

NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

**MASTERS OF CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH
COUNSELING
MASTERS OF SCHOOL COUNSELING**

Revised: Spring, 2018
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MISSION

Mission of College of Education

The College of Education is dedicated to preparing high quality teachers, educational leaders, school and mental health counselors, school psychologists and human service professionals who effectively meet the diverse needs of Louisiana and the global community. The college is strongly committed to service in area school systems and community agencies. The mission of the College of Education is accomplished by a faculty committed to teaching, community service, professional service and research.

Mission of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MCMH) program has as its mission the professional training of students interested in working in mental health settings. We expect our students to compete successfully within the delivery of professional services as clinicians, advocates, and consultants in the mental health industry of the region and state. The program trains counselors who are culturally competent and sensitive, as well as ethical, to work effectively in a pluralistic society. The faculty designs and delivers academic and clinical experiences to all students in ways that recognize, respect and value the diversity of students' backgrounds, characteristics, beliefs, and abilities. The MCMH program also provides training consistent with requirements for licensure as a "licensed professional counselor" in the state of Louisiana as well as other states.

Mission of School Counseling Program

The Master of Education in School Counseling program has as its mission the preparation of professional school counselors to provide a variety of counseling, consultation and student services to promote the healthy development of all students. Graduate students learn to create safe and successful learning environments through school and community collaboration in order to reach all students through comprehensive school counseling programs. The program emphasizes clinical training and K-12 field experiences while providing the background knowledge necessary for an integrated approach to counseling, collaboration and program development. The program prepares culturally competent and responsive counselors who foster positive change by advocating in the school and larger community to promote access, equity, and success for all students. The faculty designs and delivers academic and clinical experiences to all students in ways that recognize, respect and value the diversity of students' backgrounds, characteristics, beliefs, and abilities. The curriculum is designed for those who hope to seek employment as a Certified School Counselor (K-12) and/or a Licensed Professional Counselor.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MCMH) program has as its purpose the professional training of candidates interested in working in mental health settings. Our students are expected to work and collaborate effectively with professionals from all other disciplines associated in the delivery of mental health services. The program provides training consistent with requirements for licensure as a “Licensed Professional Counselor” in the state of Louisiana and other jurisdictions. More specific objectives of the program with respect to what it will enable its graduates to do upon the completion of training include the following:

- a. To develop and use the skills of counseling in a wide variety of settings and with a wide variety of diverse client populations.
- b. To develop an understanding of research skills and techniques and the ability to apply these skills in solving practical counseling problems.
- c. To conduct the practice of clinical mental health counseling in a manner consistent with the ethical standards of the field.
- d. To provide students with feedback on counseling skills and to facilitate a student’s ability to apply and interpret this information so as to benefit themselves, their clients and those with whom they have interpersonal relationships.

The training program for the Master of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is geared toward teaching the students a developmental model of human growth. The counseling perspective emphasizes health and normalcy. The counseling perspective also stresses a basic respect for diversity in human relationships and individual freedom and dignity.

School Counseling Program

Throughout the curriculum, graduate candidates encounter learning experiences that facilitate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable them to be competent counselors in educational settings that are able to:

- Design, implement and lead a comprehensive developmental counseling program that addresses the academic, career, and personal and social development of all students
- Provide effective counseling, guidance and consultation services in educational settings
- Advocate for all students by implementing individual, group and school-wide interventions
- Coordinate and team with parents, teachers, administrators and other school personnel to facilitate the educational, career, and social development of students
- Develop, articulate and advocate a clearly defined identity as a professional school counselor
- Apply professional counseling ethical standards as well as federal and state law to ethical dilemmas encountered in the school setting

The specific program objectives with respect to what the school counselor will be able to do upon the completion of training include the following:

- a. Develop and apply counseling skills and interventions consistent with current professional research and practice in the field of counseling.
- b. Develop knowledge of human development, counseling theories, and social and cultural contexts and use this knowledge to conceptualize client presentation and select appropriate counseling interventions.
- c. Consult and collaborate with teachers, parents, and other professionals to support academic, career, and personal and social development of all students.
- d. Collaborate with school and community stakeholders to plan and design comprehensive, developmental school counseling programs that are sensitive and responsive to diverse student needs and ecological situations.
- e. Use developmentally appropriate and culturally affirming school counseling services to meet the needs of diverse students.
- f. Demonstrate the ability to conduct the school counseling program within the guidelines provided by the local, state, and national curriculum standards and ethical standards of the profession.
- g. Apply research based counseling and guidance strategies, and evaluate and reflect on the effectiveness of these strategies to improve student academic, career, and personal/social development.
- h. Engage in research-based inquiry, self- assessment and reflective practices to evaluate professional experiences and to develop goals for professional growth.

PROGRAM FACULTY

Dr. Jessica Fanguy Cortez

B.A., Nicholls State University; M.C.Ed., Nicholls State University; Ph.D., University of New Orleans: Prior to becoming a full-time assistant professor at Nicholls in the Fall, 2011, Dr. Jessica Fanguy Cortez worked for the Terrebonne Parish School System for 17 years. From August, 2000 to June, 2011 she worked as a school counselor in a middle school, high school and then junior high school setting. Dr. Cortez is a Licensed Professional Counselor, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a National Certified Counselor and a National Certified School Counselor. She is also a member of the American Counseling Association and the Louisiana Counseling Association. She is currently the Nicholls State University Masters of Clinical Mental Health program coordinator.

Dr. Amanda Elise Johns

B.S. University of Georgia, M.S. Troy University, Ph.D. University of New Orleans: Dr. Johns is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Professional Counselor Supervisor, and a National Board Certified Counselor. Dr. Johns has previously worked with a national hospice organization in pre and post bereavement counseling, as Clinical Director for a mental health rehabilitation agency, and in private practice prior to joining the faculty at Nicholls State University, Fall 2016. Dr. Johns continues to maintain her private practice in New Orleans. Dr. Johns is a member of the American Counseling Association, the Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors, and the Louisiana Counseling Association. Dr. Johns' current research interests are in mindfulness and non-traditional therapy.

Dr. Brian K. Knight

B.A., Social Work, University of Louisiana/Monroe; M.Ed., Clinical Mental Health, University of Louisiana/Monroe; Ph.D., University of New Orleans, Counselor Education and Supervision: Dr. Knight spent the majority of his career with the Louisiana Department of Health as a Licensed Professional Counselor in an outpatient clinical setting and ultimately as an Administrator with LDH until his departure in the summer of 2013. Dr. Knight is a Licensed Professional Counselor, a Board approved supervision, a Board Certified Counselor with the National Board of Certified Counselors and a Certified Sexuality Therapist through the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors, and Therapists. Dr. Knight maintains membership in various professional counseling organizations as well as maintaining a private practice working specifically with couples and individuals in matters of human sexuality. Dr. Knight's current research agenda focuses on human sexuality and the human experience.

Dr. Chantrelle D. Varnado-Johnson

B.A. University of New Orleans; M.A. & M.Ed. University of New Orleans; Ph.D., University of New Orleans: Dr. Varnado-Johnson is a Licensed Professional Counselor, a Licensed Professional Counselor Approved Supervisor and a National Certified Counselor. Also, she has Louisiana Appraisal Privilege. Prior to joining the faculty at Nicholls State University in the Fall, 2018, Dr. Varnado-Johnson's clinical experience consisted of working in outpatient and inpatient behavioral health treatment centers, providing clinical mental health counseling to children, adolescents, and adults with a wide range of issues, crisis intervention, and

collaborations in school and private practice. Dr. Varnado-Johnson's areas of clinical, scholarly, and advocacy interests include multicultural and social justice issues, career, clinical supervision and training, and mentorship. She is a member of the American Counseling Association, the Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors, and the Louisiana Counseling Association.

ADMISSION, REGISTRATION AND ADVISING GUIDELINES

With regard to registration and advising, students are encouraged to communicate with the Department Administrative Assistant, by email, to coordinate communication between students and program advisors, Dr. Zoe Tanner and Dr. Jessica Fanguy Cortez.

Once admitted to the program, students are advised that the use and monitoring of Nicholls email is a MANDATORY requirement of the program.

ADMISSIONS

Admission to Graduate Studies

1. Satisfy all general admission requirements of the University,
2. Hold a Bachelor's degree or graduate degree from a regionally accredited college or university,
3. Submit to the Office of Admissions a formal application at least 30 days in advance of registration,
4. Submit to the Office of Admissions complete transcripts showing all undergraduate and graduate work attempted, whether or not credit was earned,
5. Submit the results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).

Minimum Scores

- A minimum score of 300 is required on the GRE or a formula score of 335: GPA on last 60 undergraduate hours times 20, plus the GRE Test score.
- A candidate who fails to earn the minimum score required or does not meet other program admission requirements, may be classified as a pre-program candidate until all criteria are met.
- Admission to Graduate Studies does not imply admission to candidacy for a degree.

Admission of Transfers

To be admitted to Graduate Studies at Nicholls State University, a candidate who has attended another graduate school must be eligible for readmission to the graduate school of the college or university from which the student transfers. A student admitted, must meet all requirements listed under the Procedure for Admission.

Admission as a Non-degree or Pre-Program Student

A non-degree student is a student who is admitted to Graduate Studies, but does not wish to pursue a graduate degree at Nicholls. A pre-program student is a student who is admitted to graduate school, but does not meet all of the requirements for admission to a graduate program. Examples include no GRE scores, letters of recommendation, transcript, etc.

Only twelve semester hours, (no grade less than a B) of graduate credit earned as a non-degree or pre-program student can be applied towards a degree at Nicholls.

Admission to a Master's Degree Program

An applicant will be admitted to regular status as a graduate student, if the following criteria are met:

1. Holds a Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a minimum GPA of a 2.5 on all undergraduate coursework or a minimum GPA of 2.75 on the last 60 hours of undergraduate pursued,
2. Has attained the minimum combined GPA/GRE score required for the MCMH or MESD Program,
3. Has at least nine hours of Psychology, Education, or Family and Consumer Sciences coursework (education classes not eligible for MCMH program), and
4. Submits transcript and three letters of recommendation.
5. Complete a personal statement
6. Complete a background check

Conditional Status

An applicant may be admitted on academic probation if the applicant meets all criteria for admission to regular status except grade-point average requirements. An applicant whose GPA is at least 2.0 on all undergraduate work attempted or who has a GPA of 2.5 on the final 60 hours may be admitted to the program on probation.

An applicant who does not meet the minimum GPA can petition the academic dean for admission on probation. The petition may be approved if the candidate provides the dean with appropriate GRE scores and other evidence as required by the dean to indicate the applicant's prospect for success at the graduate level. Approval will be granted only in cases of unusual and justifiable circumstances.

Residence Requirements

To satisfy residence requirements, a candidate must earn at least two thirds of the semester hours of degree program credits in residence at Nicholls State University.

Appeals

Appeals for readmission to Graduate Studies must be made to Graduate Council. Academic grievance appeals may be brought to the attention of the Graduate Studies coordinator or the dean of the academic college in which the graduate candidate is enrolled.

Admission to Candidacy

Admission to Graduate Studies does not admit a candidate to candidacy for a degree. Admission to candidacy indicates a judgment by the Graduate Council that the candidate has shown sufficient promise to be permitted to complete work toward a degree. For admission to candidacy for a Master's degree, a candidate must submit a formal application to his or her Graduate Studies Coordinator after satisfying each of these requirements for candidacy: (1) have met successfully all applicable admissions formulas, foundation courses, and teaching certificate requirements; (2) be classified as a regular candidate; (3) have completed 12 semester hours of graduate work at Nicholls; (4) have earned at least a 3.00 average on all graduate work.

Additionally, a candidate for the Master of Clinical Mental Health and Master of School Counseling must have been recommended for candidacy by the Counseling faculty. Formal admission to candidacy will be granted by vote of the Graduate Council upon recommendation of the candidate's dean. Petitions for Candidacy may be accessed at <https://www.nicholls.edu/graduate/forms/>.

Financial Responsibility Obligation Agreement (FROA)

When advising begins each semester, students are to complete the FROA in Banner. Students who do not complete the FROA will not be able to register for courses until the FROA is accepted. Below are the steps to completing the FROA for each semester:

Steps to electronically sign the **Financial Responsibility Obligation Agreement**:

1. Enter Banner Self Service from the Nicholls web site
2. Enter Secure Area
3. Enter user ID (N number) and Pin (Date of Birth unless you have changed this)
4. Click on the Student Tab
5. Click on the Registration Link
6. Click on the Financial Responsibility Obligation Agreement--you will need to change the term to either Summer and/or Fall of the current year
7. Please read and click "Go"
8. Log off Banner

ADVISING AND REGISTRATION OF COURSES

When a candidate is admitted to graduate school, pre-status or fully admitted, for the first time in the College of Education, the student must meet with the appropriate program coordinator and/or department chair and discuss scheduling and advising.

Program Advisors

The program advisor for the Masters of School Counseling Program is Dr. Jessica Fanguy Cortez email: jessica.fanguy.cortez@nicholls.edu. The program advisor for the Masters of Clinical Mental Health Counseling is Dr. Brian Knight email: brian.knight@nicholls.edu. Students must coordinate with the department administrative assistant to schedule appointments for advising. Students are advised that online registration is closed to students. The registration of coursework for the MESC Program and MCMH Program must be coordinated through the department administrative assistant.

Program Advising

Advising is conducted in accordance with the Nicholls State University Academic Calendar. Advising for the Summer and Fall Semesters typically begins mid-Spring. Advising for the Spring Semesters typically begins mid-Fall.

Class Scheduling Policy

The needs of graduate candidates and the limitations imposed by administrative factors determine course offerings. During any given semester or session, the University does not guarantee the offering of courses not justified by sufficient enrollment. Depending upon availability, candidates may schedule late afternoon, evening, hybrid, or online classes. Evening classes are held Monday through Thursdays. Students should continue to monitor their Moodle account prior to the semester beginning to ensure they have been properly registered for courses and to obtain syllabus information for courses.

Full-Time and Part-time Course Loads

During a regular semester (Fall and Spring), graduate students taking at least 9 semester hours are considered full-time students. During the summer semester, graduate students taking six hours are considered full-time students. A graduate student taking less than nine hours in the regular semesters (Fall and Spring) and less than six hours in the summer semester is considered a part-time student. A candidate's course load may be reduced at the discretion of the student's academic department head and/or dean. Full-time status of graduate assistants is defined under Graduate Assistantships.

Grading System

A grade of A indicates superior work and has a value of four quality points per credit hour. A grade of B indicates satisfactory work and has a value of three quality points per credit hour. A grade of C indicates work of borderline quality and has a value of two quality points per credit hours. No more than six semester hours of C grades may be counted toward a degree. A grade of D indicates work below the minimum standard expected of a graduate candidate and has a value of one quality point per credit hour. Courses with D grades may not be counted toward a degree. A grade of F indicates unsatisfactory work and has neither quality point nor credit hour value.

A grade of I indicates that the candidate has been doing satisfactory work, but because of circumstances beyond his or her control the candidate has been unable to complete all course requirements. A grade of I is not given to a candidate doing unsatisfactory work and is not counted in the grade-point average until it is resolved into a final grade. The procedure used to change an I grade is as stated under Change of Grade in the Bulletin section devoted to University Academic Procedures and Requirements. A grade of I must be resolved within one calendar year following the semester in which the I grade was received, or the I grade will automatically be changed to F. In the event the faculty member assigning the I is temporarily not on campus that following calendar year, an appeal for a time extension may be made to the Graduate Council. A graduate candidate is expected to complete all requirements for each course within the semester during which scheduled unless prevented from doing so by circumstances beyond the candidate's control. If this occurs, it is the responsibility of the candidate to make known to the instructor these circumstances as soon as possible. An instructor who is not so notified proceeds under the assumption that failure to complete course requirements is due to candidate negligence and uses normal procedures for assigning a permanent semester grade.

A grade of U is assigned to a graduate candidate only for MCMH practicum (COUN 520, 521), MESC practicum (COUN 523), and internship (COUN 534, 535) work which could not be completed during the semester enrolled because of circumstances beyond candidate control. An Unsatisfactory (U) grade carries a one calendar year time limit for completing all course requirements, whether the candidate has re-enrolled in the University or not. The U converts automatically to an F unless the candidate re-registers for the appropriate course during the semester or session at the end of a one year time limit would expire. Only one such re-registration will be allowed. Re-registration does not extend the normal time limitation of six years in effect for a degree.

No candidate having an unresolved I or U will be cleared for graduation until the grade has been changed to a permanent grade. Grades of U resolved after the last day to drop a course or resign from the University during a semester or session, but before expiration of the time limit, will be considered to have been resolved during the next semester or session. Grades of S and U for graduate candidates are assigned only for designated courses for which this grading procedure is specified. These grades and grades of I and U are not used in the computation of the grade-point average because the candidate does not receive quality points for these grades. When an I or U grade is resolved into a permanent grade, quality points are earned and the candidate's scholastic standing is adjusted to reflect the influence of the permanent grade.

A candidate may drop a course or courses or may resign from the institution with a grade of W prior to a date specified in the official University calendar. After that date a candidate may not drop a course or resign from the institution. After that date in extraordinary circumstances the academic dean having jurisdiction may authorize resignation from the institution or dropping a course with the grade W. Extraordinary cases do not include dissatisfaction with an anticipated grade or the decision to change a major.

Second Degree

A graduate candidate shall be awarded a second Master's degree whenever all requirements for that degree have been fulfilled. The candidate will be required to satisfy all demands of the second degree which are different from the first degree. Credits from the first degree applicable to the second degree shall not exceed one half of the total credit required for the second degree.

The Comprehensive Examination required for the first degree (for some programs) will not be acceptable as meeting requirements of the second degree.

Substitution of Courses

All course substitutions must be approved in writing by the candidate's academic dean, department head, and/or program coordinator before the course is substituted in scheduling. Students wishing to take a course at another university must present the course title, number, and description of the course.

Time Limitation

It is expected that all requirements for the Master's degree (including transfer credits, if any) will be completed within six consecutive years.

A candidate who enrolls for a program of studies leading to a graduate degree is normally expected to complete requirements in effect at the time of initial enrollment in that program and to maintain continuous enrollment in Graduate Studies until the degree is earned. Candidates who fail to enroll continuously may find themselves out of sequence with course offerings and suffer delays in completion of degree requirements which could invoke the six calendar year limitations.

If requirements for a degree cannot be completed within the normal time period of six years, the candidate may petition for an extension of time. The petition must explain why the degree cannot be completed within the time schedule for completing the program. Final authorization will be considered only in unusual and justifiable circumstances.

Transfer Credits

A candidate may transfer from a regionally accredited college or university a maximum of one third of the semester hours of degree program credit, with no grade lower than B, provided that such transfer credit shall be applicable to the degree program. Both resident and extension credits are thus acceptable. Transfer credits are subject to the six-year limitation. The candidate must formally petition his or her academic dean for acceptance of transfer graduate credit. Final authorization of transferred credit is made by the candidate's academic dean. Credit earned at another institution while under academic or non-academic suspension will not be accepted by Nicholls for transfer. In order to have transfer credits accepted by the University, the applicant must be eligible to re-enter the institution from which he or she wishes to transfer.

MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Undergraduate Preparation

Undergraduate preparation for the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling includes nine semester hours in psychology or other course work deemed acceptable by the program coordinator. Three semester hours of undergraduate course work in statistics is recommended, but not required. Six of the nine hours must be completed prior to enrollment in any graduate classes and all prerequisites must be completed within the first semester of enrollment in graduate classes.

Graduate Course Work

Sixty-hour emphasis for those who seek employment in human service delivery systems or for those interested in pursuing licensure. Note that licensure in Louisiana (and most states) requires completion of additional post-graduate supervised counseling experience and a passing grade on the National Counselor Exam. This curriculum requires several courses that are likely to be offered only via internet. Basic computer knowledge is required for students to enroll in the MCMH program.

Foundations Core Coursework

EDFR 501 (3)—Educational Research or
 PSYC 507 (3) -- Statistical Analysis and Research Methods
 COUN 502 (3)—Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling
 COUN 511 (3)—Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy
 COUN 519 (3)—Advanced Lifespan Developmental Psychology
 COUN 549 (3)—Professional Issues and Ethics in Counseling

Pre-Clinical Coursework

COUN 500 (3)—Basic Facilitative Skills
 COUN 504 (3)—Adult and Child Psychopathology and Diagnosis
 COUN 505 (3)—Analysis of the Individual
 COUN 520 (3)—Introduction to Counseling Practicum

Clinical Coursework

COUN 521 (3)—Counseling Practicum
 COUN 545 (3)—Counseling Internship I
 COUN 546 (3)—Counseling Internship II
 COUN 596 (0)—Clinical Mental Health Master's Comprehensive Examination

Additional Coursework

PSYC 523 (3) --- Crisis Prevention and Intervention
 COUN 510 (3)—Theory and Procedures in Group Counseling
 COUN 513 (3)---Applied Psychopharmacology
 COUN 526 (3)—Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy
 COUN 527 (3)—Career and Lifestyle Development
 COUN 541 (3) – Cross Cultural Counseling
 COUN 551 (3) – Applied Theories

Electives: Only (3) hours of electives required

PSYC 506 (3)—Applied Behavior Analysis
 COUN 512 (3)---Cognitive Behavior Theory & Applications
 COUN 522 (3)—Interventions for Diverse Needs
 COUN 525 (3)—Problems in Psychology
 COUN 530 (3)—Counseling Strategies with Children and Adolescents
 COUN 537 (3)—Substance Abuse Counseling
 COUN 550 (3)—Special Topics in Psychology. May be taken multiple times.

Degree Plan for CMHC

Students will complete a degree plan for their program advisor within one semester of beginning the program.

YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			
Recommended Courses (Hours)	Semester(s) Available			Recommended Courses	Semester(s) Available			Recommended Courses	Semester(s) Available		
EDFR 501 (3) – Ed Research or PSYC 507 (3) – Statistics	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 527 (3) – Career and Lifestyle Development	Sp ☐	Su ☐		Elective (3) – See Catalog	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐
COUN 502 (3) – Intro to CMH Counseling	Sp ☐		Fa ☐	COUN 541 (3) – Cross Cultural	Sp ☐	Offered upon Professor availability.		*COUN 521 (3) - Counseling Practicum	Sp ☐		Fa ☐
COUN 511(3) – Theories of Counseling and Psychology	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 510 (3) – Theory and Procedures in Group Counseling	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 545 (3) – Counseling Internship I	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐
COUN 519 (3) – Advanced Lifespan Developmental Psyc	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	PSYC 523 (3) - Crisis Prevention and Intervention	Sp ☐		Fa ☐	COUN 546 (3) – Counseling Internship II	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐
COUN 549 (3) – Professional Ethics	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 513(3) – Applied Psychopharmacology			Fa ☐	COUN 596 (0) – CMHC Comp Exam	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐
COUN 500 (3) – Basic Facilitative Skills	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 526 (3) – Intro to Marriage/Family Therapy	Sp ☐	Su ☐					
COUN 504 (3) – Adult & Child Psyc & Diagnosis	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	*COUN 520 (3) – Intro to Counseling Practicum	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐				
COUN 505 (3) – Analysis of the Individual		Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 551 (3) – Applied Theories	Sp ☐	Su ☐					

**COUN 520 Intro to Counseling Practicum prerequisites: COUN 500 and Graduate Program Coordinator approval

***See graduate handbook for any other Prerequisites

MASTER OF EDUCATION-SCHOOL COUNSELING

Undergraduate Preparation

Completion of pre-requisite courses: A valid teacher's certificate or nine hours of approved hours in undergraduate education, psychology or other coursework deemed acceptable by the program coordinator. (Six of the nine hours must be completed prior to enrollment in MESC graduate courses and all prerequisites must be completed within the first semester of enrollment in graduate classes. A grade of C or better must be earned in all prerequisite courses).

Graduate Course Work

Sixty hour emphasis for those who seek employment as a certified School Counselor (K-12) and/or licensure (as Licensed Professional Counselor)

Foundations Core Courses

COUN 501 (3) - Introduction to School Counseling
 COUN 511 (3) - Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy
 COUN 519 (3) - Advanced Lifespan Developmental Psychology
 COUN 549 (3) - Professional Issues and Ethics in Counseling

Advanced Concentration Coursework

COUN 500 (3) – Basic Facilitative Skills
 COUN 504 (3) – Adult & Child Psychopathology & Diagnosis
 COUN 505 (3) – Analysis of the Individual
 COUN 510 (3) – Theory and Procedures in Group Counseling
 COUN 520 (3) – Introduction to Counseling Practicum
 COUN 522 (3) - Interventions for Diverse Needs
 COUN 523 (3) - School Counseling Practicum I
 COUN 526 (3) - Introduction to Marriage and Family Therapy
 COUN 527 (3) – Career and Lifestyle Development
 COUN 530 (3) - Counseling Strategies with Children and Adolescents
 COUN 534 (3) – School Counseling Internship I
 COUN 535 (3) – School Counseling Internship II
 COUN 551 (3) – Applied Theories
 EDFR 501 (3) - Educational Research or PSYC 507 (3) – Statistical Analysis and Research Methods
 PSYCH 523 (3) – Crisis Prevention and Intervention

Electives: Candidates must complete three semester hours of the following courses.

COUN 502 (3) – Introduction to Mental Health Counseling
 COUN 509 (3) – Clinical Sexuality for Mental Health Professionals
 COUN 512 (3) – Cognitive Behavior Theory & Applications
 COUN 520 (3) – Introduction to Counseling Practicum
 EDLE 535 (3) - Using Inquiry and Data to Lead Change
 EDAS 535 (3) - Program Evaluation
 COUN 537 (3) – Substance Abuse Counseling
 COUN 550 (3) - Special Topics in Counseling. May be taken multiple times if topics differ.
 See catalog for other elective options

Degree Plan for School Counseling

Students will complete a degree plan within one semester of beginning the program for their program advisor.

YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3			
Recommended Courses (Hours)	Semester(s) Available			Recommended Courses	Semester(s) Available			Recommended Courses	Semester(s) Available		
EDFR 501 (3) – Ed Research or	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 527 (3) – Career and Lifestyle Development	Sp ☐	Su ☐		Elective (3) – See Catalog	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐
PSYC 507 (3) - Statistics				COUN 522 (3) – Interventions for Diverse Needs (or) COUN 541 (3) – Cross Cultural	Sp ☐			*COUN 521 (3) - School Counseling Practicum	Sp ☐		Fa ☐
COUN 501 (3) – Intro to School Counseling			Fa ☐	COUN 510 (3) – Theory and Procedures in Group Counseling	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 534 (3) – School Counseling Internship I	Sp ☐		Fa ☐
COUN 511(3) – Theories of Counseling and Psychology	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	PSYC 523 (3) – Crisis Prevention and Intervention	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 535 (3) – School Counseling Internship II	Sp ☐		Fa ☐
COUN 519 (3) – Advanced Lifespan Developmental Psyc	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 530 (3) – Child and Adolescent Counseling		Su ☐		COUN 595 (0) – MESC Comp Exam	Sp ☐		Fa ☐
COUN 549 (3) – Professional Issues & Ethics in Counseling	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 526 (3) – Intro to Marriage/Family Therapy	Sp ☐	Su ☐					
COUN 500 (3) – Basic Facilitative Skills	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	*COUN 520 (3) – Intro to Counseling Practicum	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐				
COUN 504 (3) – Adult & Child Psyc & Diagnosis	Sp ☐	Su ☐	Fa ☐	COUN 551 (3) – Applied Theories	Sp ☐	Su ☐					
COUN 505 (3) – Analysis of the Individual		Su ☐	Fa ☐								

**COUN 520 Intro to Counseling Practicum prerequisites: COUN 500 and Graduate Program Coordinator approval

***See graduate handbook for any other Prerequisites

Master's Comprehensive Examination

During the final semester or session, candidates for the M.E.S.C. or the M.C.M.H. degree must take the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (a written comprehensive examination and/or submit a comprehensive portfolio. If the student's performance on the CPCE examination is unsatisfactory, the student, at the committee's discretion, may be permitted to take a written examination at the next or a later scheduled examination. A candidate must register for COUN 595 or COUN 596 at the beginning of the semester or session in which the examination is to be taken or the portfolio is to be submitted. No special examinations will be given. No candidate will be permitted a third examination.

HOW TO BECOME CERTIFIED AS A LOUISIANA PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELOR (Changes as of January, 2013)

1. Earn a Master's Degree in School Counseling from a CACREP accredited university.
2. Complete the Praxis Examination in School Guidance and Counseling.

Renewal Requirements. For purposes of maintaining a valid counselor endorsement, any school counselor receiving certification after July 1, 2013 is required to either provide verification of a current license professional Counselor (LPC) license or complete 150 hours of continuing learning units (CLUs) that are consistent with the Individual Professional Growth Plan (IPGP) over a five-year time period. These CLUs must be standards based and follow the models of the American School Counseling Association (ASCA) and CACREP.

The Professional School Counselor test measures whether entry-level school counselors have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice. The test is designed to follow the American Association of School Counselors ASCA National Model. There are four major components of the test than mirror ASCA's model. The foundations component focuses on the history and role of professional counselor, knowledge about human development, and ethical and legal principles. The delivery of services component focuses on individual, group, classroom-guidance, and schoolwide interventions, as well as, consultation and collaboration. The management component focuses on appropriate methods for developing and maintaining a comprehensive guidance program. Finally, the accountability component focuses on program evaluation, research, and assessment.

Test questions call on the individual's knowledge of research-based counseling practices as well as the ability to apply knowledge and principles to situations that apply in the schools. The test taker will be asked to analyze and respond to situations involving individual students, classroom situations, and school and community events at grade levels kindergarten through twelfth grade (The Praxis Study Companion, 2014).

You can also get more information about the Praxis and test dates at

<http://www.ets.org/praxis>.

LICENSING INFORMATION FOR LICENSED PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

The laws that govern the requirements necessary for Licensed Professional Counselors are located at the following website:

<http://www.lpcboard.org/Law%20Update%20for%20Website%20RE%20Act%20736%20and%20To%20be%20Effective%20484.pdf>



The process to become a licensed professional counselor begins as a graduate student. Upon completion of a graduate degree in professional mental health counseling with content that consists of graduate hours to include courses in theories; human growth and

development; abnormal behavior; techniques of counseling; group dynamics; processes and counseling; lifestyle and career development; appraisal of individuals and ethics, students may apply to the Louisiana Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners for approval to become a provisional licensed counselor.

Effective September 21, 2012, students who are practicing as mental health counselors and who are not licensed or registered as a provisional licensed professional counselor could have sanctioned imposed and fines assessed. Therefore, it is **imperative** that students who conduct mental health services following graduation register with the board as a counselor intern. This information can be accessed at the following website: http://www.lpcboard.org/position_statements.htm.

In order to be approved as a provisional licensed counselor, students must show proof of an earned graduate degree described above and be able to demonstrate to the board they are conducting counseling services at a site that is acceptable and are under the supervision of a board approved supervisor. Board approved supervisors usually charge for their services at rates that can be anywhere from \$30 to \$100 per session. If approved, students must work as a provisional licensed counselor for **at least** two years. During that timeframe, students must accumulate three thousand hours of supervised experience (1,900 direct, 1,000 indirect, 100 supervision) and successfully pass the National Counselors' Examination (NCE). Once all of these requirements are met, students can apply to the board for licensure.

Effective **September 1, 2015**, provisional licensed counselors who apply to the Louisiana Licensed Professional Counselors Board of Examiners for licensure must demonstrate completion of a graduate degree which is professional mental health counseling in content that consists of at least **60 graduate hours**.

Provisional licensed counselors must reapply to the Louisiana Licensed Professional Counselors Board every two years. During this time, evidence of at least one attempt at the NCE, acquisition of 20 CEUs, and proof of supervision hours must also be presented.

Once licensed, students must renew their license every two years by demonstrating forty clock hours of continuing education that were earned in that timeframe in an area of mental health counseling approved by the board.

Students should be aware that there are fees assessed to apply for provisional licensed counselor status, licensed professional counselor status and for renewal of licensed professional counselor status.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Professional Dispositions for Masters of Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Students

Master of Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling students at Nicholls State University are expected to demonstrate appropriate skills and behaviors in the classroom as well as in clinical settings and supervisory relationships. Professional dispositions are defined as “the commitments, characteristics, values, beliefs, interpersonal functioning, and behaviors that influence the counselor’s professional growth and interactions with clients and colleagues.” As a student in the MCMH and MESC programs, you are expected to exhibit the dispositions listed below.

Expectations of MCMH and MESC Students: Students are evaluated after they have completed COUN 500, Basic Facilitative Skills and COUN 520, Introduction to Practicum by program faculty and prior to admittance into COUN 523 or 521. Students are also evaluated after any infractions.

1. MCMH and MESC students engage in ethical behavior and decision making as outlined in the American Counseling Association’s Code of Ethics (2014) and American School Counseling Association’s Code of Ethics (2016). The code of ethics states that the fundamental principles of professional ethical behavior are:
 - Autonomy - fostering the right to control the direction of one’s life;
 - nonmaleficence - avoiding actions that cause harm;
 - beneficence - working for the good of the individual and society by promoting mental health and well-being;
 - justice - treating individuals equitably and fostering fairness and equality;
 - fidelity - honoring commitments and keeping promises, including fulfilling one’s responsibilities of trust in professional relationships;
 - veracity- dealing truthfully with individuals with whom counselors come into professional contact.
2. MCMH and MESC students demonstrate professionalism in all professional relationships and environments, including social media. They maintain appropriate boundaries.
3. MCMH and MESC students demonstrate multicultural competency. They are respectful and accepting of others’ differences in classroom discussions, clinical settings and in the community.
4. MCMH and MESC students engage in continuous self-evaluation and improvement.
5. MCMH and MESC students are open to constructive criticism from instructors and classmates and provide appropriate constructive criticism to classmates.

6. MCMH and MESC students engage in appropriate self-care. Students understand and recognize burn-out and take appropriate actions to prevent burnout or to recover from it.
7. MCMH and MESC students give credit to authors for their work. They do not engage in plagiarism.
8. MCMH and MESC students value class attendance and participation. They adhere to policies and procedures regarding tardiness, absences, and deadlines.

Evaluation Timeframes

In this program, there are both formal and informal assessments that take place during coursework. As each student progresses through the curriculum, individual faculty members are conducting both academic and professional/personal assessment in a continuous and on-going observation of each student. As stated above, following completion of COUN 500 and 521, students will be formally evaluated by program faculty prior to placement in practicum. Evaluation will continue during practicum and during practicum and internship. Concerns about individual students are brought to the program faculty as a whole, and consultation is sought during faculty meetings throughout the student's program. This means that at any time, a student may be identified as needing remediation as outlined below. (Academic struggles that exceed the limits of the Graduate School policy on grade point averages will cause the student to fall under the Graduate School's retention policy. In addition, behavior deemed by the Nicholls State University community to be unacceptable will subject the student to immediate dismissal per The Nicholls State University's *Code of Student Conduct*

[http://www.nicholls.edu/documents/student life/code of conduct.pdf](http://www.nicholls.edu/documents/student%20life/code%20of%20conduct.pdf).

Remediation

If at any point during the student's program, the student is deemed at risk in terms of failure due to academic skills deficits, professional skills deficits, or personal issues that prevent a student from performing the duties of a professional counselor, a remediation plan will be initiated and documented (assuming that the concerns do not warrant immediate removal from the program as specified in the Graduate School's academic policies, the University's *Code of Student Conduct*, or as deemed necessary to protect the public). This remediation plan, designed to address the issue(s) of concern, will be:

1. Established by the student's advisor with consultation from other program faculty, and when appropriate, the student's on-site supervisor, and other professionals who have relevant input into the situation;
2. Presented to the student;
3. Discussed relative to the faculty's concerns, and if applicable, protection of the public and field placement site; and

4. Agreed upon and signed by advisor, student, and the faculty member who will monitor the student's progress relative to the remediation plan, with notification to the program faculty.

These remediation plans may involve any or all of the following:

A. For Academic Remediation:

- a. Retaking courses
- b. Engaging in tutoring
- c. Study skills training
- d. Test-taking training
- e. Writing lab assistance
- f. Spoken and/or written language skills remediation
- g. Other academic interventions, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the program faculty

B. For Professional Skill Remediation:

- a. Retaking courses (e.g. skills courses, ethics, content courses)
- b. Removal from placement site or Practicum
- c. Reassignment of placement site
- d. Specific assigned activities in placement site
- e. Writing reflection papers
- f. Additional supervision meetings
- g. Other professional skills interventions, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the program faculty

C. For Personal Remediation:

- a. Personal counseling
- b. Writing reflection papers
- c. Writing apology letters
- d. Additional supervision meetings
- e. Other personal remediation interventions, as deemed necessary and appropriate by the program faculty

The remediation plan will include, at a minimum:

1. Specific activities to be completed;
2. Target measures of accomplishment, which will be documented;
3. A schedule of regular meetings between the student and the faculty member responsible for monitoring and documenting the remediation plan (if this person is different from the student's advisor);
4. A timeframe for accomplishment; and
5. Contact information for the faculty member responsible for monitoring the student's progress.

Copies of the plan will be retained by the student's advisor, the monitoring faculty member, the program coordinator, and the student. The monitoring faculty member

will also retain notes documenting all meetings with the student during the course of the remediation process.

Retention

At the completion of the remediation plan timeframe, the faculty member responsible for monitoring the remediation plan, the advisor, and the student will meet to discuss the success of the plan. If the evidence suggests that the plan has been successful, the advisor and responsible faculty member will advise the program faculty of the successful resolution of concerns. If the evidence of successful remediation is questionable, additional remediation activities may be deemed necessary, with all the conditions of appropriate remediation as outlined above. All of these discussions will be documented.

Dismissal

There are three entities that have published policies that determine continued enrollment at Nicholls State University. The policies that determine continued enrollment are itemized here and discussed below:

1. Those determined by the University in terms of behavior,
2. Those determined by the Graduate School in terms of academic standards,
4. Those determined by the Counseling Program in terms of academic success, professional success, and personal success.

If the student is unable or unwilling to complete the remediation plan outlined in this document, then the faculty of the program would have the option of using *dismissal from the program* as an action of last resort. If this action is taken, the faculty will:

1. Document all evidence leading to this decision;
2. Inform the student of the decision;
3. Inform the Dean of the College of Education
4. Inform the student of his/her due process options; and
5. Provide the contact information for the person to whom an appeal would be made.

Questions about this policy are welcome. Please see the program coordinator or your advisor if you have concerns.

Endorsement Policy

The faculty of the Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Programs will endorse candidates for licensure and employment only after all requirements of the university have been satisfactorily met.

Ethical Behavior and Academic Dishonesty

As a member of the Nicholls State University MCMH and MESC programs you, the student, are held responsible for your own ethical decisions. This being said, the faculty members expect each and every student to uphold to the highest ethical standards at all times. Students are bound to follow the Code of Ethics established

by the American Counseling Association for counselors which may be accessed at: <https://www.counseling.org/Resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf> and the Code of Ethics established by the American School Counseling Association which may be accessed at <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/Ethics/EthicalStandards2016.pdf>. Unethical behavior and Academic Dishonesty can go hand in hand. Academic Dishonesty is not simply cheating on an exam or plagiarizing a paper; it is also purchasing instructor test material, lying, stealing, borrowing another student's notes, and sharing information about an exam. Unethical behavior can be identified as voicing inappropriate about other races or minorities either in class or on social media, failing to demonstrate a non-judgmental demeanor while in the program, demonstrating a lack of empathy for others, failure to receiving feedback from instructors, engaging in dual relationships with clients and any and all actions that are prohibited by the Code of Ethics for ACA or ASCA. Academic Dishonesty can not only ruin a future career but also creates a negative image for the University.

RESOURCES ON CAMPUS

Services are available for candidates through the following offices at Nicholls State University.

Counseling Center

The University Counseling Center is located in 227 Elkins Hall and provides personal counseling for concerns such as depression, stress, self-esteem, anxiety, eating disorders, career issues, and relationship issues. Individual, group, and couples counseling sessions are offered. Services are provided by trained counselors. All services are confidential and free of charge to candidates, faculty, and staff. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Disability Center

The Disability Center is located in 101 Peltier Hall. Disabled Student Services provides services for candidates with disabilities and assists candidates in making adjustments to university life. Candidates with disabilities must first self-identify with this office and provide current documentation of their disabilities from licensed professionals regarding the nature and extent of the disabilities and the recommended accommodations. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Louisiana Center for Dyslexia and Related Learning Disorders

The specialized program serving candidates with dyslexia/learning disabilities at Nicholls State University operates through the Center for the Study of Dyslexia, located in 132 Polk Hall. To be eligible for the program candidates must have a current diagnosis (within 3 years) from a recognized authority, have verification of average or above average intellectual abilities, complete admission procedures to Nicholls State University, take an untimed ACT, and apply to the Center with needed documentation on or before the July 15 deadline for fall semester or December 1 for spring semester. For all qualifying candidates the center provides services for support system, equipment, remediation, academic planning, resources, assistance, and assessment. Candidates are required to reapply each semester. The cost of the program is \$375 per semester. Office hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Ellender Library

Ellender Library houses over 400,000 volumes, 3,000,000 titles, and 350,000 catalogued federal and state documents. It provides well-lit study areas for 1500 patrons. Library circulation is available to all registered candidates. Circulating items have a regular 3 week checkout period, with possible 3 renewals. Overdue fines are \$.25 per item per day. All days, including weekends, in which the library is opened, count towards overdue fine charges.

Interlibrary loan personnel offer personalized services to patrons who need materials from other libraries. The latest on-line computer technology is used to request materials from nearby and distant libraries. The Ellender collections can be found on all three floors. The Allen J. Ellender and the Multimedia Room (audio and visual media, and

music listening rooms), and the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Lab are located on the first floor. The second floor has the central reference desk, the circulation desk, and the reference, reserve, and the general book collection. The third floor houses serials (periodicals) and government documents. All collections are easily accessible through open shelving, convenient service stations, and the computerized card catalogue known as ELMO. The library hours vary each semester; therefore, it is your responsibility to verify the hours on their website, <http://www.nicholls.edu/library/hours/>.

Jo Carol Nolen Speech, Language, and Hearing Center

The Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic is located in 115 Talbot Hall. The clinic provides services in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders in the area of articulation, language, voice, fluency, or hearing. Clients range from infants to elderly, including candidates.

University Health Services

The University Health Services is located in the Betsy Cheramie-Ayo Nursing Building. It provides both health education and healthcare services to candidates. The staff attends to candidates' acute health concerns and teaches health promotion and disease prevention strategies. Candidates are required to submit a statement of immunization status, which documents candidates' compliance with state and institution requirements. Immunization and health records are kept confidential. Students needing university health services can contact the office at 985-493-2600 to schedule an appointment or can go to the website for detailed information on services and hours at <http://www.nicholls.edu/health/>.

Learning Resource Center

The Learning Resource Center (LRC) houses elementary and secondary school textbooks and education professional book collections. In addition it houses a variety of non-print items such as CDs, videos/audio recordings, and computer programs. The collection of state benchmarks is held for in-house circulation only. The LRC primarily serves as a study area for education majors who meet in small groups to complete lesson plans and various education assignments. Besides print and non-print educational resources, the LRC provides hardware available for candidates circulation, including TV/VCR's camcorder, CD/tape players, and electrical piano keyboard, and manipulative.

Family Resource Center

The Family Resource Center provides on-site support to families in the region. Its mission is to support and strengthen families by offering resources, information, and skill development classes. Family and individual support through the center is available through a toll-free telephone line, answered by volunteers to 4:30 p.m. with after hours and holiday coverage through an answer machine. The center provides skill building outreach programs and on-campus programs for candidates in parenting, budgeting, self-esteem, family communications, nutrition, positive discipline, conflict resolution and others on demand. A staff member is available to address, develop and implement new ideas and programs identified by professionals and community residents. Outreach programs are made available through schools, daycare centers, churches, businesses, and

recreation facilities. The center is open for the lending of resources, parent support groups, and services.

Writing Across the Curriculum Center (WAC)

The WAC Lab is located in 124 Ellender Library. Writing staff assists candidates with writing assignments that deal with any subject area. A candidate can seek help with proofreading or obtain access to additional resources for assistance with writing.

ITS

The Department of Academic Computing and Instructional Technology develops and coordinates plans for academic computing and instructional technology for the five undergraduate colleges, which includes the College of Education. Three open labs are available and contain a total of 110 computers. Open Labs serve faculty and candidates of all majors and have extended evening and weekend hours. In addition, large databases with statistical analysis software are available on all open lab computers. Valid ID's are required for entry. Knowledge of specialized programs is the responsibility of the candidate and the instructing faculty, not the lab workers. Many departments have computer labs with dedicated computer facilities. Computer labs available to education majors are the Learning Resource Center in 130 Polk Hall, the Cenac Lab located in 109 Powell, and the WAC computer lab located in 125 Ellender.

The Louisiana State Department's Regional Technology Teaching and Learning Center (TLTC) is located in 141 Polk Hall. The TLTC consists of a comprehensive technology lab equipped with 25 multimedia computers, a multimedia projector, smart board, and a variety of peripherals. The TLTC is funded through the Federal Technology Literacy Challenge Professional Development Grant initiative. It serves the K-12 community of Region III, functioning to serve as an extension of the Louisiana Center for Educational technology, provide technology-training services to educators in the immediate and surrounding parishes, and support the efforts of the Regional III Service Center.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Students are encouraged to join professional organizations. Professional organizations advocate for the profession, provide valuable resources about the counseling profession, keep students and professionals informed about the latest trends in counseling and allow students and professionals the opportunity to network with other professionals. Memberships to the organizations listed should be considered by students in the program. Most organizations have offered reduce fees for graduate students.

American Counseling Association
<http://www.counseling.org/>

Louisiana Counseling Association
<http://www.lacounseling.org/>

American School Counseling Association
<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>

Louisiana School Counseling Association
<http://www.louisianaschoolcounselor.com/>

Chi Sigma Iota Honor Society
<http://www.csi-net.org/>

PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP

PRACTICUM

Practicum in the Training Clinic: Nicholls Department of Psychology, Counseling and Family Studies benefits from having its own community counseling agency within the department for student counselor training. In the second year of the curriculum, students enroll in counseling practicum, which means they will counsel paying clients from the Thibodaux region. This excerpt from the course's syllabus provides an idea of what the faculty will be expecting of students.

Course Content: The NSU Department of Psychology, Counseling and Family Studies prepares students for professional counseling practice by providing live counseling experience in practicum. Practicum students counsel actual clients from the regional community in the NSU Counselor Training Clinic. This includes the maintenance of client records. In addition, practicum students develop and refine clinical skills in weekly group/peer supervision sessions, and in individual supervision sessions with practicum faculty.

Students study basic counseling techniques in the reading material and those to be modeled by the instructor, practice and demonstrate basic counseling skills using each other as clients, make videotapes of counseling sessions for self-study and class presentation, write case conceptualizations and treatment plans, conduct appropriate personal and professional self-exploration in the supervision group, and begin to develop a helping professional identity.

Practicum is probably the most important phase of a graduate student counselor training. During practicum, students will integrate and apply the knowledge and theory learned in classes as they counsel clients with real problems in a mental health setting. Students have two roles: student and counselor. In addition to counseling clients from the community, students will be expected to conduct themselves as a professional at all times, including being responsible and acting ethically, seeking supervision on a weekly basis and cooperating with colleagues.

Commitment: The commitment to practicum includes fifty minute sessions with clients each week, an hour of individual supervision, and an hour and a half of group supervision. Outside of the counseling and supervision requirement, practicum students must write progress notes, prepare treatment-plans, review video-taped sessions, and prepare for the written exam.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate professional behavior appropriate for a counselor in a mental health clinic
 - a. Arrive on time consistently
 - b. Use time effectively
 - c. Inform supervisor and make arrangements for absences

- d. Reliably complete requested or assigned tasks on time
 - e. Complete required number of hours at clinic
 - f. Responsive to norms about clothing, language, etc. on site
 - g. Communicate responsibly for self
 - h. Exhibit the behaviors and attitudes of a competent and professional counselor
2. Demonstrate appropriate ethical awareness and conduct
- a. Knowledge of general ethical guidelines
 - b. Knowledge of ethical guidelines of NSU Psychology Training Clinic
 - c. Awareness and sensitivity to ethical issues
 - d. Personal behavior consistent with ethical guidelines
 - e. Consult supervisors and/or other practicum students about ethical issues if necessary
3. Demonstrate the capacity of active participation in expanding and applying his/her knowledge of the counseling process and counseling with diverse populations
- a. Receptive to learning when new information is offered
 - b. Actively seek new information from staff or supervisors
 - c. Ability to learn and understand new information
 - d. Broadening and deepening of understanding of concepts, theories, and information
 - e. Ability to apply new information in clinical setting
4. Take an active role in the supervision process
- a. Actively seek supervision on a weekly basis
 - b. Receptive to feedback and suggestions from supervisors
 - c. Responsible for understanding information communicated in supervision
 - d. Successfully implement suggestions from supervisors
 - e. Aware of areas that need improvement
 - f. Willing to explore personal strengths and weaknesses
5. Demonstrate appropriate process skills with clients
- a. Build rapport and respect with clients
 - b. Facilitate client expression of thought and feeling
 - c. Keep control of the therapy session
 - d. Respond to important developments in the session
 - e. Recognize the significance of client statements in relation to the presenting problem
 - f. Is sensitive and responsive to client's needs
 - g. Is sensitive to cultural differences
 - h. Is sensitive to issues of gender differences
 - i. Convey competence to the client
6. Demonstrate acceptable conceptualization skills with clients
- a. Comprehend the client's issues

- b. Recognize and interpret client's covert messages
 - c. Identify relationship among conceptual themes as expressed by the client
 - d. Keep the session moving toward some therapeutic outcome
 - e. Help the client identify appropriate outcome and/or process goals
7. Demonstrate appropriate personalization skills with clients
- a. Trust his or her insights during session
 - b. Appear comfortable in the role of therapist
 - c. Allow the client to see the person behind the role of therapist
 - d. Resist being threatened by, or defensive with the client
 - e. Convey warmth and caring to the client
8. Interact with practicum students and related staff appropriately
- a. Initiates interactions with practicum students/staff
 - b. Communicates effectively with practicum students/staff
 - c. Effectively conveys information and expresses own opinions
 - d. Effectively receives information and opinions from others
 - b. Written and verbal reports are accurate and factually correct
 - c. Written and verbal reports are presented in professional manner
 - d. Reports are clinically or administratively useful

Insurance: Students must show evidence to the clinic managers of having liability insurance by the first staffing in order to begin seeing clients. Clinic managers have more details. Continued current proof of insurance will be maintained through the practicum and internship experience.

Taping: The clinic rooms are set up to automatically video and audio tape every session. It is the student's responsibility to attend weekly small group supervision prepared to review crucial parts of the sessions. See clinic staff for assistance on how to use the clinic taping system.

Class Structure/Staffing/Group supervision: Practicum students meet weekly in group supervision for 1.5 hours. In addition, students will meet with a supervisor in weekly individual sessions of 1.0 hour. Individual sessions may be triadic. Staffing and group supervision is a place to discuss textbook material, videos, staff client cases, and work on counseling skills, case conceptualizations, treatment plans and professional/personal development.

Students are expected to be on time for group staffing, individual supervision, and all counseling sessions. Cell phone use is not allowed during class. Students must inform supervisors if they will be late for class or supervision.

Direct client contact: Prior to class, students are required to schedule time slots for clients each week. Students must be at the clinic during their scheduled time to see clients, **even if the client cancels the appointment or does not show.** If a client does not show, students must contact them by phone if possible. Sessions where clients do not show will be spent

observing a classmate in session. Oral feedback should be provided to the counselor during supervision. Counseling sessions will last 50 minutes.

Students are expected to accumulate 40 direct client contact hours (sessions for which you qualify for a star) for Practicum to achieve a grade of “satisfactory” for Practicum. Forty direct hours are the minimum for the Louisiana LPC Board licensure.

Students who do not complete the 40 hour requirement (but are in good standing) will receive an “incomplete” grade at the end of Practicum and be allowed to finish in the next regular Practicum.

Indirect contact time: In addition to the scheduled clients, students must make time to be at the clinic to complete the following:

- Individual/group supervision
- Review of sessions
- Complete paper work on clients (progress notes and treatment goals, assessment interview, reports to outside agencies, termination summaries)
- Make client phone calls (only using the clinic phones provided—never give out personal numbers)

Clinic rules: Due to the limited space in the clinic, **students should not congregate in the clinic office or in the hallway outside the clinic.** If a student is not counseling a client the following rooms are available for the tasks mentioned above: the group room (276 Polk), and the observation hall. If students are meeting people after class, they should not meet in the clinic office or the hallway outside the clinic. Students should be aware of their voice level while in the clinic and the hallway. Laughter and noise is extremely distracting to clients and counselors. If a client is getting too loud, it is acceptable to ask the client to lower his/her voice.

Dress Code: Students are reminded that when counseling a client, they must dress in business casual attire. Please refrain from wearing workout clothes, gym shorts, short dresses, midriffs or anything revealing. Students are permitted to wear jeans. Remember, this is a professional environment and we expect you to dress appropriately. Clinic managers reserve the right to address your attire if they deem necessary.

Fee Collection: Counselors should not handle client’s payments ever. Fees will be collected by an authorized Clinic Manager or faculty member BEFORE SESSIONS in room 271 Polk.

Evaluation and Grades: Practicum grading is S/U. A student will be judged to have passed if they meet the following requirements:

- Receive an acceptable score on all criteria of the performance evaluation
- Attendance at all staffing’s and individual/small group supervisions
- Attendance for assigned clinic hours
- Completion of any outside assignments (on time)
- No major ethical violations

- Professional behavior at all times while on practicum time
- Client session videotapes for review upon demand
- Maintain liability insurance
- All client files up to date at the end of the semester (case notes, termination summaries, etc.)

INTERNSHIP

Once the graduate student completes the required practicum and is in their last semester(s) of either the CMHC or MESC program, they are allowed to enroll in Internship.

CACREP Standards for Internship

The program requires completion of a supervised internship in the student's designated program area of 600 clock hours, begun after successful completion of the practicum. The internship is intended to reflect the comprehensive work experience of a professional counselor appropriate to the designated program area. Each student's internship includes all of the following:

1. At least 240 clock hours of direct service, including experience leading groups.
2. Weekly interaction that averages one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the internship, usually performed by the onsite supervisor.
3. An average of 1 1/2 hours per week of group supervision provided on a regular schedule throughout the internship and performed by a program faculty member.
4. The opportunity for the student to become familiar with a variety of professional activities and resources in addition to direct service (e.g., record keeping, assessment instruments, supervision, information and referral, in-service and staff meetings).
5. The opportunity for the student to develop program-appropriate audio/video recordings for use in supervision or to receive live supervision of his or her interactions with clients.
6. Evaluation of the student's counseling performance throughout the internship, including documentation of a formal evaluation after the student completes the internship by a program faculty member in consultation with the site supervisor.

Goals and Objectives of Supervision

The overall objective of field experience is to provide interns with supervised day-to-day practice in a traditional setting that fosters professional growth.

The intern student will demonstrate:

- Clinical/counseling orientation and task assumption competencies
- Essential professional identity and ethical code competencies
- Interviewing and counseling (theory and practice) competencies
- Assessment and appraisal skill competency
- Counseling and guidance competencies
- Essential case management competencies including knowledge of available references and resources; and
- Consultation, administration, and leadership competencies

Students will provide the following information about the counseling case: presenting problem, history of presenting problem, previous attempts at problem solution, important information about the client.

- Counseling Plan: goals, action-step, and desired outcomes (Do these goals match the presenting problem?)
- Techniques: skills, strategies, and interventions
- Initial Impression: how does the counselor's first impression of the client affect service delivery? (What am I thinking about this client that may interfere with my ability to help them?)
- Diversity: the counselor's self-awareness (thoughts, feelings about the client, about self, and about the counseling process)
- Counselor needs: what would be helpful in the future with a client such as this one?
- Supervision Techniques: watch/listen to video/audio record, evaluate the student

Provide Feedback:

- About counselor strengths and areas needing improvement
- About the counseling case and future counseling direction
- About resistance to supervision
- About future work with client

Evaluation

Clinical supervision will help counselors to master the self-evaluation skills that will aide them throughout their careers. Clinical supervisors provide fair and helpful evaluations by:

- Making sure that agency policies, including job descriptions, responsibilities and expectations are easily accessible and understood by the supervisee.
- Giving specific explanations of how the supervisee is to be evaluated
- Offering timely and honest feedback of the supervisee's actions
- Suggesting behaviors to the supervisee that will improve their work
- Allowing the supervisee the opportunity to correct their mistakes on their own

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I understand the terms and policies stated in this handbook and agree to abide by these terms and policies as outlined herein. I understand that if I do not agree to the terms, that I am not allowed to register for any courses or continue in the Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling programs, until I have agreed to the terms. I understand that I can obtain a copy of this handbook from the Nicholls State University, Department of Psychology website. My signature also indicates that I have attended at least one New Student Orientation.

Additionally, I understand that a criminal background check is required upon admission into the program. I agree that I will notify the program faculty of the Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling programs of additional criminal offenses that may occur following the submission of the required Criminal Background Check.

Student Signature

Date

Student Name -- Printed

Address

Phone number

Email address