the semester the student plans to do a practicum/internship (PI) experience, students will complete a PI application form. These forms also require approval signatures from the student's advisor. The practicum and internship application

deadlines are the third Friday in September and the third Friday in February. Students must be timely and responsible for checking their emails from the Coordinator of Practicum/Internship. The deadlines and all necessary paperwork are also posted under the fieldwork forms link at [http://www.memphis.edu/cepr/counseling/prac\\_intern.php](http://www.memphis.edu/cepr/counseling/prac_intern.php)

### Course Completion Time Limits

You have eight years to complete your Master of Science program. After eight years, you have the option of retaining those courses older than eight years through the process of Course Validation (see the University Graduate Catalog for further information). If you are a doctoral student, you have ten years in which to complete all requirements for the degree. A similar course validation process is available to doctoral students.

### Admission to Candidacy and Filing for Graduation

In the semester of study in which you intend to complete your degree and graduate, you should complete the "Masters Degree Candidacy" form, and an "Intent to Graduate" card. Doctoral candidates must also file a "Doctoral Degree Candidacy" and "Intent to Graduate" card. These forms can be found at: [http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/resources/forms\\_index.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/resources/forms_index.php). The deadline dates for filing the appropriate forms are published at: <http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/calendar.php>

### Master's Comprehensive Exam

A comprehensive examination is required of each counseling student. You are eligible to take this examination when you have successfully completed all of the core requirements in your program. You must file an application to take the comprehensive examination. This application is available in the CEPR office. The deadline for fall is September 15 and spring is February 15. The comprehensive exam is the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) published by the Center for Credentialing & Education, affiliate of the National Board for Certified Counselors. Exam questions cover core content of the master's program, including human growth and development, socio-cultural foundations, counseling theory, the helping relationship, group dynamics and counseling, lifestyle and career development, individual appraisal, counseling practice, research and evaluation, and professional issues. The examination is typically given just past mid-term. Each student must pass this examination in order to graduate.

### Professional Counselor Portfolio

Master of Science students are required to purchase a LiveText membership at the beginning of their program and maintain their accounts for the duration of their program. Each student will upload required artifacts (e.g., papers, assessments, evaluations) to his or her LiveText account for each core course.

### Doctoral Comprehensive Examination

For doctoral students, your preparation for comprehensive examinations should start with your advisor. In consultation with your advisor, you will develop a plan for preparation, designed to facilitate your performance on the written and oral examinations. Currently, the doctoral comprehensive exam can only be taken during the spring semester. The written portion is comprised of the following 12 hours: 3 hours of case study; 1 hour of consultation; 1 hour of supervision; 1.5 hours of theories; 1.5 hours of advanced group counseling; 2 hours of research; and 2 hours of material from your specialty. The oral exam occurs after the written portion and is 1 hour in length.

### Graduation

Graduates of the program must successfully complete all required courses with an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and the comprehensive examination. Presently, graduation ceremonies are held right after the completion of each term, i.e., December following the fall term, May following the spring term, and August following the summer term. Thus, you should plan on participating in the graduation exercises for the term in which you graduate.

## **GENERAL PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### Transfer of Credits

A maximum of 15 semester credit hours can be transferred. Those hours must have been earned in an accredited graduate program and not be over six years old at the time of the student's completion of her/his master's degree. Their inclusion in the student's master's degree is subject to the approval of the student's advisor and the Director of Counseling Programs. This approval should occur at the time of approval of the student's "Program Plan". Additional information regarding the transfer of graduate credits can be found at: [http://www.memphis.edu/gradcatalog/acad\\_reg/transfer.php](http://www.memphis.edu/gradcatalog/acad_reg/transfer.php)

### Review and Retention Policy

The student's advisor is the initial contact related to behavioral or academic retention issues. At the end of each semester, counseling faculty meet in order to discuss students who fail to meet expectations related to the CORIS domains (see pages 16-17 of this handbook). Copies of behavioral incident and academic retention (course grades of C+ or lower) reports are distributed and reviewed during these meetings. There are two basic types of retention, behavioral and academic.

#### 1. Behavioral Retention

Students are expected to conform to conduct standards specified in The University of Memphis Code of Student Conduct and the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics. Faculty members document behaviors that do not conform to these standards on an incident report. An incident report form includes: (a) student name, (b) date and time of incident, (c) specific behaviors demonstrated, (d) witnesses, (e) persons involved, (f) signature, and (g) name of instructor completing report.

The student is mailed the (a) incident report and (b) a letter from the Retention Coordinator informing the student they may make a written response to the Retention Coordinator and recommending consultation with their advisor or other faculty member. If the student meets with their advisor, the advisor writes a summary of the meeting. A copy of the incident report, letter, and advisory meeting summary are filed with Retention Coordinator (Director of Counseling Programs).

A retention committee meeting may be called by the Retention Coordinator. The student is invited to appear before the committee in order: 1) to insure an accurate, open, and just discussion of the particulars surrounding the situation, and 2) to insure that the student's best interests are considered. Retention appeals are conducted according to the procedures specified in the Graduate Catalog of The University of Memphis.

#### 2. Academic Retention

If a student receives a C+ or lower course grade, a letter is mailed to the student informing them that they

will need to retake the course in order to receive degree credit and requiring them to discuss their academic progress with their advisor. At the meeting with the student's advisor, the advisor may recommend remedial academic work. The student may retake the course once. A student may retake a maximum of two required courses.

If the student is on academic probation, an email is sent to the student's University of Memphis account requiring them to discuss their academic progress with their advisor. At the meeting the advisor may require the student to engage in particular remedial academic work. If a passing grade in a required course is not received (i.e. grade of B- or better) the second time the course is taken, the student will be unable to complete the requirements for a Master of Science degree (see Graduate Catalog of The University of Memphis). At that time, a letter is mailed informing the student they will be unable to complete the requirements for a Master of Science degree. The student's advisor and the Retention Coordinator receive a copy of the letter. Once the student meets with their advisor, their advisor writes a summary of the discussion. The Retention Coordinator receives a copy of the summary report. Retention Coordinator monitors (a) the academic progress of those students receiving a C+ or lower course grade and the number of times the student retakes the same course and (b) the academic progress of students on probation. Retention appeals are conducted according to the procedures specified in the Graduate Catalog of The University of Memphis.

#### Grade Appeals Procedures

The University has established clear and detailed guidelines for those occasions when a student might want to appeal a grade. The current Graduate Catalog notes:

This appeal procedure provides any graduate student at The University of Memphis with a clearly defined avenue for appealing the assignment of a course grade that the student believes was based on prejudice, discrimination, arbitrary or capricious action, or some other reason not related to academic performance. **In all cases the complaining student shall have the burden of proof with respect to the allegations in the complaint and in the request for a hearing.**

The steps and deadlines for a grade appeal can be found online at: <http://www.memphis.edu/gradcatalog/>

Click on Academic Regulations for more information about Grade Appeals.

#### Endorsements

The program's policy is as follows:

Endorsement of students and graduates for professional credentials and/or employment is given by program faculty only on the basis of completion of all program requirements, including course work and practicum and internship experiences, leading to the qualification for the endorsement sought.

Thus, requests for endorsement must be initiated by the program student or graduate, and be directed to individual program faculty members. Prior to making any endorsement, a faculty member will review the student's file to ascertain that the endorsement should be issued or is appropriate.

## **COURSES OF STUDY**

Each concentration and degree has a structured program of study, consisting of core courses, required College of Education courses, and selected specialization courses. The following courses of study are available on the main department website <http://www.memphis.edu/cepr> and specified in summary form in the current Graduate Catalog:

- A. MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- B. MS in School Counseling
- C. MS in Rehabilitation Counseling
- D. MS in Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling
- E. Ed.D. In Counseling
- F. Certificate in College & Career Counseling
- G. Certificate in School Counseling
- H. Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### New Student Orientation

The counseling program conducts new student orientation sessions in August and January. The orientation sessions are generally 1-2 hours in length and are intended to provide a general introduction to the program, including major concentrations, program progression, professional associations, etc., and faculty associated with those concentrations. Each new student is required to attend this session.

### Assistantships/Financial Aid Opportunities

The counseling program offers a limited number of assistantships to doctoral level students. In addition, there are a number of other financial aid possibilities available to both masters and doctoral level students, including assistantships in the residence halls, various areas of student affairs, and selected offices in the College of Education and university. The university and college also offer a limited number of fellowships and scholarships for full and part-time students. Information about these opportunities should be obtained from the Financial Aid office.

### Attendance Policy

Each student is responsible for being informed regarding the attendance policy in each course in which he/she enrolls. Course attendance policies will be outlined in course syllabi. Since courses vary in their manner of conduct, there is no program-wide policy on class attendance. Attendance is required in individual and group supervision components of practicum and internship.

### Professional Organizations Membership and Liability Insurance

There are number of local, state, regional, and national professional counseling associations to which you will be encouraged to join and become actively involved. Typically, those organizations will include the West Tennessee Counseling Association, Tennessee Counseling Association, the American Counseling Association, the National Rehabilitation Association, the American School Counselor Association, and the

National Rehabilitation Counseling Association. Student memberships in professional organizations are typically half the cost for a regular professional counselor. Memberships in professional organizations will generally yield you professional journals, newsletters, very affordable liability insurance, reduced conference rates, periodic dinner meetings, and many networking opportunities. More detailed information is available in the Foundations of Counseling course, on the Departmental bulletin board, and from your advisor.

#### Licensure and/or Certification

Graduates of the program are eligible for licensure and/or certification dependent upon the completion of course work, clinical experience, and comprehensive examinations. School counselors can obtain certification as counselors from the State Department of Education. All counseling graduates are also eligible for State licensure and National credentialing by virtue of completing 60 semester hours in counseling services. In the State of Tennessee, applicants are also required to complete two years of supervised post-master's experience as a practicing counselor. Licensing requirements vary by state. Students interested in relocating are encouraged to research the requirements for licensure in other states

#### University/Departmental Resources

*Computers.* The Department, College and University have many computers available for student use. Both Microsoft compatible and Macintosh computers are easily accessible in several locations on campus. Computer labs are available to our students in every academic building on campus. All you will need is a blank saving device such as a jump drive. The software will be on the hard drives of the computers. Your semester fees entitle you to use the computers.

*Writing Centers.* This center is located in the McWherter Library and is designed to meet the writing assistance needs of both undergraduate and graduate students who need to improve their writing skills. They are not used to write your papers; rather, they can help you improve what you have already written, including the organization, style, and grammar. There are no charges for their services. Their website is: <http://www.memphis.edu/cwc/>. In addition, students may wish to use the English Learning Center located in Patterson 225. Their website is: <http://www.memphis.edu/esp/centers.php>

*Student Development Services.* Many student services are located in Wilder Tower. A list of services can be found here: <http://www.memphis.edu/studentdev/services.php>.

*The Counseling Center.* The Counseling Center provides free counseling, wellness, and psychiatric services for University of Memphis students. Their website is: <http://www.memphis.edu/counseling/> and they are located in 214 Wilder Tower. Their phone number is 901.678.2068.

*Career Services.* You should keep your advisor apprised of your desires regarding future employment in the field of counseling. You are also able to utilize career and employment assistance at Career Services located in 400 Wilder Tower. The Career Services website is: <http://www.memphis.edu/careerservices/>

*Departmental Communications.* General information will be shared via email, therefore students are expected to check their University of Memphis email on a regular basis. These emails will include information about job openings, internship/practica opportunities, volunteer counseling opportunities,

research opportunities, financial aid possibilities, general departmental announcements, news items regarding our faculty, students, and alumni, Graduate Student Association news, announcements of calls for programs for professional conferences and registration material for such conferences, continuing education opportunities such as seminars and workshops, and applications for professional association membership. Information may also be posted on department bulletin boards located in the office suite areas, in and outside of classrooms regularly used by our students.

*Student Disability Services.* The Office of Disability Resources for Students is located in 110 Wilder Tower. This office provides an array of services for students with varied disabilities to facilitate the academic progress of each student served. This office can assist in assessment and the development of a plan of appropriate services. Advance notification should be made by the student to ensure timeliness of services. Their website is: <http://www.memphis.edu/drs/>

*Chi Sigma Iota.* Kappa Zeta is the local chapter of the international professional honor society Chi Sigma Iota. Our chapter is a student-run and led organization which is designed to foster the professional identity of counselors-in-training, in addition to practicing counselors.

*Professional Development Workshops.* You are encouraged to participate in the many professional development opportunities that are available each semester. The department is approved to offer continuing education credit by professional counseling organizations, including the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC).

*Potential Job Settings.* Our graduates find employment in a wide array of settings including: schools (including preschool through colleges and universities), community mental health centers, alcohol and drug treatment centers, churches, governmental agencies (both state and federal), hospitals (public and private), private counseling practices, industries, and various residential facilities (serving youth and adults).

### Student Wellbeing and Evaluation

Working in the Counseling profession requires a high level of emotional well-being. In order to be an effective clinician, one must have an understanding of, and be willing to examine and explore their own personal values, biases, characteristics, motivations, and relationships with others. We expect our students to be able to explore and extend their personal philosophies and become multiculturally sensitive to their own points of view and interactions with others. This exploration takes time and is a developmental process. Throughout a student's course of studies, various experiences and opportunities are provided for students to maximize their self-awareness and self-understanding.

The Counseling faculty believes that self-understanding contributes to personal competence and professional development as well as to the capacity for good judgment in a counseling setting. Many students find the self-exploration component of counselor development to be difficult, however, in order to be an effective clinician, counselors need to be mindful of their own values and biases, and receptive to evaluation and continual feedback for growth. Our faculty members believe that personal and professional competence and development are enhanced when cooperative and close working relationships exist among all of our students, between students and their instructors, among our faculty, and between our program and our outside community contacts and organizational relationships. A strong working alliance must exist between a student and his or her advisor to facilitate professional growth and the selection of a program of studies that provides the optimal preparation to meet a student's long-term vocational goals.

Students are expected to have an awareness and understanding of the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics (<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>) and disclose information indicating impairment or the potential for harm to clients. Based on performance and evaluation, students may be required to repeat coursework, to obtain assistance or remediation, and/or terminate their enrollment in the program. Students also must understand that in order to successfully complete the counseling program at University of Memphis, they will be expected to demonstrate academic competence and counseling skills appropriate for an advanced counseling intern, including conducting appropriate intake interviews, assessments, sessions with clients, practicing in a professional, multiculturally sensitive and ethical manner, establishing appropriate relationships with site supervisors, staff and co workers, and the ability to develop and foster a therapeutic alliance and working relationship with clients to facilitate progress. Failure to attain such competencies and clinical skills may result in students being required to repeat coursework, secure remedial assistance, or be dismissed from the program.

Throughout a student's course of study, faculty members will conduct an ongoing evaluation of the student's psychosocial, emotional, behavioral and cognitive capacity to perform the competencies of a professional counselor. It is important to note that even though the student may perform well in their academic coursework, certain behaviors may be deemed inappropriate, unethical and/or potentially harmful to the student or others and, therefore, unfit for practice of counseling. At the beginning of their program, students are required to sign an **Informed Consent Document** (page 15) to make them aware that they will be continually evaluated in the following competencies and dimensions throughout their degree program. The student informed consent statement is on pages 15-17 of this handbook. Page 18 should be signed by every student at the beginning of their first semester in the Counseling program and given to their advisor.

**University of Memphis**  
**Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research**  
**Student Informed Consent Statement**

The Counseling profession is safeguarded and guided by the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics. As a CACREP accredited program that ascribes to the stringent requirements and rigors of the counseling profession, our faculty has approved this document for the purposes of student informed consent. The following paragraphs outline our expectations for the successful completion of a students' degree program and the appropriate courses of action should students encounter difficulty achieving the required personal, professional, or academic level of development and functioning necessary for the delivery of effective counseling services.

1. In order to successfully complete a Master's degree in Counseling (School, Clinical Rehabilitation, or Clinical Mental Health), I will be expected to demonstrate:
  - a. academic competence and counseling skills appropriate for a counseling intern
  - b. appropriate interviews and sessions with clients
  - c. ethical, multiculturally sensitive, and professional clinical practice
  - d. appropriate relationships with peers, faculty, clients, supervisors, and outside agencies

Failure to attain such skills may result in my being required to repeat coursework, adhere to a remediation plan, or my dismissal from the program.

2. I understand that I must abide by the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics (2014) and manage myself as a student and intern in an ethical manner.
3. I understand that my First Amendment Rights do not allow me the option to discriminate against clients with different values than my own and non-discrimination is required of student and professional counselors.
4. The Graduate Student Handbook Outlines the course sequence, projected course offerings, prerequisites, program requirements, student evaluation, remediation and retention procedures.
5. I understand that my performance in my Master's degree program at the University of Memphis will be evaluated on academic, professional and clinical/experiential skills components. The specific methods of evaluation for each individual course will be covered by the instructor of that course. A Professional Performance Evaluation will be integrated throughout the curriculum. In addition, students will continuously be evaluated throughout their degree program by faculty in the following domains:

***Commitment***

- Investment in the counseling profession and your professional development
- Commitment to: developing counselor identity, advocacy, professional excellence, civic engagement, collaboration, interpersonal competence, and to being an excellent scholar and practitioner.

## *Openness*

- Openness to ideas, learning and change
- Openness to learning to give and receive feedback
- Openness to growth and self-development
- Openness to others

## *Respect* for self and others including:

- Perceives and honors diversity
- Appropriate self-care
- Wellness philosophy

## *Integrity* meaning an attitude or way of being including:

- Personal responsibility, integrity, maturity
- Honesty
- Courage
- Congruence

## *Self-awareness*

- An attitude of self-reflection and self-exploration
- Awareness of one's place in history and culture
- Awareness that leads to an attitude of humility
- An awareness that leads to integrity

\*Gibbons, M. M., & Spurgeon, S. L. (2014, SACES).

6. I understand that the Counseling Program encourages self-growth and requires participation in experientially based courses. Courses requiring self-growth/experiential and professional competence components are integrated throughout the curriculum. Self-disclosure will not be used as a basis for grading, however, should I disclose information indicating impairment or the potential for harm to clients, I may be required to obtain assistance or remediation, and/or terminate my enrollment in the program. Openness to participation and self-exploration in experiential work is required.
7. I am aware that I must complete a Practicum and Internship outside of the department. Students will receive supervision for these experiences by both a University of Memphis supervisor in addition to an agency site supervisor. Full time employment may preclude students from simultaneously working on a full time internship. It is recommended that students working full time complete their internship part time.

8. Proficiency as both a practicum and internship student is expected for the successful completion of the Counseling Degree at the University of Memphis. Regular evaluations of my progress will be provided during Practicum and Internship. If I fail to meet performance standards in these courses or behave in an unprofessional or unethical manner, I may be required to repeat coursework, to obtain assistance or remediation, and/or terminate my enrollment in the program.
9. Licensure:
  - a. I understand that licensure requirements vary by state. I will work with my advisor to determine any special courses needed if I am planning to move outside of Tennessee after graduation.
  - b. I understand that the University of Memphis prepares students interested in school counseling to be school counselors in Tennessee and may need to meet deficiency requirements for other states.
10. I understand that a criminal record may preclude me from serving at an internship site or from attaining licensure based on site or state regulations.

**Informed Consent**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the University of Memphis Graduate Student Handbook and understand the requirements of the Master’s degree in Counseling. I understand the student retention policy and procedures (outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook) which indicate that my psycho-social, emotional and cognitive capacity to perform the competencies of a professional counselor will be continually evaluated by the counseling faculty and that the completion of coursework does not guarantee practice in the profession of counseling. I also understand that some experiential components of the counseling program may cause psychological discomfort and/or may reveal to me patterns or problem areas in my life that may need to be addressed in professional counseling. I have the opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns with a faculty member.

I understand all of the foregoing information and agree to abide by the rules and policies of The University of Memphis Department of Counseling, Educational Psychology and Research.

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature