



CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

SITE SUPERVISOR

PRACTICUM & INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

2024-2025



Counselor Education Department
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<https://www.newpaltz.edu/counselor-education/>

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INTRODUCTION LETTER

Dear Site Supervisor,

Greetings from the State University of New York at New Paltz and welcome to our network of training partners from practicum and internship sites all over the greater Hudson Valley! We are excited and thankful that you have agreed to host one of counselors-in-training at your site/agency. The experience that our counselors-in-training have in the field is an invaluable educational opportunity and the cornerstone of their training. We look forward to a great working relationship with you!

Please find attached the Site Supervisor's Handbook that contains information about our department, a description of our policies and procedures, our expectations of you and our students, as well as copies of the forms used during the practicum/internship year.

The primary point of contact between the Counselor Education Department and your agency will be our Clinical Placement Coordinators. Feel free to direct any questions or concerns directly to them. Please find their contact information, for your reference, below:

Clinical Placement Coordinators:

Amy Tully, tullya@newpaltz.edu

Yvette Kelly, kellyy@newpaltz.edu

Administrative Assistant, Watermark Administrator

Susan Buckbee, buckbees@newpaltz.edu

Thank you for your many contributions to the training of our students! I hope your experience with our department is an enriching one.

Sincerely yours,

Melanie S. Hill

Melanie S. Hill, Ph.D., NCC
Chair, Counselor Education Department
State University of New York at New Paltz

COUNSELOR EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Counselor Education Department offers the following:

1. M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling,
2. M.S. in School Counseling, and
3. Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Counselor Education Department at SUNY New Paltz trains highly skilled clinical mental health counselors and school counselors knowledgeable in both the practice and science of counseling. The program's climate combines rigorous academics that meet national standards along with a collegial and supportive mentoring environment that conceptualizes students as emerging professionals. The program is committed to the academic and personal development of counseling trainees within an atmosphere that values cultural and intellectual diversity. The program's goal is to prepare mental health and school counselors who:

- Possess the knowledge and skills necessary to practice as highly competent counselors.
- Demonstrate intellectual curiosity and a commitment to continually expanding their counseling knowledge and proficiency.
- Understand and model the professional standards and ethics of their profession.
- Attend to their own personal growth and that of their clients through supervision, valuing interpersonal feedback, and engaging in ongoing self-evaluation.
- Show mastery of the research process and understand its central role in counseling practice and conducting program evaluation.
- Are open-minded and respectful of multicultural and intellectual diversity.
- Use their counseling knowledge to function as compassionate and caring practitioners, advocates, and leaders within their profession and within the communities they serve.

FACULTY & STAFF FULL-TIME FACULTY

DR. MELANIE HILL (SHE/HER)

Chair & Associate Professor, Counselor Education Department

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DR. KELLY GREEN KEARNS (SHE/HER)

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DR. BETHANY DZIMIERA (SHE/HER)

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DR. CLAUDIA LINGERTAT (SHE/HER)

Visiting Assistant Professor

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Administrative Assistant

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Clinical Placement Coordinator (Middle & Lower Hudson Valley)

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Clinical Placement Coordinator (Upper Hudson Valley)

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CHRIS CHAMBERLIN (HE/HIM)

Training Clinic Director

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AFFILIATED AND ADJUNCT FACULTY

DR. AMY NITZA (SHE/HER)

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DR. JONATHAN RASKIN (HE/HIM)

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RACHEL SPEAR (SHE/HER)

Adjunct Faculty

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CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Counselor Education Department offers a CACREP-Accredited 60-credit Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, which serves both students looking to become licensed as mental health counselors and those seeking to eventually proceed into doctoral programs. The curriculum covers mental health counseling practice and research, in addition to necessary coursework in human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, helping relationships, group work, career and lifestyle development, appraisal, research and program development, and professional orientation. Practicum and internship experiences provide unique, varied, and intense hands-on mental health counseling training experiences under supervision of licensed professionals. The degree can be completed full-time in two years, including summer classes. The program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and is registered with the State Education Department as meeting the educational requirements necessary for mental health counseling licensure in New York. Detailed information on the Licensure and Practice of the Mental Health Professions in New York is available from the Office of the Professions (OP) at <http://www.op.nysed.gov/mhclhc.htm>.

MISSION STATEMENT

In addition to the criteria outlined in the general mission statement, the **mission of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program** is to produce graduates who:

- Function as highly skilled and ethical counselors in individual, couples, and group settings.
- Demonstrate mastery of major counseling theories and skills and show the ability to utilize them therapeutically in clinical settings.
- Have strong foundational knowledge in human growth and development and can use it to inform their therapeutic work with individuals, couples, and groups.
- Value and respect diversity and demonstrate multicultural competency working with therapy clients from diverse backgrounds.
- Show mastery of skills necessary to work therapeutically with clients who have experienced crises, disasters, and trauma.
- Possess an adjustment-oriented approach that emphasizes prevention, wellness, early intervention, and advocacy, along with diagnosis and remediation of pathology.

CACREP STANDARDS

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is nationally accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This accreditation benefits our students in many ways, including making their licensure more portable to other states. To keep the accreditation, we must continue to meet CACREP Standards (2016). These standards cover the qualifications of the faculty and site supervisors, the content we teach, and how we evaluate our program. CACREP outlines common competencies for all accredited programs in eight core content areas. Furthermore, CACREP has student learning objectives for specific counseling specializations (e.g., school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, couples and family counseling). The CACREP core standards and school counseling competencies are described in detail in Appendices A and B, respectively. Additional information related to CACREP standards can be found at <https://www.cacrep.org/>.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Counselor Education Department objectives were revised in Fall 2019 and are in alignment with CACREP’s Professional Identity Standards.

CACREP Professional Identity Standard	Program Objective #	SUNY New Paltz Counselor Education Department Objectives
Professional Counseling Orientation & Ethical Practice	PO-01	Students develop strong professional identities as mental health and school counselors and learn to think and act ethically, demonstrating professional accountability for their knowledge and application of ethical principles, codes, and decision-making processes.
	PO-02	Students understand the various professional roles that mental health and school counselors engage in, including - but not limited to - supervision, consultation, leadership and social advocacy.
Social & Cultural Diversity	PO-03	Students learn to be sensitive to the diversity in ethnicity and life situations of their clients and are able to adapt their counseling practice to the individual needs of diverse clients.
Human Growth & Development	PO-04	Students will be able to apply various theories of human development to their counseling process, so they are effective at integrating a developmental approach to counseling in their work with clients.
	PO-05	Students learn theories of normal and abnormal personality development.
	PO-06	Students learn theories and etiology of addictions and addictive behaviors
Career Development	PO-07	Students understand career development across the lifespan for diverse clients, how to integrate career concerns with mental health concerns, and demonstrate ethical and culturally competent career counseling strategies.
Counseling & Helping Relationships	PO-08	Students learn theories and models of counseling, including a systems approach to conceptualizing clients.
	PO-09	Students learn the foundational ingredients of effective counseling and psychotherapy, particularly development of an empathic, collaborative therapeutic alliance and therapeutic skills that foster movement toward clients’ goals and potentialities. Students demonstrate basic competence in utilizing psychotherapy skills fundamental to all theoretical approaches, conduct an intake interview with initial assessment and case conceptualization, and facilitate counseling sessions.
Group Counseling & Group Work	PO-10	Students learn the theory and practice of group counseling. Students demonstrate understanding of types of groups related to clients’ goals; ethical and professional concerns related to group work; leadership issues and skills; group dynamics; stages of group development; therapeutic factors evoked within groups, application of contemporary theoretical approaches; and standards of practice.
Assessment & Testing	PO-11	Students will gain knowledge needed to administer, interpret and utilize psychological tests and other sources of assessment data in school, community, clinic and other mental health settings.
Research & Program Evaluation	PO-12	Students will understand how to apply principles of effective research to evaluating counseling research to inform their counseling practice and to participate in practice-based research at their counseling site.
Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice; Human Growth & Development; Counseling & Helping Relationships	PO-13	Students learn theory, research, and practice in crisis counseling and disaster mental health.

Professional Dispositions	PO-14	Students demonstrate the interpersonal capacity to relate to others in the appropriate and professional manner as expected of professional counselors.
Clinical Mental Health Counseling	PO- CMHC-01	Students understand the theories and models of clinical mental health counseling and are able to effectively use client case conceptualizations to assess, diagnose, and identify and apply appropriate treatment modalities to a wide range of client situations.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS (60-CREDITS)

Counseling Foundation	COU 570 Substance Use & Addictions Counseling (3)
COU 510 Counseling Theories (3)	Measurement & Diagnosis
COU 515 Counseling Skills (3)	COU 610 Research Methods & Program Evaluation (3)
COU 520 Career Development, Counseling, & Assessment (3)	COU 540 Psychopathology (3)
COU 525 Multicultural Counseling (3)	COU 555 Assessment (3)
COU 575 Human Growth and Development (3)	Professional Identity & Training
Practicum & Internship	COU 501 Ethics & Professional Identity in CMHC (3)
COU 530 Practicum in Mental Health Counseling (3)	COU 505 Professional Roles in CMHC (3)
COU 771 Internship in Mental Health Counseling 1 (3)	Specialization
COU 772 Internship in Mental Health Counseling 2 (3)	COU 585 Contemporary Issues (3)
Professional Practice	COU 585 Contemporary Issues (3)
COU 545 Group Dynamics & Counseling (3)	Elective (3 credits)
COU 550 Couple & Family Counseling (3)	Mandated Training
COU 565 Disaster Counseling & Crisis Intervention (3)	Child Abuse ID/Reporting

TWO-YEAR PLAN OF STUDY

	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
Year 1	(12 CREDITS) COU501 Ethics & Prof. Iden in MHC COU510 Counseling Theories COU515 Counseling Skills COU520 Career Counseling	(12 CREDITS) COU540 Psychopathology COU545 Group Counseling COU575 Human Growth & Dev PLUS, one of the following: COU530 Practicum in MHC COU565 Disaster & Crisis Interventions	(6 CREDITS) COU570 Substance Use & Addictions PLUS, one of the following: COU530 Practicum in MHC COU565 Disaster & Crisis Interventions
Year 2	(12 CREDITS) COU505 Professional Roles in MHC COU525 Multicultural Counseling COU771 Internship in MHC I COU555 Assessment	(12 CREDITS) COU550 Couple & Family Counseling COU610 Research Meth & Prgm Eval COU772 Internship in MHC II COU Elective	(6 CREDITS) COU585 Contemp Issues COU585 Contemp Issues

THREE-YEAR PLAN OF STUDY

	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
Year 1	<p>(9 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU501 Ethics & Prof. Iden in MHC COU510 Counseling Theories COU515 Counseling Skills</p>	<p>(9 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU540 Psychopathology COU545 Group Dynamics & Counseling COU575 Human Growth & Dev</p>	<p>(6 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU565 Disaster & Crisis Interventions COU570 Substance Use & Addictions</p>
Year 2	<p>(9 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU505 Professional Roles in MHC COU520 Career Counseling COU525 Multicultural Counseling</p>	<p>(9 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU530 Practicum in MHC COU550 Couple & Family Counseling COU 610 Research Meth & Prgm Eval</p>	<p>(6 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU585 Contemporary Issues COU585 Contemporary Issues</p>
Year 3	<p>(6 credits)</p> <p>COU 771 Internship in MHCI COU COU555 Assessment</p>	<p>(6 CREDITS)</p> <p>COU 772 Internship in MHC II COU Elective</p>	

PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP

OVERVIEW

Clinical Mental Health Counseling students complete intensive supervised practicum and internship experiences during which they actively work with clients and students in mental health-related training settings. The counseling practicum and internship constitute the students' primary applied training experiences and involve accruing many hours of direct client contact under supervision of trained professionals. Students are expected to complete a total 700 hours for their practicum and internship experiences *combined*. As a practitioner-scholar oriented program, we believe these experiences are central to the education at SUNY New Paltz. The practicum is the fieldwork experience that occurs during the second semester of the student's first year. The experience is designed to reflect the student's initial experience working with clients. The internship begins the following year and involves an increase in the expectation for direct client contact and additional responsibilities. Both the practicum and internship experience carry with it the expectation of increasingly independent practice but under close supervision.

COLLEGE SUPERVISION

During the one semester of practicum and two semesters of internship, counselors-in-training enroll in a course supervised by a Counselor Education Department faculty member. These courses examine the wide range of professional issues often encountered when doing clinical work in schools, including, but are not limited to, questions of ethical standards, dealing with difficult students/parents, supervisory and/or organizational issues, and enhancing the personal and professional development of the intern as a counselor in training. The **Faculty Supervisor** is responsible for evaluating the counselor-in-training's counseling skills, ensuring that the learning objectives are being met, and monitoring the counselor-in-training's progress in their clinical work with students. Supervision provided by the faculty supervisor supplements, but does not replace nor supersede, on-site individual supervision by clinical staff. The **on-site supervisor** is clinically responsible for all cases and therefore has absolute authority in dictating client therapy.

The **Clinical Placement Coordinator** serves as a liaison between the program (including the Chair and Faculty Supervisor) and the practicum/internship site and serves as the primary point of contact for the site supervisor.

REQUIREMENTS

1. **Duration:** during the Spring semester, January – May; OR during the Summer 10-week session.
2. **Time:** Mental Health Counseling Practicum students are expected to complete 100 hours of on-site counseling-related work, at least 40 hours of which must be spent in direct counseling service.
 - a. **Direct Service** is defined as: “supervised use of counseling, consultation, or related professional skills with actual clients (can be individuals, couples, families, or groups) for the purpose of fostering social, cognitive, behavioral, and/or affective change. These activities must involve interaction with others and may include: (1) assessment, (2) counseling, (3) psycho-educational activities, and (4) consultation. The following would **not** be considered direct service: (1) observing others providing counseling or related services, (2) record keeping, (3) administrative duties, (4) clinical and/or administrative supervision” (CACREP 2019 Standards).
 - b. If the student counselor engages in **co-counseling** with another counselor, the student counselor must facilitate at least 50% of the session to count toward the direct hours requirement.
 - c. One hour of **group counseling** counts the same as one hour of individual counseling, regardless of how many individuals there are in the group being facilitated.
3. **Supervision:** there is a minimum requirement of **one hour a week** of onsite individual or triadic supervision with the student and the site supervisor. Students should not schedule a client meeting if they do not have direct access to a supervisor; students should have immediate access to a supervisor in case an emergency should arise.
 - a. The site supervisor must have:
 - i. a minimum of a master’s degree in mental health counseling or related field,
 - ii. relevant certifications and/or licenses
 - iii. a minimum of two years post-masters clinical experience,
 - iv. knowledge of the program’s expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students, and relevant training in counseling supervision.
 - b. Students are expected to participate in other learning opportunities such as case conferences and staff meetings.
 - c. The supervisor will complete an evaluation of the student at the middle and end of each semester. The program will provide forms for the supervisor evaluations.
4. **Audio/Video recording:** students are expected to bring recorded samples of their work to their university with permission for release signed by clients.
5. **Practicum Site Agreement:** the site agreement contract lists the expectations for the university, site, site supervisor, faculty supervisor, practicum student. The Clinical Placement Coordinator distributes and collects the site contracts at the beginning of each semester. A contract signed by the student and site supervisor is required at the beginning of the practicum training experience.
6. **Time Log-** Students are required to keep weekly time logs in a departmental Excel spreadsheet, and monthly time logs in Watermark. These time logs are prepared by the student and verified by the site supervisor. They document direct client contact hours, weekly supervision, and other activities attended by students such as case conferences, in-service trainings, and consultations with other care providers. Time logs will be retained by the College and should not contain any client- identifying information.

Note: Although each placement will have somewhat different requirements, it is expected that the specified hours designated above will be the same across all sites. Specific requirements for established placements will be completed by the on-site supervisor and according to guidelines established by SUNY New Paltz.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Student pre-requisites:

- Matriculated student in either the Clinical Mental Health Counseling or Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.

- Completion of the following courses with a minimum grade of a B:
 - COU501: Ethics & Professional Identity in Mental Health Counseling
 - COU510: Counseling Theories
 - COU515: Counseling Skills
- Students who are returning from a leave of absence may be required to take a Counselor Education course prior to proceeding to practicum, so that their readiness to proceed can be evaluated.

Applying for practicum. Students who meet the prerequisite requirements and wish to begin practicum must submit a Practicum Application by the date listed below. At the mid-point and the end of the relevant semester, the counseling core faculty, along with any the Practicum and Internship Coordinator and other instructors teaching the core counseling courses, meet to review all students who have applied for entry into the practicum. Students are assessed in terms of their (a) academic performance, (b) demonstration of counseling skills and competencies, (c) adherence to professional and ethical standards of the profession, and (d) a commitment to, and demonstration of, professional behaviors and dispositions.

Instructors will complete a “Midterm Feedback Form” which includes numerical ratings of student performance in these four areas, as well as written feedback. Counselor Education faculty advisors will meet with their advisees to share and discuss the feedback on this form. Students are provided a copy of the form; another copy is placed in the student file. Any student who is not making satisfactory progress in any of the four areas by the end of the semester may be held back from proceeding to practicum or put on probation and a remediation process is initiated to address the deficits.

Importantly, placement sites always reserve the right to determine which students will be placed at their site. At any time before or during a placement, should a site determine that a student is not fit to continue with a placement, then the site can dismiss the student from the placement.

2025 TIMELINE (SPRING PRACTICUM ONLY)

- **Tuesday, 9/3:** After consulting with the faculty, Amy and Yvette will begin contacting site supervisors at approved practicum sites to verify their availability, current opportunities, number of openings, etc.
- **Tuesday, 9/10:** Practicum Information Session- 11:00am: Mental Health Counseling students
- **Monday, 9/16:** Practicum Application Due. *Note:* Early in the fall semester is also the best time to prepare/update a high-quality resume, along with a cover letter template that can be customized to specific practicum sites (as discussed during the practicum information sessions).
- **Monday, 9/30:** Students who have submitted practicum applications to the Counselor Education Department will receive a survey containing approved and available practicum site information. Students will be asked to indicate their preferences. **(Survey due date: Friday 10/4)**
- **Thursday, 10/10:** Based on the data from site supervisors and students, Amy and Yvette will email each practicum applicant a personalized list of sites to apply to with the goal of optimizing the placement application process and outcomes.
- **10/14-10/15:** Fall Break. No Classes.
- **Thursday, 10/17:** Due date for students to send their resumes and cover letters to their assigned placement coordinator (Amy or Yvette) according to instructions provided on 10/10.
- **Monday, 10/21:** Amy and Yvette will notify participating site supervisors that our practicum placement process has officially begun, and send all student resumes and cover letters out to site supervisors.
- **Thursday, 11/14:** Rank-order lists due to assigned placement coordinator (Amy or Yvette) from practicum applicants and site supervisors (using a fillable form, to be distributed).
- **Friday, 11/22:** MATCH DAY. Each student will be e-mailed their match results, and site supervisors will be included in this correspondence. **Please remember that all placements are conditional upon a student's final academic evaluation for the fall 2024 semester.**

Important Note: Following the matching process, Amy and Yvette will work with any students who still need to be placed. Please remember that if a student has not applied to a minimum of 3 approved sites or has turned down the match (communicated by Amy or Yvette), we cannot guarantee that a placement will be secured. All placements are conditional and subject to end-of-semester evaluations that assess academics, counseling skill development, adherence to professional and ethical standards, and professional behaviors and dispositions. To take the practicum class, a student must be matched with an approved practicum site in advance. Even if given the go-ahead by the faculty, students are never guaranteed practicum placements. Placements are always at the discretion of the training sites.

POLICIES GUIDED BY CACREP

- Counselors-in-training are covered by individual professional counseling liability insurance policies while enrolled in practicum and internship (Standard III.A.).
- Supervision of practicum counselors-in-training includes program-appropriate audio/video recordings for use in supervision or live supervision of the student's interactions with clients (Standard III.B.).
- Formative and summative evaluations of the student's counseling performance and ability to integrate and apply knowledge are conducted as part of the student's practicum (Standard III.C.).
- Counselors-in-training have the opportunity to become familiar with a variety of professional activities and resources, including technological resources, during their practicum and internship (Standard III.D.).
- In addition to the development of individual counseling skills, during *either* the practicum or internship, counselors-in-training must lead or co-lead a counseling or psychoeducational group (Standard III.E.).
- Counselors-in-training complete supervised counseling practicum experiences that total a minimum of 100 clock hours over a full academic term that is a minimum 10-week academic term (Standard III.F.).
- Practicum counselors-in-training complete at least 40 clock hours of direct service with actual clients that contributes to the development of counseling skills (Standard III.G.).
- Practicum counselors-in-training have weekly interaction with supervisors that averages one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the practicum by a site supervisor who is working in biweekly consultation with a program faculty member in accordance with the supervision contract (Standard III.H.).
- Practicum counselors-in-training participate in an average of 1 ½ hours per week of group supervision that is provided on a regular schedule throughout the practicum. Group supervision must be provided by a Counselor Education Department faculty member (Standard III.I.).

REQUIREMENTS

1. **Duration:** during the academic calendar year, from August – May.
2. **Time:** Mental Health Counseling Internship students are expected to complete 600 hours of on-site counseling-related work, at least 240 hours of which must be spent in direct counseling service.
 - a. **Direct Service** is defined as: “supervised use of counseling, consultation, or related professional skills with actual clients (can be individuals, couples, families, or groups) for the purpose of fostering social, cognitive, behavioral, and/or affective change. These activities must involve interaction with others and may include: (1) assessment, (2) counseling, (3) psycho-educational activities, and (4) consultation. The following would **not** be considered direct service: (1) observing others providing counseling or related services, (2) record keeping, (3) administrative duties, (4) clinical and/or administrative supervision” (CACREP 2019 Standards).
 - b. If the student counselor engages in **co-counseling** with another counselor, the student counselor must facilitate at least 50% of the session to count toward the direct hours requirement.
 - c. One hour of **group counseling** counts the same as one hour of individual counseling, regardless of how many individuals there are in the group being facilitated.
3. **Supervision:** there is a minimum requirement of **one hour a week** of onsite individual or triadic supervision with the student and the site supervisor. Students should not schedule a client meeting if they do not have direct access to a supervisor; students should have immediate access to a supervisor in case an emergency should arise.
 - a. The site supervisor must have:
 - i. a minimum of a master’s degree in mental health counseling or related field,
 - ii. relevant certifications and/or licenses
 - iii. a minimum of two years post-masters clinical experience,
 - iv. knowledge of the program’s expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students,
 - v. relevant training in counseling supervision.
 - b. Students are expected to participate in other learning opportunities such as case conferences and staff meetings.
 - c. The supervisor will complete an evaluation of the student at the middle and end of each semester. The program will provide forms for the supervisor evaluations.
4. **Audio/Video recording:** students are expected to bring recorded samples of their work to their university with permission for release signed by clients.
5. **Internship Site Agreement:** the site agreement contract lists the expectations for the university, site, site supervisor, faculty supervisor, practicum student/intern. The Clinical Placement Coordinator distributes and collects the site contracts at the beginning of each semester. A contract signed by the student and site supervisor is required at the beginning of the internship training experience.
6. **Time Log-** Students are required to keep weekly time logs in a departmental Excel spreadsheet, and monthly time logs in Watermark. These time logs are prepared by the student and verified by the site supervisor. They document direct client contact hours, weekly supervision, and other activities attended by students such as case conferences, in-service trainings, and consultations with other care providers. Time logs will be retained by the College and should not contain any client- identifying information.

Note: Although each placement will have somewhat different requirements, it is expected that the specified hours designated above will be the same across all sites. Specific requirements for established placements will be completed by the on-site supervisor and according to guidelines established by SUNY New Paltz.

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Student pre-requisites:

- ✓ Matriculated student in either the Clinical Mental Health Counseling or Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.

- ✓ Completion of the following courses with a minimum grade of a B:
 - COU530: Foundations in Mental Health Counseling
- ✓ Currently enrolled in or have taken COU545 Group Counseling.
- ✓ Students who are returning from a leave of absence may be required to take a Counselor Education course prior to proceeding to practicum, so that their readiness to proceed can be evaluated.

Applying for internship. Students who meet the prerequisite requirements and wish to begin internship must submit an Internship Application by the published due date. At the midpoint and end of the relevant semester, the counseling core faculty, along with the Practicum and Internship Coordinator, and any other instructors teaching the core counseling courses, meet to review all students who have applied for entry into internship. Students are assessed in terms of their (a) academic performance, (b) demonstration of counseling skills and competencies, (c) adherence to professional and ethical standards of the profession, and (d) a commitment to, and demonstration of, professional behaviors and dispositions.

Instructors will complete a “Midterm Feedback Form” which includes numerical ratings of student performance in these four areas, as well as written feedback. Counselor Education faculty advisors will meet with their advisees to share and discuss the feedback on this form. Students are provided a copy of the form; another copy is placed in the student file. Any student who is not making satisfactory progress in any of the four areas by the end of the semester may be held back from proceeding to Internship II or put on probation and a remediation process is initiated to address the deficits.

To take the internship classes, a student must be offered an internship placement by an approved site. Even if given the go-ahead by the faculty, students are never guaranteed internship placements; the offer of a placement is always at the discretion of the training sites. Importantly, placement sites always reserve the right to determine which students will be placed at their site. At any time before or during a placement, should a site determine that a student is not fit to continue with a placement, then the site can dismiss the student from the placement. Further, all students completing the first semester of their year-long internship will be evaluated before being allowed to proceed to the second semester.

TIMELINE

Specific dates for the Fall 2025 Internship process will be shared at the beginning of the Spring 2025 semester and published in the monthly newsletter.

POLICIES GUIDED BY CACREP

- Counselors-in-training are covered by individual professional counseling liability insurance policies while enrolled in practicum and internship (Standard III.A.).
- Supervision of practicum counselors-in-training includes program-appropriate audio/video recordings for use in supervision or live supervision of the student’s interactions with clients (Standard III.B.).
- Formative and summative evaluations of the student’s counseling performance and ability to integrate and apply knowledge are conducted as part of the student’s practicum (Standard III.C.).
- Counselors-in-training have the opportunity to become familiar with a variety of professional activities and resources, including technological resources, during their practicum and internship (Standard III.D.).
- In addition to the development of individual counseling skills, during *either* the practicum or internship, counselors-in-training must lead or co-lead a counseling or psychoeducational group (Standard III.E.).
- After successful completion of the practicum, counselors-in-training complete 600 clock hours of supervised counseling internship in roles and settings with clients relevant to their specialty area (Standard III.J.)
- Internship counselors-in-training complete at least 240 clock hours of direct service (Standard III.K.)
- Internship counselors-in-training have weekly interaction with supervisors that averages one hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the internship, performed by the onsite supervisor (Standard III.L.)
- Internship counselors-in-training participate in an average of 1 ½ hours per week of group supervision provided on a regular schedule throughout the internship. Group supervision must be provided by a Counselor Education Department faculty member (Standard III.M.)

MANDATED TRAINING

HIPAA TRAINING

All students in the Counselor Education Department need to complete a [HIPAA training](#) and sign a [Confidentiality Agreement](#) prior to beginning the Counselor Education Department. Students will not be granted access to the clinical training spaces until the HIPAA training has been completed and the Confidentiality Agreement has been submitted. **Signed Confidentiality Agreements should be submitted to Susan Buckbee (WH 319) by the first day of classes.** The HIPAA Training and Confidentiality Agreement can be accessed via the Counselor Education Department website: <https://www.newpaltz.edu/psychology/counseling-graduate/forms-attachments-and-program-materials/>

CHILD ABUSE IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING

Students in the **School Counseling** program must complete a child abuse reporting session **prior to practicum.** This session can be taken on campus at SUNY New Paltz, online, or from any approved training provider. For a list of approved providers, see <http://www.op.nysed.gov/training/camemo.htm>.

- To take the training online, go to <http://www.childabuseworkshop.com/>. Enter the registration code NewPaltz9 for the same rate as on-campus. This code only works for SUNY New Paltz students.
- For more information the **on-campus workshop**, you can register for it at a discounted rate with your credit card at the beginning of every semester on our Certification Assistance webpage: <https://www.newpaltz.edu/schoolofed/certification.html#Workshops>

LIABILITY AND MALPRACTICE INSURANCE

All students must present evidence of adequate personal liability coverage; minimum amount of \$1,000,000 incident/\$1,000,000 aggregate. Student membership in the American Counseling Association (www.counseling.org/students) or New York Mental Health Counseling Association (<https://nymhca.org/page/membership-benefits>) makes students eligible for free or discounted malpractice insurance.

SUNY New Paltz is not endorsing or recommending these insurance companies. It is the student's responsibility to evaluate the insurance available prior to choosing a particular company. The student may choose to use his/her own personal insurance agent if that company can provide satisfactory coverage.

Students will be asked to present evidence of coverage prior to each course involving a training component. Evidence of coverage consists of a photocopy of the cover page of the insurance policy that shows the student's name, social security number, policy number, and dates of coverage. **Courses where proof of insurance is required are: COU 530, 535, 771, 772, 781, and 782.** If a change occurs in a student's insurance during clinical course work, the student is required to notify immediately the current instructor(s).

EVALUATION OF COUNSELING STUDENTS

OVERVIEW

The American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and Standards (2014) states that "Counselor educators, through ongoing evaluation, are aware of and address the inability of some students to achieve counseling competencies. Counselor educators do the following: (1) assist students in securing remedial assistance when needed, (2) seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students for assistance, and (3) ensure that students have recourse in a timely manner to address decisions requiring them to seek assistance or to dismiss them and provide students with due process according to institutional policies and procedures." (Section F.9.b).

The Counselor Education Department emphasizes professional, personal, and academic development as essential to counselor education. Counselors-in-training must not only (a) **excel academically** but must also (b) **demonstrate adequate counseling skills**

and competencies, (c) adhere to the professional and ethical standards of the profession, and (d) commit to and demonstrate professional behaviors and dispositions including Commitment, Humility, Openness, Respect, Integrity, and Self-Awareness (CHORIS).

The Counselor Education Faculty **and clinical on-site supervisors** will evaluate counselors-in-training based on these criteria throughout the program. A student's acceptance in the program does not guarantee their fitness to remain in the program. Counselors-in-training who cannot or choose not to adhere to or meet these criteria will be subject to probation, remediation and/or dismissal from the respective programs.

The following section presents a detailed outline of:

1. how and when counselors-in-training can be expected to be evaluated;
2. faculty and students' responsibility as well as students' rights;
3. policies and procedures on how faculty will identify and will work with counselors-in-training' who exhibit some type of deficiency;
4. the procedures for how such issues will be adjudicated;
5. how such issues may be resolved (i.e., probation, remediation, or dismissal from program).

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Students are formally and informally evaluated throughout the program on their: (a) **academic performance**, (b) **demonstration of counseling skills and competencies**, (c) **adherence to professional and ethical standards of the profession**, and (d) **a commitment to, and demonstration of, professional behaviors and dispositions**.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

- A cumulative B average (GPA of 3.0) or better must be maintained across all graduate level courses.
- No more than two grades below B- (2.67 on the 4.00 scale) will be permitted.
- Students must receive a grade of B or better in the following pre-requisite courses:
 - COU501 Ethics & Professional Identity in MHC or COU502 Ethics & Professional Identity in SC,
 - COU510 Counseling Theories,
 - COU515 Counseling Skills,
 - COU545 Group Dynamics & Counseling,
 - COU530 MHC Practicum or COU535 SC Practicum,
 - COU771/772 MHC Internship or COU781/782 SC Internship.
- The "Replace Course Grading Option" is available to matriculated graduate students as a *one-time*, single course option, subject to the approval of the Counselor Education Department Chair.
- Students should refer to academic policies on incomplete grades, withdrawals, academic probation, and grade appeal procedures outlined in The Office of Graduate, Professional and Interdisciplinary Studies Website: [Policies & Forms | SUNY New Paltz](#)

COUNSELING SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Counselors-in-training in both the CMHC and SC programs will be required to demonstrate several core counseling skills throughout the program.

WHAT SKILLS WILL BE ASSESSED?

Counselors-in-training will be assessed on 12 core counseling skills and 6 counseling dispositions (see appendix). While we expect continual demonstration of basic dispositions, counselors-in-training will be required to demonstrate more advanced

counseling skills as they progress throughout the program. For example, the counseling skills counselors-in-training will be required to demonstrate new and more sophisticated skills in COU530/535 compared to COU515.

HOW WILL COUNSELING SKILLS BE ASSESSED?

Depending on the course, counseling skills may be assessed in any of the following ways: in-class role-plays, out- of-class mock sessions, supervisor-verified transcripts, or audio/video taped sessions with clients/students.

Counseling skills may be assessed by the course instructor as well as the on-site supervisor according to the following five-point Likert scale: 4 = Highly Developed, 3 = Well Developed, 2 = Developing, 1 = Continue Practice, 0 = Major Adjustments Needed.

WHERE WILL COUNSELING SKILLS BE ASSESSED?

While these core counseling skills may be assessed in many of the COU courses, they will be the foundational assessment in the following courses: COU515 Counseling Skills, COU530 CMHC Practicum, COU535 SC Practicum, COU771 CMHC Internship I, COU772 CMHC Internship II, COU781 SC Internship I and COU782 SC Internship II.

HOW OFTEN WILL COUNSEING SKILLS BE ASSESSED?

Counselors-in-training will be assessed at least twice a semester (mid-term and end of semester) on their counseling skills in the foundational skills courses. In other courses, the number of and timing of counseling skills assessment will vary.

WHAT ARE THE COUNSELING SKILLS BENCHMARKS STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE ?

For each required counseling skill and disposition, the benchmark (i.e., rubric rating that needs to be achieved) will vary depending on the class (see attached). To successfully pass a course, without being on probation, counselors-in-training must meet each of the required benchmarks for that course (see Appendix).

If the highest rubric rating a student earns on any required counseling skill, is the “**probation**” they will be placed on **probation**. Students on probation will be required to follow a remediation plan determined by the Chair of the Counselor Education Department. Depending on the level of remediation needed, the remediation plan may include things such as:

- A mock session in which you highlight at least 2 instances where they demonstrate the skill.
- Audit COU515 Counseling Skills.
- Meet with instructors for additional supervision.

If, by the end of the semester, the highest rubric rating a student earns is “**unacceptable**” on any required counseling skill, they will be required to **repeat the course**. (see appendix for list of skills and [benchmarks by course](#))

PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL STANDARDS

Students are expected to be familiar with and abide by the following ethics codes, available on each organization’s website:

- American Counseling Association (ACA): <http://www.counseling.org/>
- American Psychological Association (APA): <http://www.apa.org/>

PROFESSIONALISM

Professional counselors are often held to a higher standard of professionalism than the community at large. We are expected to interact with others professionally, hold specific dispositions that support the mental well-being of our clients and colleagues, and take care of our own well-being so that it doesn’t interfere with our work. Below is a more specific description of each of these areas of professionalism.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS

Counselors serve as models in terms of respectful communication and a commitment to your role as a school counselor. Behaviors that showcase professionalism as a counseling student include (but are not limited to):

- **Showing up to class on time and prepared consistently** (and communicating when you are not able to do so) – be sure to familiarize yourself with attendance policies of each instructor.
- **Being an active learner** – while instructors are responsible for the content of their courses, you are also responsible for doing the readings and being prepared each week. As a faculty, we value interactive discussions and not didactic lectures where we tell you what you need to know. All readings should be completed prior to class.
- **Class engagement** – while everyone has different learning styles, it is generally expected that you show you are actively involved in class (not staring at your laptop throughout, texting on your phone, or engaging in other behaviors that detract from your classroom presence).
- **Responsibility for your own growth and needs** – proactively and respectfully working with faculty to address any personal issues that arise that might interfere with your ability to succeed.
- **Respect in interactions with others** – as we learn and grow as a community of counselors, it is imperative that we respect the lived experiences and humanity of one another and consistently express empathy and positive regard for one another. This also comes through in small ways, such as addressing the recipient by name in emails, or in larger ways, such as directly addressing others if conflict arises to showcase respect in the relationship.

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS EXPECTED OF STUDENTS

Professional dispositions are “the commitments, characteristics, values, beliefs, interpersonal functioning, and behaviors that influence the counselor’s professional growth and interactions with clients and colleagues” (CACREP, 2018). All students are expected to demonstrate these six (6) basic areas that are considered “essential attributes” for counselors (Spurgeon, Gibbons, & Cochran, 2012). The faculty is responsible for helping students identify strategies for building strong professional dispositions and providing feedback when dispositions may impact their effectiveness as counselors negatively. These dispositions have been shown to be associated with success for professional counselors (Christensen, Dickerman, & Dorn-Medeiros, 2018). You will be evaluated on each of these dispositions throughout the program. The acronym CHORIS may help you remember them.

Disposition	Definition
Commitment	Demonstrates engagement in and dedication to the learning process, the counseling profession, and the development of counseling skills and knowledge. Completes tasks by scheduled deadlines, meets program and site expectations, and takes initiative in program and site activities.
Humility	Demonstrates commitment to self-critique regarding own counseling skills, ability, and knowledge with a recognition that professional growth is a life-long process. Embraces an attitude of curiosity and acceptance of others' beliefs, identities, and values.
Openness	Demonstrates an interest in learning, growing, and changing behavior. Receives and integrates feedback, alternate perspectives, and new ideas into thinking and behaviors.
Respect	Demonstrates an ability to collaborate with colleagues and supervisors in the pursuit of shared goals and understanding. Recognizes role and maintains core conditions when navigating challenging or conflictual situations. Communicates with colleagues and supervisors effectively and appropriately.
Integrity	Demonstrates professional behavior with others, including maturity and honesty within all professional interactions. Takes responsibility for own professional behavior during challenging circumstances, including providing an accurate appraisal of the situation that is genuine and truthful regarding the

	events that transpired. Accepts mistakes and avoids placing blame on others. Adheres to professional and ethical guidelines for the counseling profession.
Self-Awareness	Demonstrates ability to recognize and manage own thoughts, feelings, and actions and how these impact relationships with others. Actively pursues learning about self in relationship to the world around them. Implements professional self-care strategies to optimize wellness, mitigate personal concerns, and prevent burnout that may impact clients and counselor competency.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Students in the program are expected to attend to their own social and emotional functioning. Counseling training requires that trainees be self-reflective, open to new and challenging ideas, willing to examine their own assumptions, able to receive feedback, and generally willing to engage in personal growth. At times this may involve examining one’s own life experiences and facing one’s own emotional issues. Willingness to do this important personal work is an integral part of any counselor’s training.

Counseling graduate students are encouraged by the faculty to seek personal counseling services for themselves during the time they are enrolled in the counselor preparation program. In keeping with the philosophy of counseling that counseling services can be helpful to all persons, not just individuals who have emotional or mental disorders, but for individuals who are functioning effectively as well, graduate students are encouraged to learn about themselves from being a client in a counseling relationship. In addition to self-exploration, being a client provides counseling students with the opportunity to experience what they ask their clients to do, which helps counseling students to empathize more fully with clients who seek counseling services.

A distinction is made between advisement and counseling. Advisement focuses on academic and professional goals and growth whereas counseling assists people with personal concerns and psychological adjustment.

Although Graduate Counselor Education Faculty members are qualified to fulfill both functions, ethics of the counseling profession prohibit them from engaging in **dual relationships** with their students. Because faculty members are asked to evaluate students’ academic and professional growth, they are asked to refrain from providing personal counseling services to students and their family members. Students who would like to seek professional counseling may consult with Counseling Program faculty regarding other services and referrals.

Requests for personal counseling referrals are encouraged and will not be judged negatively by the Counselor Education Faculty. Please see [Student Support Services](#) for therapist recommendations.

EVALUATION PROCESS

Students are formally and informally evaluated throughout the program on their: (a) academic performance, (b) demonstration of counseling skills and competencies, (c) adherence to professional and ethical standards of the profession, and (d) commitment to, and demonstration of, professional dispositions including Commitment, Humility, Openness, Respect, Integrity, and Self-Awareness (CHORIS).

According to the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) “F.9.a. Evaluation of Students Counselor educators clearly state to students, prior to and throughout the training program, the levels of competency expected, appraisal methods, and timing of evaluations for both didactic and clinical competencies. Counselor educators provide students with ongoing feedback regarding their performance throughout the training program.”

On the first day of each class, professors will specifically address—both in class and in their syllabi—how students will be evaluated in areas other than their academic performance. Generally, in addition to academic performance, this evaluation will include (a) students’ understanding and adherence to professional and ethical behavior, (b) their demonstration of their mastery

over the relevant professional skills and competencies, and (c) their social- emotional and interpersonal functioning as relevant to their work as counselors.

In addition, members of the Counselor Education Faculty meet to formally to evaluate student fitness and performance at the midpoint of fall, spring, and summer semesters. In some cases, students will be evaluated at other points during the year as well. The faculty make judgments as to the students' professional fitness and performance based on observations of course performance, evaluations of students' performances in simulated practice situations, supervisor's evaluations of student's performances in clinical situations, and their adherence to their discipline's code of ethics. Faculty will identify additional help students may need to be successful, as well as recognize outstanding achievements of students in their work utilizing the "Midterm Evaluation Form".

Students will be evaluated using the following rubric:

- 4 = exceeds standards (A/A-)
- 3 = meets standards (B+/B)
- 2 = approaches standards (B-/C+/C)
- 1 = does not meet standards (D/F)

PROCEDURES FOR REVIEWING STUDENT COMPETENCY

EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND PROBATION

- Students who receive a "2" in any of the areas for any course evaluated on their midterm or final evaluation (i.e., academics, counseling skills, professional development, personal development) will be placed on "program probation."
- Students are expected to attend to the areas of concern and demonstrate improvement for the student to successfully progress in the program.
- Students on program probation will be reviewed at the midpoint and end of every semester until enough significant progress has been noted for them to be removed from probation. For those on probation for receiving a "2" in either (a) academic performance or (b) counseling skills, this may be as soon as the end point of the semester in which they were placed on probation.
- At the discretion of the Counselor Education Faculty, students who are on program probation may be required to devise a written plan that addresses the concerns raised in their evaluation. This written plan should include goals and timeline by which the goals will be met.
- If there is not significant improvement made, then a professional competency review process may be initiated. See section describing professional competency review for additional information.

Proceeding to Practicum & Internship-

- Students who receive a "2" or below in (a) COU pre-requisite courses, (b) counseling skills, (c) professional development, or (d) personal development, cannot proceed on to practicum or internship.
- Students who have applied for and been denied a practicum or internship twice will automatically be removed from the program.

PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY REVIEW PROCEDURES

Step 1: If at any time during the semester, a faculty member identifies a concern with a student, the *faculty member will meet with the student on an informal basis* to see if some informal remediation can resolve the issue. Faculty members will attempt to identify and address any concerns with a student's performance as early as possible in the semester.

Step 2: If the issue cannot be resolved in this manner, the faculty member will initiate the *Student Professional Competency Review* procedure by filling out the "Call for Student Professional Competency Evaluation" and the relevant sections of the "Professional Counseling Performance Evaluation Form."

1. The faculty member will provide the “Call for Student Professional Competency Evaluation” to the Counselor Education Department Chair (*note: if the Chair of the Counselor Education Department is the one completing the “Call for Student Professional Competency Evaluation”, another Counselor Education Faculty member will be nominated by the Counselor Education Faculty to serve in the Chair’s role for these proceedings).
2. The Counselor Education Department Chair will, within 2 weeks, designate a “Faculty Review Committee” consisting of three members from the Counselor Education, Music Therapy, or Communication Disorders faculty. The purpose of the Faculty Review Committee is to assess the student’s performance and recommend a course of action to the student and Counselor Education Department Chair. (*In the instance that three Counselor Education faculty members are not available to serve, affiliated faculty with appropriate counseling training may be nominated to serve on the Faculty Review Committee).
3. Once a Faculty Review Committee has been established, the Counselor Education Department Chair will inform the student in writing that the Faculty Review Committee will be meeting, and that the student’s presence is required. This written notice will occur within a week of the Faculty Review Committee being established. The specific time and date of the meeting will be shared with the student by the Chair of the Faculty Review Committee (giving the student approximately two weeks’ notice). The student will be allowed to bring a representative to the meeting with whom the student can consult, but who may not speak during the meeting. A notice of this meeting will also be provided to the Psychology Department Chair, the Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Assistant VP of Graduate and Extended Learning.
4. At the conclusion of the meeting, the Faculty Review Committee will recommend one of three courses of action:
 - a. The student’s professional and interpersonal functioning is okay, and the student can continue in the program with **no remediation** or further concern.
 - b. The student should undergo some form of **remediation**. (See information about remediation below)
 - c. The student should be **dismissed** from the program.
5. Within two weeks of making their decision, the Faculty Review Committee will inform the Counselor Education Department Chair of their decision.
6. Within two weeks of receiving the decision from the Faculty Review Committee, the Counselor Education Department Chair will officially inform the student in writing of the committee’s decision. A copy of this decision will also be provided to the Psychology Department Chair, the Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Assistant VP of Graduate and Extended Learning.
7. If at any point the student does not agree with the Faculty Review Committee’s decision and/or does not believe that the proper procedures for the review have been followed, the student may appeal to the decision (See Disposition Appeal Procedures described below).

REMEDATION

- The form of remediation is determined by the committee.
- Examples of remediation include but are not limited to course repetition, denial of advancement to sequenced courses, recommendation to receive personal counseling, increased supervision, reduced clinical load, written warnings, placement on formal probation, advisement to take a leave of absence, disciplinary action, receiving tutoring, attending special seminars, extra assignment or coursework, attending peer support groups, and repetition of practicum/internship.
- If the review committee and the Counselor Education Department Chair recommend that the student receive some type of remediation and the student agrees to this recommendation:
 1. A time-based and outcome focused plan will be developed in which clearly documentable steps and actions to be taken by the student (and perhaps faculty) to help student remediate the issue.
 2. A date for a follow-up review procedure is identified to determine if the student has met the goals and expectations of the remediation.
 3. At the date indicated, the Counselor Education Faculty determines the student’s future status in the program based on their assessment of whether the remediation has been successful. They inform the student and

Psychology Department Chair, the Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences and the Assistant VP of Graduate and Extended Learning about whether (a) they believe the remediation has worked, (b) further remediation is required, or (c) the student should be dismissed from the program. If the remediation is successful, then the student continues with the program under no further sanction. If it has not been successful, then the Counselor Education Faculty either implements additional remediation (returning the process to Step 2) or moves to dismiss the student from the program.

4. If the Counselor Education Faculty chooses to dismiss the student from the program, the Counselor Education Faculty will be reported this to the student, Psychology Department Chair, the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Learning Innovation in writing.
5. If at any point the student does not agree with the Counselor Education Faculty's decision and/or does not believe that the proper procedures for the review have been followed, the student may appeal to the decision (See Graduate Academic Appeals Procedures described below).

GRADUATE ACADEMIC APPEALS PROCEDURES

Students who wish to appeal an course grade, academic integrity decision, or a professional dispositions decision should use the Graduate Academic Appeals Procedure described in detail in the Graduate Catalog: [Graduate Academic Appeals Procedure < State University of New York at New Paltz](#)

STUDENT EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

All currently enrolled students can evaluate individual courses and instructors throughout their enrollment. Further, they will be given the opportunity to evaluate their on-site supervisors and practicum/internship placements. Graduates are contacted shortly after they graduate, and periodically thereafter to solicit their opinions about the program, faculty, department, and clinical experiences. Graduates and students currently enrolled in the program are encouraged to provide up-to-date contact information.

While all forms are completed and submitted using Watermark, the pages that follow include samples of the many are the forms you will need as you work with our counselors-in-training during their practicum and internship experience. Printable copies of these forms are available online via the Counselor Education Department website (<https://www.newpaltz.edu/counselor-education/>)

You will find these forms in the pages that follow:

- A. [CACREP Core Competencies](#)
- B. [CACREP School Counseling Competencies](#)
- C. [Counseling Skill Benchmarks by Class](#)
- D. [Call for Student Professional Competency Review](#)

CACREP CORE COMPETENCIES

1. PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION AND PRACTICE

- a. history and philosophy of the counseling profession and its specialty areas
- b. the multiple professional roles and functions of counselors across specialty areas, and their relationships with human service and integrated behavioral health care systems, including interagency and interorganizational collaboration and consultation
- c. counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of interdisciplinary community outreach and emergency management response teams
- d. the role and process of the professional counselor advocating on behalf of the profession
- e. advocacy processes needed to address institutional and social barriers that impede access, equity, and success for clients
- f. professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current issues
- g. professional counseling credentialing, including certification, licensure, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues
- h. current labor market information relevant to opportunities for practice within the counseling profession
- i. ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling
- j. technology's impact on the counseling profession
- k. strategies for personal and professional self-evaluation and implications for practice
- l. self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role
- m. the role of counseling supervision in the profession

2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

- a. multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally
- b. theories and models of multicultural counseling, cultural identity development, and social justice and advocacy
- c. multicultural counseling competencies
- d. the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others
- e. the effects of power and privilege for counselors and clients

- f. help-seeking behaviors of diverse clients
- g. the impact of spiritual beliefs on clients' and counselors' worldviews
- h. strategies for identifying and eliminating barriers, prejudices, and processes of intentional and unintentional oppression and discrimination

3. HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- a. theories of individual and family development across the lifespan
- b. theories of learning
- c. theories of normal and abnormal personality development
- d. theories and etiology of addictions and addictive behaviors
- e. biological, neurological, and physiological factors that affect human development, functioning, and behavior
- f. systemic and environmental factors that affect human development, functioning, and behavior
- g. effects of crisis, disasters, and trauma on diverse individuals across the lifespan
- h. a general framework for understanding differing abilities and strategies for differentiated interventions
- i. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for promoting resilience and optimum development and wellness across the lifespan

4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT

- a. theories and models of career development, counseling, and decision making
- b. approaches for conceptualizing the interrelationships among and between work, mental well-being, relationships, and other life roles and factors
- c. processes for identifying and using career, avocational, educational, occupational and labor market information resources, technology, and information systems
- d. approaches for assessing the conditions of the work environment on clients' life experiences
- e. strategies for assessing abilities, interests, values, personality and other factors that contribute to career development
- f. strategies for career development program planning, organization, implementation, administration, and evaluation
- g. strategies for advocating for diverse clients' career and educational development and employment opportunities in a global economy
- h. strategies for facilitating client skill development for career, educational, and life-work planning and management
- i. methods of identifying and using assessment tools and techniques relevant to career planning and decision making
- j. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for addressing career development

5. COUNSELING & HELPING RELATIONSHIPS

- a. theories and models of counseling
- b. a systems approach to conceptualizing clients
- c. theories, models, and strategies for understanding and practicing consultation
- d. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for establishing and maintaining in-person and technology-assisted relationships
- e. the impact of technology on the counseling process

- f. counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process
- g. essential interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization skills
- h. developmentally relevant counseling treatment or intervention plans
- i. development of measurable outcomes for clients
- j. evidence-based counseling strategies and techniques for prevention and intervention
- k. strategies to promote client understanding of and access to a variety of community-based resources
- l. suicide prevention models and strategies
- m. crisis intervention, trauma-informed, and community-based strategies, such as Psychological First Aid
- n. processes for aiding counselors-in-training in developing a personal model of counseling

6. GROUP COUNSELING & GROUP WORK

- a. theoretical foundations of group counseling and group work
- b. dynamics associated with group process and development
- c. therapeutic factors and how they contribute to group effectiveness
- d. characteristics and functions of effective group leaders
- e. approaches to group formation, including recruiting, screening, and selecting members
- f. types of groups and other considerations that affect conducting groups in varied settings
- g. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for designing and facilitating groups
- h. direct experiences in which counselors-in-training participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours over the course of one academic term

7. ASSESSMENT & TESTING

- a. historical perspectives concerning the nature and meaning of assessment and testing in counseling
- b. methods of effectively preparing for and conducting initial assessment meetings
- c. procedures for assessing risk of aggression or danger to others, self-inflicted harm, or suicide
- d. procedures for identifying trauma and abuse and for reporting abuse
- e. use of assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes
- f. basic concepts of standardized and non-standardized testing, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessments, and group and individual assessments
- g. statistical concepts, including scales of measurement, measures of central tendency, indices of variability, shapes and types of distributions, and correlations
- h. reliability and validity in the use of assessments
- i. use of assessments relevant to academic/educational, career, personal, and social development
- j. use of environmental assessments and systematic behavioral observations
- k. use of symptom checklists, and personality and psychological testing
- l. use of assessment results to diagnose developmental, behavioral, and mental disorders
- m. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for selecting, administering, and interpreting assessment and test results

8. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

- a. the importance of research in advancing the counseling profession, including how to critique research to inform counseling practice
- b. identification of evidence-based counseling practices
- c. needs assessments
- d. development of outcome measures for counseling programs
- e. evaluation of counseling interventions and programs
- f. qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods
- g. designs used in research and program evaluation
- h. statistical methods used in conducting research and program evaluation
- i. analysis and use of data in counseling
- j. ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting, interpreting, and reporting the results of research and/or program evaluation

CACREP MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING COMPETENCIES

Counselors-in-training who are preparing to specialize as clinical mental health counselors will demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the context of clinical mental health counseling. Counselor Education Departments with a specialty area in clinical mental health counseling must document where each of the lettered standards listed below is covered in the curriculum.

1. FOUNDATIONS

- a. History and development of clinical mental health counseling
- b. Theories and models related to clinical mental health counseling
- c. Principles, models, and documentation formats of biopsychosocial case conceptualization and treatment planning
- d. Neurobiological and medical foundation and etiology of addiction and co-occurring disorders
- e. Psychological tests and assessments specific to clinical mental health counseling

2. CONTEXTUAL DIMENSIONS

- a. Roles and settings of clinical mental health counselors
- b. Etiology, nomenclature, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders
- c. Mental health service delivery modalities within the continuum of care, such as inpatient, outpatient, partial treatment and aftercare, and the mental health counseling services networks
- d. Diagnostic process, including differential diagnosis and the use of current diagnostic classification systems, including the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* and the *International Classification of Diseases (ICD)*
- e. Potential for substance use disorders to mimic and/or co-occur with a variety of neurological, medical, and psychological disorders
- f. Impact of crisis and trauma on individuals with mental health diagnoses
- g. Impact of biological and neurological mechanisms on mental health
- h. Classifications, indications, and contraindications of commonly prescribed psychopharmacological medications for appropriate medical referral and consultation
- i. Legislation and government policy relevant to clinical mental health counseling
- j. Cultural factors relevant to clinical mental health counseling
- k. Professional organizations, preparation standards, and credentials relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling
- l. Legal and ethical considerations specific to clinical mental health counseling
- m. Record keeping, third party reimbursement, and other practice and management issues in clinical mental health counseling

3. PRACTICE

- a. Intake interview, mental status evaluation, biopsychosocial history, mental health history, and psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management
- b. Techniques and interventions for prevention and treatment of a broad range of mental health issues
- c. Strategies for interfacing with the legal system regarding court-referred clients
- d. Strategies for interfacing with integrated behavioral health care professionals
- e. Strategies to advocate for persons with mental health issues

COUNSELING SKILL BENCHMARKS BY CLASS

Counseling Skill	Description	COU515 Counseling Skills	COU530 CMHC Practicum	COU771 CMHC Internship I	COU772 CMHC Internship II
1 Nonverbal Skills	Includes body position, eye contact, posture, distance from client, voice tone, rate of speech, use of silence, etc. (<i>attuned to the emotional state and cultural norms of the clients</i>)	Demonstrates effective nonverbal communication skills, conveying connectedness & empathy.	Demonstrates effective nonverbal communication skills for the majority of counseling sessions.	Demonstrates inconsistency in his or her nonverbal communication skills.	Demonstrates limited nonverbal communication skills.
2 Encouragers	Includes minimal encouragers & door openers such as “Tell me more about...”, “Hmm...”	Demonstrates appropriate use of encouragers, which supports development of a therapeutic relationship.	Demonstrates appropriate use of encouragers for the majority of counseling sessions, which supports development of a therapeutic relationship.	Demonstrates inconsistency in his or her use of appropriate encouragers.	Demonstrates limited ability to use appropriate encouragers.
3 Questions	Use of appropriate open & closed questioning (<i>e.g., avoidance of double questions</i>)	Demonstrates appropriate use of open & close-ended questions, with an emphasis on open-ended question.	Demonstrates appropriate use of open & close-ended questions for the majority of counseling sessions.	Demonstrates inconsistency in using open-ended questions & may use closed questions for prolonged periods.	Demonstrates limited ability to use open-ended questions with restricted effectiveness.
4 Reflecting-Paraphrasing	Basic reflection of content-paraphrasing (<i>With couples, families, or groups- paraphrasing the different clients’ multiple perspectives</i>)	Demonstrates appropriate use of paraphrasing as a primary therapeutic approach.	Demonstrates appropriate use of paraphrasing.	Demonstrates paraphrasing inconsistently & inaccurately or mechanical or parroted responses.	Demonstrates limited proficiency in paraphrasing or is often inaccurate.
5 Reflecting-Reflection of Feelings	Reflection of feelings (<i>With couples, families or groups- reflection of each clients’ feelings</i>)	Demonstrates appropriate use of reflection of feelings as a primary approach.	Demonstrates appropriate use of reflection of feelings.	Demonstrates reflection of feelings inconsistently & is not matching the client.	Demonstrates limited proficiency in reflecting feelings &/or is often inaccurate.
6 Reflecting-Summarizing	Summarizing content, feelings, behaviors, & future plans (<i>With couples, families or groups- summarizing relational patterns of interaction</i>)	Demonstrates consistent ability to use summarization to include content, feelings, behaviors, and future plans.	Demonstrates ability to appropriately use summarization to include content, feelings, behaviors, and future plans.	Demonstrates inconsistent & inaccurate ability to use summarization.	Demonstrates limited ability to use summarization (<i>e.g., summary suggests counselor did not</i>

						understand clients or is overly focused on content rather than process).
7	Advanced Reflection (Meaning)	Advanced reflection of meaning, including values and core beliefs (<i>taking counseling to a deeper level</i>)	Demonstrates consistent use of advanced reflection & promotes discussions of greater depth during counseling sessions	Demonstrates ability to appropriately use advanced reflection, supporting increased exploration in session	Demonstrates inconsistent & inaccurate ability to use advanced reflection. Counseling sessions appear superficial.	Demonstrates limited ability to use advanced reflection &/or switches topics in counseling often.
8	Confrontation	Counselor challenges clients to recognize & evaluate inconsistencies	Demonstrates the ability to challenge clients through verbalizing inconsistencies & discrepancies in the clients' words &/or actions in a supportive fashion. Balance of challenge & support.	Demonstrates the ability to challenge clients through verbalizing inconsistencies & discrepancies in the clients' words &/or actions in a supportive fashion (can confront, but hesitant) or was not needed; therefore, appropriately not used	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to challenge clients through verbalizing inconsistencies & discrepancies in clients' words &/or actions in a supportive fashion. Used minimally/missed opportunity.	Demonstrates limited ability to challenge clients through verbalizing discrepancies in the client's words &/or actions in a supportive & caring fashion, &/or skill is lacking
9	Goal Setting	Counselor collaborates with clients to establish realistic, appropriate & attainable therapeutic goals (<i>with couples, families, or groups- goal setting supports clients in therapeutic goals</i>)	Demonstrates consistent ability to establish collaborative & appropriate therapeutic goals with clients.	Demonstrates ability to establish collaborative & appropriate therapeutic goals with client.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to establish collaborative & appropriate therapeutic goals with clients.	Demonstrates limited ability to establish collaborative, appropriate therapeutic goals with clients.
10	Focus of Counseling	Counselor focuses (or refocuses) clients on their therapeutic goals (<i>i.e., purposeful counseling</i>)	Demonstrates consistent ability to focus &/or refocus counseling on clients' goal attainment.	Demonstrates ability to focus &/or refocus counseling on clients' goal attainment.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to focus &/or refocus counseling on clients' therapeutic goal attainment.	Demonstrates limited ability to focus &/or refocus counseling on clients' therapeutic goal attainment.
11	Facilitate Therapeutic Environment:	Expresses accurate empathy & care; Counselor is "present" and open to clients (<i>includes immediacy and concreteness</i>)	Demonstrates consistent ability to be empathic & uses	Demonstrates ability to be empathic & uses appropriate responses.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to be empathic &/or	Demonstrates limited ability to be empathic &/or

	Empathy & Caring		appropriate responses.		use appropriate responses.	uses appropriate responses
12	Facilitate Therapeutic Environment: Respect & Compassion	Counselor expresses appropriate respect & compassion for clients	Demonstrates consistent ability to be respectful, accepting, & compassionate with clients.	Demonstrates ability to be respectful, accepting, & compassionate with clients.	Demonstrates inconsistent ability to be respectful, accepting, & compassionate with clients.	Demonstrates limited ability to be respectful, accepting, &/or compassionate with clients.

