

# **COUNSELING PROGRAM GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **FACULTY LISTING**

### Core Counseling Program Faculty and Concentration Areas

Dr. Steven West, Rehabilitation Counseling, Professor and Department Chair

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

Dr. Melissa Fickling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Assistant Professor

Dr. Leigh Holman, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, Assistant Professor

Dr. Richard James, EdD Program Director, Professor

Dr. Chloe Lancaster, Coordinator of School Counseling & Admissions, Associate Professor

Dr. Daniel Lustig, Rehabilitation Counseling, Professor

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

Dr. Steve Zanskas, Coordinator of Rehabilitation Counseling, Associate 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 (2014) 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, 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 institution's 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, race, 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 requires additional supervised practice as an advanced counseling professional and the successful completion of a dissertation.

### 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 (up to 15 hours in rare cases), 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. The form must include your university issued U Number and the course information including CRN or it 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 Counseling 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 successful completion (grade of B or better) 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 are 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.

A score is considered passing if it falls within one Standard Deviation of the national mean score for the exit exam administrations for the given semester and year. Each time the test is given, new psychometric data are provided, so the cutoff score may change from one administration to the next; however, the cutoff used to determine whether a student passes/not will remain constant at one Standard Deviation below the national mean for exit exam administrations.

Students who pass will receive an email simply stating they passed. If the student passes the CPCE, the comps coordinator will complete the necessary paperwork and submit that to the counseling coordinator to sign and send to the Dean's office.

Students who did not pass will receive an email with their advisor copied on the email. The email will include an attachment with a detailed analysis of the student's scores on the test as a whole and the individual domain scores in relationship to the corresponding national mean and standard deviation. This will provide the student with information regarding his/her relative strengths and areas for growth that may be the focus of their study plan moving forward.



If the student does not pass, he or she may choose from the following two options: (a) take an Oral Exam within 10 business days of finding out results. The oral exam will focus on any areas they have scored one standard deviation below the mean on the CPCE they failed; or (b) re-take the CPCE the next semester it is offered.

Students who do not pass a second administration will be administered an oral exam which focuses on any areas they have scored one standard deviation below the mean on BOTH administrations of the CPCE they failed.

A more detailed Master's Comprehensive Exam Policy is posted on the Counseling program website: <https://umdrive.memphis.edu/pcogdal/Public/ClinicalFieldWorkForms/>

#### 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. A LiveText membership can be purchased at [www.LiveText.com](http://www.LiveText.com) or in the campus bookstore. For technical assistance, contact LiveText directly, not the U of M Help Desk or IT Department.

#### 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)

### Assessment of Student Progress and Retention Procedures

You are expected to maintain good academic standing while in the program as well as behave in an professional manner. Satisfactory academic progress is demonstrated by maintaining a 3.00 average in all courses. If your GPA falls below 3.00, you are considered by the university to be on academic probation. You may have 2 semesters of consecutive enrollment to raise the GPA above a 3.00 and return to academic "good standing." If you do not increase your GPA to a minimum of 3.00 at the end of that second semester, you will be subject to an automatic retention process or suspension. Under an extraordinary circumstance, the program faculty may recommend that you continue beyond two consecutive semesters on probation. But such recommendation must be approved by the Chair of the College Office of Graduate Programs first and then the Dean of Graduate School at the University. The program faculty will review the performance of your work as a degree-seeking status student to determine whether you should be dismissed from the degree program due to consistent low performance. Counseling core courses must be passed with a B- or better. A grade lower than a B- necessitates re-enrollment in that class.

You are expected to demonstrate behavior consistent with professional expectations of competence and The University of Memphis' academic integrity (<http://libguides.memphis.edu/academicintegrity>) and code of conduct guidelines (<http://www.memphis.edu/studentconduct/pdfs/csrr.pdf>).

The Counseling program faculty evaluates your progress during the Spring semester. Your performance in didactic courses, research work, and professional work as graduate assistants will be evaluated. In addition, student progress is assessed according to CORIS domains. See **Informed Consent** document at end of this handbook.

Underlying all the areas in the form is professionalism. This includes professional behavior and interpersonal competence (e.g., self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation; independence; ethical responsibility; social responsibility; openness to supervision and feedback; and personal responsibility). Information on these areas is based on evaluations by assistantship supervisors, clinical supervisors, and faculty observation.

Following the annual review, you will receive a statement of their progress in the program (making satisfactory progress, needs improvement). Your advisor will be responsible for providing more specifics from the annual review in writing, noting particular strengths and needed areas of development. If concerns are raised, these will be reviewed with you in a scheduled meeting.

In the event that your progress and performance is considered unsatisfactory, you must be notified of what the concerns are and provided with feedback from the faculty members. You and appropriate faculty will then meet to 1) discuss the concerns, 2) give you an opportunity to respond and/or explain the performance, and 3) determine what actions are required to remedy the situation. If your official performance is evaluated as less than satisfactory and you do not agree with the evaluation, you will be asked to write a response within 14 days following the notification addressing your performance. This feedback will be circulated among the Counseling program faculty and included with the evaluation in the student's file.

Evaluative statements regarding your performance and progress are disseminated no further than those with official responsibility for evaluations and related actions. Additional information on retention and evaluation is included in the Policy on the Retention and Remediation of Students in next section.

### Policy on the Retention and Remediation of Students

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the competencies and professional behavior expected of each student and the procedures for identifying and addressing issues of concern that may occur during the course of their education.

As described in the this Handbook, the overarching goal of the Counseling Graduate program is to prepare counselors and counselor educators to assume roles as professionals both inside and outside of academia. Competence is evaluated comprehensively. In addition to performance in coursework, scholarship, comprehensive examinations, and related program requirements, other aspects of professional development (e.g., interpersonal, technical, and ethical) will be evaluated. Such comprehensive evaluation is necessary in order for faculty to appraise the entire range of academic performance and professional development of their students.

You are expected to be familiar with the Program objectives and to ensure that your academic and professional development plans are consistent with the achievement of these goals. This policy describes the procedures used to monitor progress, to identify deficiencies and to assist the student in remediation where possible, or to dismiss the student from the Program when remediation is not possible.

*Identification and Verification of Issues Requiring Remediation or Dismissal.* We want you to do your best and are here to help you do your best in the program. However, sometimes issues of concern (e.g., academic, social, emotional), for whatever reason, arise. Formal evaluation of your progress takes place annually during the student review process described in the "Assessment of Student Competence" section above. However, a faculty member, supervisor, or fellow student can identify possible issues of concern at any point in your academic career. The following sections describe the procedures for informal identification of issues and the review process once a potential issue is identified.

*Informal Identification of Issues of Concern.* In addition to issues identified during the annual Review, any faculty member, supervisor, or student may raise a concern at any time. Students who have a concern about a fellow student should first discuss the issue with that student, if appropriate. If that approach is not appropriate or does not yield the desired result, they should discuss it with their own advisor, who will then raise the issue with the other Program faculty. Faculty understand that students might be concerned about talking about a fellow classmate to faculty, but we encourage students to consider their professional responsibilities as well as their collegiality and to seek faculty input when they are concerned about a fellow student's behaviors, attitudes, or characteristics. Advisors and faculty members will protect the confidentiality of the student reporting the potential problem, but they may request that the student meet with them to provide additional information. The Program faculty will briefly discuss the potential issue during the meeting in which it is raised, and if necessary, the advisor of the student concerned will gather additional data and will report to the Program faculty. If the concern appears valid, a formal review will take place as described below.

*Review Procedures for Possible Issues.* When an academic, social, and/or emotional issue of concern has been identified, your advisor and/or the Counseling Program Director will meet with you to review the evaluation, and to determine whether an issue actually exists. Depending on the time at which the issue is identified, this discussion can take place in the context of the annual review process. In addition to the original report of the issue, information will be gathered from formal written and/or verbal evaluations and from informal sources, including observations of students outside the classroom (e.g., colloquia and

research groups) of your performance and progress.

After the initial meeting with you, the faculty will meet to determine whether an issue of concern is present. In some instances, you may be required to appear before the entire Counseling program faculty for a retention meeting. Students will be notified of the date and time of the retention meeting via email and/or mail. You must attend any scheduled retention meeting in order to remain in good standing and continued enrollment in the program. Please be advised that the Counseling program faculty can make a decision regarding your program status in your absence.

The faculty understands that in extraordinary unavoidable circumstances (such as a motor vehicle accident, hospitalization, or death of a household family member) you may be unable to attend the retention meeting. In these instances, it is your responsibility to immediately notify your advisor and the Counseling Program Director of the reason for their absence. In the event that you fail to appear for a scheduled meeting you may “show cause” for your absence by submitting written documentation from a physician, hospital, or similar institution indicating why you were physically unable to attend the scheduled meeting. Your advisor must receive the documentation explaining the reason for your unavoidable absence within seven calendar days of the scheduled retention meeting. Counseling program faculty will review the documentation and determine whether the documentation is sufficient to warrant the rescheduling of a retention meeting.

If you are in violation of maintaining performance expectations described in the Counseling Program Student Handbook or the University Graduate Student Handbook, you may be placed on academic probation. You may be immediately dismissed from the program if the violation is exceptionally egregious. You may be placed on remediation following discussion among core faculty during which consensus is reached regarding student performance. If the faculty determines that there is an issue of concern, they will develop a written plan for remediation or a recommendation for dismissal and will schedule a meeting to discuss this plan with you. If you are placed on remediation, the length of the remediation status as well the remediation requirements that must be met before the probationary status ends will be communicated to you both verbally and in written form. After the faculty members have presented their recommendations to you and answered your questions, you must sign the document indicating that the recommendations have been presented and explained. You will be given the opportunity to accept the recommendations, to provide a written rebuttal, and/or to appeal. If you choose to provide a rebuttal, the Program faculty will meet again to consider any new evidence presented by you, and will provide written documentation of their decision following review of the your response. If you wish to appeal the faculty’s decision, he or she may follow the appeal procedures outlined in The University of Memphis Bulletin.

Remediation plans will be developed in consideration of the your unique situation. Possible examples of remediation steps are (a) a modified plan of study that may include additional coursework, projects, and/or supervision, (b) a referral to other professionals (e.g., professional counseling), (c) a recommendation that the student take a leave of absence, or (d) any combination of the above. The plan will document the behaviors that must be performed at the appropriate level in order for the student to move forward in his/her training. If you do not complete the established actions by the specified timeline, you be recommended for dismissal for failure to make satisfactory progress.

#### 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

### **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 the month they begin the program.

### 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, via emails from the Director of Counseling Programs, 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 successful 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. ACA has a useful website for information regarding licensure (<http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/licensure-requirements>) and the NBCC website certification explains certification in greater depth (<http://www.nbcc.org/>).

### 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.

*Psychological Services.* The Psychological Services Center offers psychotherapy and psychological evaluation services to children and adults. The clinic is open to the general public, as well as the University community. Fees are reduced for university students, staff, and faculty. The Center is located in room 126 of the Psychology Building. For appointments or information, contact the Center at 901.678.2147. Their website is: <http://www.memphis.edu/psychology/centers/psc.php>

*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. You may contact Kappa Zeta at [uofmchisigmaiota@gmail.com](mailto:uofmchisigmaiota@gmail.com)



*Integrative Student Rehabilitation Organization (ISRO).* This is a Registered Student Organization (RSO) at The University of Memphis. The organization is a student directed and operated service organization for any graduate student interested in the rehabilitation counseling profession.

*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). Our doctoral graduates typically find employment as professional counselors, supervisors, and counselor educators.

### 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 current 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** 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 located at the end of this handbook. The last page should be signed by every student at the beginning of their first semester in the Counseling program and given to their Foundations instructor. The signed form will then be placed in the student's file.

**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 been given 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