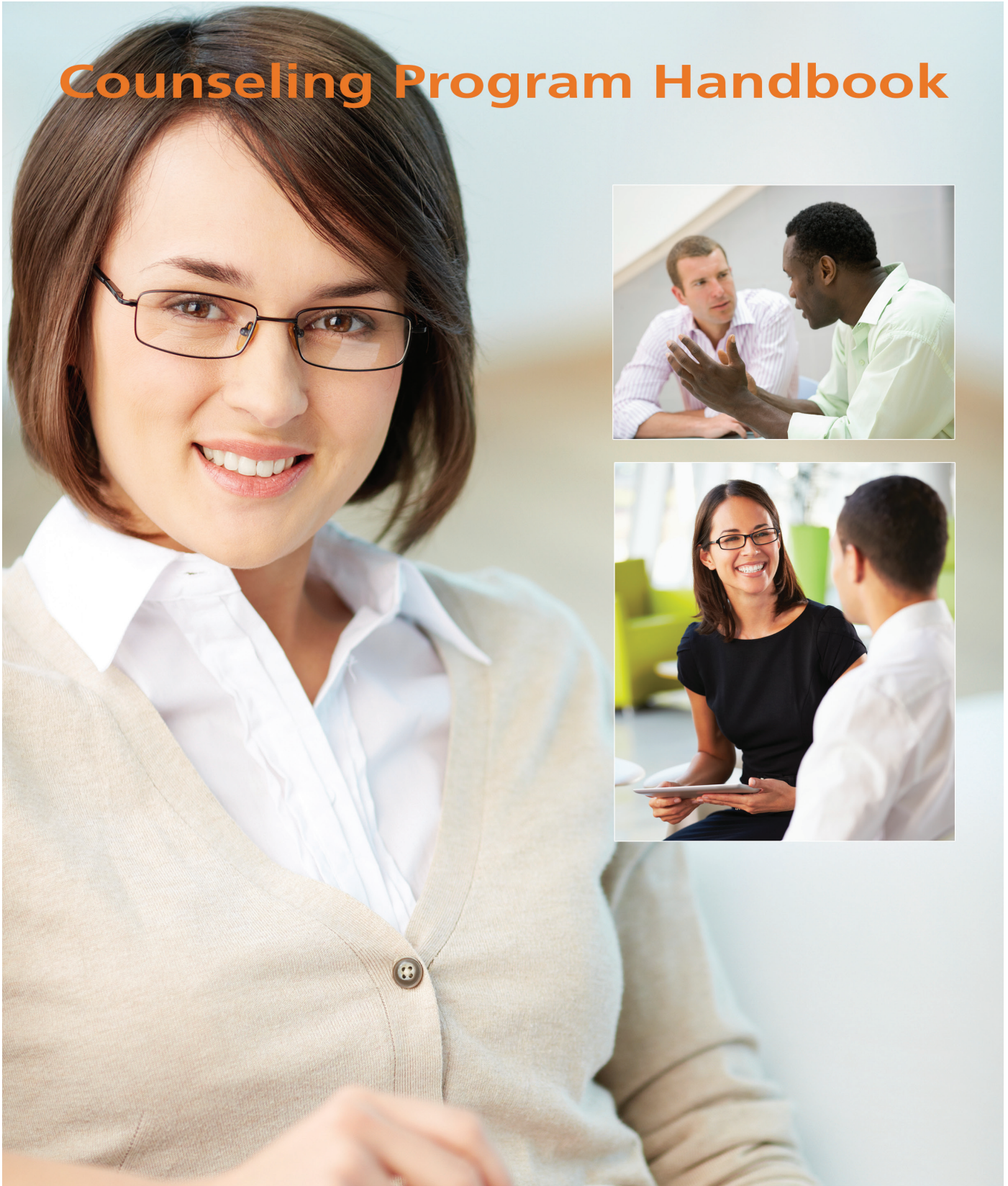


Counseling Program Handbook





Clinical Mental Health Counseling
Marriage and Family Counseling
School Counseling

Counseling

The intent of the Student Handbook is to compile policies and procedures that apply to the graduate majors in the Counseling Program. This is not a contract and is subject to change. The Handbook is updated regularly to provide the most recent guidelines, for seamless progression through the program. Occasionally, procedures of particular importance to you as a student will be presented in the Handbook even if they are not unique to this major. For general university policies and procedures, as well as course description and registration information, please consult the University Catalog, www.govst.edu/catalog, and the University Student Handbook, www.govst.edu/studenthandbook.



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COUNSELING: MASTER OF ARTS

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The counseling faculty offer this handbook to students interested in one of three sequences (i.e. clinical mental health counseling, marriage and family counseling, or school counseling) and to our current students. It is hoped that the contents will aid students in understanding the counseling program and its purpose is to provide guidelines in order to maximize students' experience in our program. Students in our program will find this handbook useful at each stage of the process toward graduation. While every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive handbook, the following are only guidelines. Students need to work closely, especially early in their program, with their advisor. Completion of all graduation requirements, while a concern of the advisor, is ultimately the responsibility of the student.

In addition, it should be noted that all counseling programs receive periodic review, permitting addition of new coursework, elimination of obsolete coursework, and/or change in program policy when appropriate. Any curriculum changes or policy changes required by reviews will be based on due notice and consultation with the academic and professional community. In order to "lock" in your curriculum you must sign a study plan with your advisor. The study plan is the contract between you and the program regarding the requirements for graduation. If you do not sign a study plan early in your studies it is possible that curriculum changes could affect your requirements for graduation.

Those exploring the possibility of entering our program and those seeking entrance should go to www.govst.edu/counseling and read admission material and download applications forms.

COUNSELING

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The graduate major in counseling offers a choice of three sequences: clinical mental health counseling, marriage and family counseling, or school counseling. Individuals are prepared to enter the counseling profession with a special focus on urban settings. Students progress through a sequence of curricular and clinical experiences that includes

working with individuals, couples, and/or families. Students gain experience with clients both in our on-campus clinic and in an off-campus internship. Supervision of clinical experience includes individual, group, and live supervision.

Students interested in counseling receive skill preparation for direct service to clients; for diagnostic, consultative, and evaluative services; and for preventive intervention. Possible employing agencies and institutions include mental health clinics and hospitals, corporations, governmental social agencies, public and private schools, community colleges, various community intervention programs, and correctional institutions. This major also prepares students for advanced graduate work at other institutions. A 600-hour internship placement is required.

All three sequences are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): First accreditation was granted to school counseling and community counseling (currently clinical mental health counseling) in 1990, marriage and family counseling in 1995. The school counseling program at GSU meets the academic requirements for Illinois licensure as a Professional Counselor (LPC) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has approved the school counseling program at GSU as leading to the Educator License – School Counselor endorsement.

In 2014 the GSU Counseling Program was reaccredited by CACREP for eight years with no stipulations.

Counseling Lab

The clinical mental health and marriage & family sequences complete practicum courses on campus in our Counseling Lab. Please see the Lab Assistant or Coordinator to access the Counseling Lab Handbook, located online at www.govst.edu/counselinglab; click Student Resources.

About GSU

Governors State University and the counseling program are dedicated to serving a diverse student population. Founded in 1969, GSU is located in University Park, Illinois, about 30 miles south of Chicago's Loop. It is convenient to major cities south of Chicago, including Joliet, Kankakee, and Orland Park. The university is part of a diverse, urban area and is dedicated to serving the needs of a wide-ranging population. Governors State University has a diverse student body, which will allow students to experience an education that is in touch with the larger, diverse society they will work in upon graduation. Statistically, the average age of a GSU student is 35 and 70 percent of our students are women, 36 percent are minority, and nearly 2 percent are international students. In addition, 28 percent of the faculty are minority (double the national average).

Governors State University offers undergraduate level and graduate level courses leading to bachelor's and master's degrees. There are four colleges: Arts and Sciences, Business and Public Administration, Health and Human Services, and College of Education. The Counseling Program is part of the Division of Counseling and Psychology which is housed in the College of Education.

About the Counseling Program

Counselors must have a critical body of knowledge and set of skills in order to help clients function effectively in their lives. To achieve this goal, the program offers a curriculum which includes the following core components: human growth and development; social and cultural foundations; the nature of helping relationships; group theory and group process; career and lifestyle development; appraisal, research and program evaluation; ethics, standards, and credentialing; and professional issues. In addition, course work specific to the various areas of specialization (i.e. clinical mental health, school, or marriage and family) is required. Finally, a variety of field practicums and internship experiences are required to ensure that students are able to apply the skills and knowledge they have learned. The counseling program is also designed to make sure that the counseling student possesses the personal characteristics necessary to be an effective helper. This is accomplished through a multifaceted admissions process, the use of experiential learning approaches, and through the application of an ongoing screening of students' personal characteristics. The program is consistent with the guidelines which have been set by the national accrediting body, the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Technical materials, equipment, and various computer programs may be required as part of the overall graduate program in addition to the books and materials required by individual courses. All graduate students are expected to be computer/internet capable, including submitting papers electronically, receiving emails, and participating in on-line course discussions.

PROGRAM MISSION, GOAL, AND OBJECTIVES

Mission

The mission of the Counseling Program at Governors State University is to train culturally competent professional counselors who possess substantive knowledge and skills to practice effectively and ethically in clinical mental health, marriage and family, or school counseling settings. The nationally renowned faculty is dedicated to providing the highest quality of training and education as achieved through the integration of theory, research, cross cultural studies, social justice, advocacy, and supervision as well as a strong emphasis on clinical practice. The Counseling Program is committed to serving the diverse local population by recruiting students from underrepresented groups, by educating future counselors on issues related to working with diverse populations, and by providing services and liaisons with community agencies and schools.

Goal and Objectives

The Goal of the Counseling Program is to prepare professional counselors with personal and professional integrity. This endeavor requires, at a minimum, institutional and departmental support, a programmatic structure meeting credentialing requirements, qualified faculty, and dedicated students. In order to help prepare students to enter the field of counseling, students will be provided with specialized curricular, experiential, supervisory, and professional experiences. These include coursework, practicum, internship, supervision, and opportunities for professional experiences. Students are encouraged to work with faculty on presentations and in research. Faculty and students are expected to participate in local, state, and national professional activities and associations such as the American Counseling Association (ACA), its divisions, branches, and its affiliate organizations.

Graduates of the counseling program will meet the following objectives:

1. Understand the various aspects of professional functioning and identity, including: the history and philosophy of the counseling profession, professional roles and ethics, functions and relationships with other human service providers and the importance of ACA and its division, branches and affiliates.
2. Demonstrate the ability to act professionally and ethically.
3. Understand the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends in a pluralistic society and demonstrate the ability to integrate this knowledge in clinical practice.
4. Understand the nature and needs of individuals and families at all developmental levels through the application of theory, learning, personality development, and human behavior and demonstrate the ability to integrate this understanding in clinical practice.
5. Understand the nature of career development and life factors that relate to career decision making, labor market information, career planning, and career assessment, and demonstrate the ability to integrate this understanding in clinical practice.
6. Understand helping relationships as related to counseling and consultation practices across the lifespan and demonstrate the ability to integrate this understanding in clinical practice.
7. Understand group theory and group practice as related to dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods, and group approaches and demonstrate the ability to integrate this understanding in clinical practice.
8. Understand individual, marriage and family, and group assessment approaches and evaluation and their utility in a pluralistic society and demonstrate the ability to integrate this understanding in clinical practice.
9. Understand appropriate research methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, case study), statistical analysis, needs assessment and program evaluation methodologies, as well as ethical concerns for conducting research and evaluating research in a pluralistic society.
10. Demonstrate the ability to use and apply basic technology needed for academic excellence and professional use.
11. Understand the role of the advocacy competencies, social justice and diversity research and literature, and demonstrate multicultural counseling interventions in clinical practice.

ADMISSION AND REQUIREMENTS

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In order to take counseling courses a student must be admitted to the program or students may take up to 6 hours as a Non-degree seeking student (**more than 6 graduate credits taken at GSU before admission into the Counseling Program will not count toward graduation**). In order to be considered for admission to the counseling program, students must complete a counseling application packet, and meet the minimum requirements for admission. The Graduate Record Examination only needs to be taken if the student's GPA falls below our minimum standard. In addition, school counseling applicants must submit a copy of the Test of Academic Proficiency exam results with their application, or no later than candidacy. Admission requirements and application materials may be obtained through www.govst.edu/counseling or request a hard copy by calling 708.534.4490 or 800.GSU.8GSU (800.478.8478).

Admissions

Students choosing to pursue a master's degree in counseling must already possess a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university. In addition to meeting university admission requirements, applicants must meet program/sequence requirements. The clinical mental health sequence requires 60 credits, the school counseling sequence require a minimum of 57 credit hours (there are additional undergraduate credits required if student does not have a certificate in teaching) and marriage and family counseling requires a minimum of 60 credit hours. All sequences culminate in a 600-hour internship. All counseling students are required to take a core set of classes, must see clients through our counseling lab and during internship, and participate in individual and group supervision.

Those interested in applying to the counseling program must meet the minimum criteria, complete a GSU application, and complete the counseling application. Applicants must choose which sequence they would like to apply to and provide all required, supporting documentation.

Graduate Student Status

Those interested in admission to the counseling program should apply as degree-seeking student. Graduate degree-seeking students are those who meet the established admission requirements of the University, college, and specific program for which the Master's Degree/post-Baccalaureate Certificate is sought. Admission to a graduate major does not carry with it, nor guarantee, admission to degree candidacy in the major.

Those who are not ready to apply for full admission to the counseling program may apply to GSU as a Graduate non-degree seeking student, and can take COUN6600 and COUN6630 before admission to the program. Graduate non-degree seeking students are defined as those who hold a bachelor's or higher degree and have not declared a major at the time of admission. **No more than six (6) credit hours earned as a graduate Non-degree seeking student shall be transferable toward the requirements of any graduate degree program, and such transfer will be subject to the degree requirements in effect at the time of admission to the specific major.** Graduate non-degree seeking students may not take graduate level courses designated by division faculty as reserved for Master's degree candidates only.

Admission Criteria

Admission to the counseling program and one of its three sequences is competitive. **There is no guarantee of admission just because an applicant meets or exceeds the minimum criteria.** The minimum criteria for admission are described as follows.

1. In addition to the GSU graduate application for admission, applicants must have at least a:
 - a) Cumulative GPA of 2.75 or higher for all undergraduate course work attempted; or
 - b) GPA of 3.0 for the last 60 hours of undergraduate coursework.
 - c) If a student meets neither of the above minimum requirements, but the cumulative GPA for all undergraduate coursework attempted is between 2.5 and 2.74, a student must:
 1. attain a score of at least 302 on the verbal and quantitative portions of the Graduate Record Exam – General Test (score of 1050 if test was taken prior to August 2011); OR
 2. take COUN 6600, COUN 6630 and ENGL 1010 (writing course) and complete with B's or better.

3. Any cumulative GPA below a 2.5 will not be considered.

Note: completion of these courses or the GRE does not guarantee admission.

2. Recommendation of the faculty based on the submission of the application packet which includes:
 - a. One copy of official transcripts of all previous college work
 - b. Counseling Application
 - c. Three Personal Reference forms
 - d. Checklist
 - e. The GRE, if applicable.
 - f. School Counseling students only can also submit one of the following test results:
 1. Test of Academic Proficiency (TAP – formerly Illinois Basic Skills test); or
 2. ACT Exam
 3. SAT Exam
3. Have completed all prerequisite courses with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. If these are not completed at the time of admission, they **must** be completed prior to attaining candidacy. Prerequisite courses for the clinical mental health counseling and marriage and family counseling sequences include a course in statistics, a course in research methodology, a course in abnormal psychology and course work in Addictions Studies at the 5000 level (marriage and family sequence must complete ADDS6300) or above totaling three semester hours; Applicants for the school counseling sequence must have completed a course in statistics, a course in research methodology and course work in Addictions Studies at the 5000 level or above totaling three semester hours.

Students must follow sequence, program, college, and university requirements and policies.

Note: admissions are made into a specific counseling sequence (school, marriage and family, or clinical mental health). Changing sequences may require a new application review. As a result, it may not be possible to change sequences based on accreditation limitations or the amount and quality of applicants.

Information related to the program and special application materials for the Master of Arts in Counseling program are available from the GSU Office of Admission and Student Recruitment and on the university website at www.govst.edu/counseling.

Office of Admission and Student Recruitment Governors State University

1 University Parkway, University Park, Illinois 60484
708.534.4490

Graduate Studies and Requirements

Although guidance is available and students are encouraged to seek help, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to know the policies, procedures, and requirements related to completion of the masters degree and licensure/certification. There are multiple levels involved in earning a degree and license: State, University, College of Education, Division of Psychology and Counseling, and professors. State requirements for licensure can be found online at:

Licensure Information:

www.idfpr.com/ldpr/WHO/prfcns.asp

University Catalog: www.govst.edu/catalog/

College of Education: www.govst.edu/coe/

Counseling Web Page: www.govst.edu/counseling

University Student Handbook:

www.govst.edu/studenthandbook/

Counseling Program Handbook: located in the GSU Portal, under Colleges.

The GSU Graduate Studies Policy describes Graduate education as the pursuit of knowledge and the means to knowledge at an advanced level. Graduate education is distinct and different from basic levels of education both in kind and in degree. It demands of students engaged in it greater intellectual maturity and autonomy, a deeper responsibility for their own learning, more intense study, and the mastery of different and more complex skills.

Additionally, graduate education demands of faculty engaged in it a deeper knowledge and greater skill within a given discipline, a greater commitment to the development of students' intellectual autonomy, and a more rigorous effort to imbue students with the values and standards of the discipline or profession.

A graduate degree is a distinction to be earned. Award of the degree symbolizes both the student's accomplishment and the University's endorsement. A student receiving a Master's Degree must have demonstrated:

1. an in-depth knowledge of significant theories, issues and findings, and mastery of appropriate skills, within his/her discipline;
2. the ability to apply such knowledge and skills;
3. the ability to read, interpret and evaluate research literature and to relate results to selected areas of interest;
4. the ability to analyze problems and to critique attempted solutions, especially within his/her own discipline;

5. the ability to integrate knowledge from a variety of disciplines;
6. the ability to design and implement a research, scholarly, or creative project; and
7. the ability to communicate scholarly thought to professional colleagues through writing and discussion.

PLAGIARISM

The following acts are examples of plagiarism:

1. Handing in an assignment that someone else has written and claiming the work as your own.
2. Handing in an assignment that contains sections, paragraphs, sentences or key phrases that someone else has written without documenting the source(s) for each portion of the assignment not written by you.
3. Handing in an assignment that includes any material copied word for word from a source without the appropriate use (according to *APA Manual, 6th Edition**) of quotation marks and page numbers.
4. Handing in an assignment that incorrectly cites secondary sources rather than primary sources (e.g. if you read something in a textbook and they cite the original source you either need to go read the original source or cite the primary source as "as cited in" and then put the secondary source: See *APA Manual, 6th Edition**).
5. Handing in an assignment that contains paraphrased ideas from another source, published or unpublished, without documenting the source for each paraphrase. (Changing around a few words in a sentence from the source is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism.)
6. "Someone else" in the three statements above may refer to a published author, another student, an Internet source, or any person other than the student claiming credit for the assignment. Even if the work is by the same author for the document being turned in, if the work was for a previous or other course, it should be documented as such.
7. "Documenting" means providing the name of the author, the source you have used, and other relevant bibliographical information such as addresses for web sites used as sources. If you do not know how to document sources within your paper, please refer to the ***Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th Edition.***

8. Note that the APA 6th edition is the ultimate authority on APA style.*

IMPORTANT: Papers that contain plagiarized material may be given a grade of zero which may result in failing the course. Students who engage in plagiarism may also be subject to disciplinary action. See student handbook. **If you are unsure about any of this, please ask the instructor prior to submitting your paper.**

*NOTE: Make sure *APA Manual*, 6th Edition is second print.

Degree Requirements for Counseling Program

Students must meet all university requirements for a master's degree. All counseling students are required to complete the core courses. In addition, there are specific requirements for courses depending on which sequence the student is enrolled in. Students should complete their study plan with the advisor before or within the first semester of enrollment to ensure proper progression through the program. Although the advisor is available to help students with any questions or concerns regarding curriculum and progression through the program, it is the student's responsibility to make sure he/she is following the policies and procedures of the program, college, and university. Students should refer to program student handbook, university student handbook, and the university catalog for all policies and procedures. Total hours required for graduation is between 57 and 60 hours depending on sequence.

Students must complete all counseling courses with B's or better (effective for student admitted for Fall 2015 and after).

Core Courses

Required Core Courses (33 Hours)

- COUN 6610 Research and Assessment (3)
- COUN 7720 Social and Cultural Foundations (3)
- COUN 6600 Professional Orientation and Ethical Standards for Counselors (3)
- COUN 7620 Life Span Developmental Issues (3)
- COUN 6630 Counseling Theories (3)
- COUN 7725 Family Systems: Theory and Practice (3)
- COUN 7730 Life Style and Career Development (3)
- COUN 7810 Beginning Counseling and Human Relations Skills (3)
- COUN 8811 Interventions with Children and Adolescents (3)

- COUN 7847 Group Dynamics and Intervention (3)
- COUN 7855 Assessment and Treatment Planning (3)

Counseling Sequences

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Sequence (27 Hours)

- COUN 7633 Clinical Mental Health Counseling/Community Counseling (3)
- COUN 8842 Practicum I: Individual and Vocational Counseling (3)
- COUN 8845 Practicum II: Individual and Vocational Counseling (3)
- COUN 8848 Crisis Intervention and Trauma Counseling (3)
- COUN 8849 Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse Counseling (3)
- COUN 8856 Practicum in Group Counseling: Adult (3)
- COUN 8859 Family Counseling Techniques (3)
- COUN 8971 Counseling Internship I (3)
- COUN 8972 Counseling Internship II (3)

Marriage and Family Counseling Sequence (27 Hours)

- COUN 7633 Clinical Mental Health Counseling/Community Counseling (3)
- COUN 8825 Advanced Family Systems (3) **(offered on a limited basis)**
- COUN 8842 Practicum I: Individual and Vocational Counseling (3)
- COUN 8845 Practicum II: Advanced Individual and Vocational Counseling (3)
- COUN 8856 Practicum in Group Counseling: Adult (3)
- COUN 8859 Family and Couples Counseling (3)
- COUN 8860 Systems Theory (3) **(offered on a limited basis)**
- COUN 8981 Counseling Internship I (3)
- COUN 8982 Counseling Internship II (3)

School Counseling Sequence (24 Hours) (Hybrid)

- COUN 6638 Introduction to School Counseling (3)
- COUN 8844 Practicum School Counseling (K-12) (3)
- COUN 8851 Consultation and School Staff Development (3)
- COUN 8852 College Career Coaching Academy (3)
- COUN 8853 Parent Education: Prevention and Intervention (3)
- COUN 8858 Development of School Counseling Programs (3)
- COUN 8968 Counseling Internship I (3)
- COUN 8969 Counseling Internship II (3)

Students who wish to pursue an Educator License with a School Counselor endorsement and who do not currently hold a valid Illinois or comparable out-of-state initial, standard or master teaching certificate must complete the teaching competency classes as well as the required sequence courses. All other students must complete only the required sequence courses.

Teaching Competency Classes for Non-Certified School Counseling Students

COUN 7620 Life Span Development Issues (3)*
COUN 6622 Applied Learning Theory for School Personnel (3)*
EDAD 7801 Organizational Leadership (3)*
SPED 6101 Survey of Students with Exceptionalities (3)*
**or equivalent courses*

Enrollment in COUN8842, COUN8844, COUN8845, and COUN8856 requires prior admission to candidacy and completion of course prerequisites. When registering for courses that require candidacy, students must already have been awarded candidacy, rather than be in the process of applying for candidacy. A 600-hour internship is required for all counseling students. Application deadlines for internship are as follows: fall semester, June 15; spring semester, October 15; summer semester, March 15.

New Student Orientation

Each semester counseling faculty present a student orientation to help students understand the degree requirements of the counseling program. Those admitted to the counseling program are required to attend the orientation before or during the student's first semester in the program. During the orientation program faculty are introduced, requirements and policies are reviewed, sequence commonalities and differences are discussed, student and professional organizations are reviewed. Students are advised of the availability of personal counseling services provided by counseling professionals in the GSU Academic Resource Center.

NOTE: If you do not attend an orientation by your second semester, a hold will be placed on your registration until you complete it.

Student Progress in Program

The counseling faculty have an ethical responsibility to the counseling profession and to the public to evaluate students' professional suitability. Students in the counseling program are evaluated based on academic achievement and their ability to be effective with clients.

In addition to coursework evaluations, there are five major evaluation points for counseling students:

1. Successful completion of core courses for evaluation. COUN 6600-Professional Orientation and Ethical Standards for Counselors, COUN 7720-Social and Cultural Foundations, COUN 7810-Beginning Counseling and Human Relations Skills, COUN 7847-Group Dynamics and Intervention. Each course has to be completed with a grade of B or better and a positive recommendation from the Counseling Program Faculty Screening Committee.
2. Candidacy: to determine if the student is ready to work with clients.
3. Practica: to determine how effectively the student works with clients.
4. Internship: to determine if the student is ready to work in an off campus site as a professional under supervision.
5. Internship defense/graduation: to determine if the student is ready to work independently as a professional counselor.

Violation of the Student Conduct Code (see Student Handbook), ACA Ethical standards, or behavior that indicates to the faculty that the student lacks the emotional maturity, personal stability or sufficient promise as a practicing professional to warrant continuation in the counseling program may result in a recommendation for remediation, dismissal or transfer to a more appropriate major. The advisor will assist in the transition to a new major, when indicated.

Admission to Candidacy

After admission as a degree-seeking student, a student must apply for candidacy. Students who have been admitted conditionally may not apply for candidacy until those conditions have been met. Application forms and instructions are available online in the portal under "Colleges". Application for candidacy should be made before the start of the semester in which degree candidacy is sought. To qualify to be considered for degree candidacy:

1. Pre-requisites for the program must be complete with a cumulative GPA of 3.0.
2. Be admitted to the program and have **completed** COUN 6600, COUN 7720, COUN 7810 and COUN 7847 with a grade of "B" or better in each course.
3. Students must receive positive recommendations on the student evaluation sheets from instructing faculty in these courses.

4. **Students must attach proof of professional liability insurance.**
5. **School Counseling students: must provide proof of purchasing Live Text by attaching a print-off from Live Text with account number.**
6. Turn in the completed application and all indicated attachments to the counseling advisor by the deadline.

Writing Course Referral

If faculty determine that a student's writing falls below the recommended standards of the program, he/she will be referred to a writing course. If the recommendation has been made pre-candidacy, the student will be required to take this course and pass with a "B" or better in order to continue applying for candidacy. If the recommendation is post-candidacy, students can either be strongly encouraged or required to complete this course, especially if it is a required component of a remediation plan. If the writing course is not offered in a particular semester, students can take PSYC 2102 in its place.

Professional Ethics and Academic Honesty of Students

All students are expected to treat each other, staff, clients, and faculty with respect. In addition, all students must follow the rules, regulations, and ethical guidelines of counseling and of the University. The American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics can be found at www.counseling.org/Resources/CodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx and the University guidelines on academic honesty can be found in the Catalog and in this handbook. Academic honesty pertains to all methods of fulfilling academic requirements at Governors State University. The Counseling Program uses the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Sixth Edition (APA style) to format papers and ensure proper credit to the ideas and work of others. All counseling students are required to know the APA publication style. For more information on APA style see www.apastyle.org/.

Statement of Expectations

The counseling program is charged with the dual task of nurturing the development of counselors-in-training and ensuring quality client care. In order to fulfill these dual responsibilities faculty must evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. A student's progress in the program may be interrupted for failure to

comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with being able to provide ethical services to clients. For example, in order to ensure proper training and client care, a counselor-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. These factors are evaluated based on one's academic performance and one's ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, accept personal responsibility, and be able to express feelings effectively and appropriately.

Remediation Plan

Those students who do not continuously meet professional ethics and academic honesty standards, academic requirements and/or variables outlined in the statement of expectations may be required to have a remediation plan. In order to graduate, student must complete the remediation plan in a timely manner.

Academic Honesty

The following statements are taken directly from the online version of the University Catalog (www.govst.edu/catalog Click "Appendix").

The following procedures are appropriate ways to use the ideas and work of others when fulfilling academic requirements:

1. When someone else's work or scholarship is used to fulfill academic requirements, the source should be given credit. It should not be stated or implied that this work is a person's own work.
 - a. When using material from a publication (e.g., book, journal, article, film, etc.) that material should be enclosed in quotation marks, or otherwise set off, and the source of the material acknowledged.
 - b. When paraphrasing published material (e.g., using it almost word-for-word) the source should also be acknowledged unless the information is common knowledge in the field.
 - c. Unpublished data or ideas of another person should be utilized only with the consent of that person.
 - d. Material should be prepared jointly with one or more other individuals only with the permission of the instructor. The contributions of all individuals to this material should be clearly acknowledged when it is submitted.

- e. Having someone else prepare material that is to be submitted should only be done with the instructor's permission to do so.
2. The same piece of work should not be submitted for credit in more than one course without the permission of all instructors involved.
3. Hypothetical data should be submitted only with the permission of the instructor to do so and should be clearly labeled as such.
4. One should refuse to make work available to another person who intends to submit part or all of that work as if he/she had written it.
5. Students may neither give, request, nor utilize assistance during an examination without the instructor's permission.

These ethical guidelines are in no way intended to discourage people from studying together or from engaging in group projects.

Technology

In accordance with University and CACREP requirements, all students must demonstrate a basic competency in technology. At a minimum, students must be able to use Microsoft Word to create papers and other assignments, conduct searches on the internet and use library databases to access journal articles and books, send and receive electronic mail with attachments, and utilize WebCT for web enhanced courses.

All students are **required** to check their University assigned e-mail account frequently for messages from the University and from the counseling program. If a student wishes, GSU e-mail accounts can be forwarded to other electronic mail accounts.

Advising and Regulations

Students must be enrolled in the College of Education and in the Division of Psychology and Counseling prior to being assigned an advisor. Either before the beginning of the first semester or within the first semester, students are required to make an appointment with an advisor to complete a study plan indicating which classes they should enroll in order to complete their graduate degree. Students should be advised prior to registration to determine course selection and to plan for future semesters.

The advisor's functions will include:

1. Student study plan development. The study plan is a guide that must be followed for the degree and/or certification program.

2. Initial review and recommendation of transfer credit or the waiving of requirements based upon prior graduate study.
3. Pre-registration advisement.
4. Review of student program toward degree completion. If it becomes apparent that another skills course or an elective is needed, the advisor will meet with the student in order to modify the study plan. Depending upon the circumstances either the advisor or the student may initiate the request for revision.
5. Alternative career plan advisement.

Student's responsibilities include:

1. Reading and becoming familiar with the GSU catalog.
2. Making contact with the advisor at least every other semester.
3. Updating all pertinent information in your student record, e.g., change of address, name, major, etc.
4. Completing your study plan before the conclusion of the first semester at GSU and updating the study plan when changes are made.

Student Study Plan

Students are required to develop a student study plan prior to your first semester of enrollment in the college. You should, at the earliest opportunity, make an appointment with your advisor to develop a study plan. Student study plans must be approved by the advisor and the division chairperson. The original will be kept on file within the division; you will receive a copy. Changes in the student study plan must be initiated by your advisor and the chairperson. You should bring a copy of your student study plan to all meetings with your advisor.

Transfer Credit

If you wish to transfer credit from other institutions, you must have transcripts with you when you see your advisor to develop your study plan. The number of transfer hours accepted shall not exceed 25% of the total hours required for the program. In order to obtain official approval for a transfer of credit, you must arrange for an appointment with the program advisor to discuss the matter in detail. At this meeting you are requested to submit completed transfer of credit forms, an official copy of your transcripts from the previous college or university, and a copy of the course description from the previous institution (catalog copy of the course description). Graduate students who have

received a grade of "B" or better at other accredited institutions may be permitted to transfer course credit based on the requirements of the program and the advisor's judgment as to whether such coursework is appropriate to the degree you are pursuing. All transfer credit must be approved by the dean of the college. You must secure prior approval from your advisor to take coursework at other institutions if it is to be used on your study plan.

You must formally apply for transfer credit through your advisor when you develop your initial study plan. To obtain transfer credit you must produce an official transcript indicating the institution you attended, the course(s), and the grade(s) earned. The advisor and professor who usually teach the course at GSU must approve the request. The dean or an appointed designee will make the ultimate decision. You will have had to earn a "B" or better for transfer credit to be awarded. The transfer credit will appear on your study plan. **Maximum of 12 credit hours may be transferred.**

You may also request a waiver of a particular requirement based upon previous graduate work. A waiver does not reduce the number of credit hours you need to obtain a degree but may allow you to substitute an elective for a required course. You must initiate the request for a waiver with your advisor. The waiver will be granted if the advisor, the faculty member who usually teaches the course and the chairperson approve the request. You may not request transfer credit or waiver for the required practicum courses, COUN 8842, COUN 8844, COUN 8845, COUN 8856, COUN 8859, COUN 8860, nor for the internship courses COUN 8968, COUN 8969, COUN 8971, COUN 8972, COUN 8981, and COUN 8982. However, you may substitute an advanced skill course for the basic skill course, COUN 7810, based upon prior graduate work. To do this, you need to request a waiver of the requirement and submit, to your advisor, a tape recording of a counseling session for faculty review. If the recording is not approved, you will be required to take the course.

Rules on transferring candidacy courses:

- The institution must be CACREP accredited
- Limit of two candidacy courses as transfer
- Transfer must have faculty approval (from the professor who teaches the course).

Student Course Load

The maximum course load you may carry for each semester is 16 hours. Overloads will not be permitted except in unusual circumstances. An approval of the chairperson is needed for overloads.

Readmission/Reactivation/Transferring Sequences

Readmission: If you have been readmitted to the College of Education you must complete a new student study plan and follow the catalog in effect when you return.

Reactivation: In order to be reactivated, students need to fill out a Reactivation form and attach a letter of explanation (as to why the student has been out for a year or more). Give paperwork to Academic Advisor. The Division Chair will meet with the advisor to determine if the student should be reactivated, should be reactivated but needs to re-take some courses, or should reapply into the program. Decisions are based on length of time out of the program as well as circumstances. Reactivation requires students to complete a new study plan under the current catalog.

Transferring Sequences: Student may transfer sequences at any time (talk with Advisor first). Students must submit **a)** A Change of Major/Status form **b)** new Counseling Application **c)** letter explaining the reason for the switch and **d)** state exam results, if transferring into the School sequence. Turn all paperwork in to the Advisor on designated deadlines (same as for new students: February 15 (Fall) or August 15 (Spring)). Student will go through the admissions process, including the faculty interview.

Policy and process regarding the transfer of a dismissed student into another sequence:

1. Student is dismissed from sequence.
2. Student is barred from enrolling in any counseling courses.
3. No sooner than 2 ½ years after dismissal, student is eligible to apply into a different sequence (with a modified application process).
4. New sequence team meets to determine if they will accept the candidate's application (this process includes an individual candidate interview and a file review).
5. If sequence team decides to admit candidate, the team will create a remediation plan.
6. If student agrees to remediation plan, he/she registers as a graduate non-degree seeking student for the remediation period. If student does not agree to the remediation plan, the student is not admitted into the sequence.
7. Student is fully admitted to the sequence when the remediation is deemed to be successful (but no earlier than 3 years after the original dismissal).

8. If student does not successfully complete the remediation plan, student will not be admitted into the sequence.
9. Successful completion of the remediation plan does not guarantee that student will successfully complete the program. As with all students, the student will continue to be evaluated throughout the program and will be subject to additional remediation and/or dismissal as necessary.

Independent Study

Graduate students may take a maximum of six (6) hours of Independent Study within a degree program. All Independent Study projects must be described in a written proposal prior to listing the Independent Study on an Advance Registration Form. The Independent Study proposal must be approved by the supervisor of the Independent Study project and the division chairperson prior to registration. Students without approval will not be allowed to receive credit for independent Study projects on their study plans. Independent Study may not be taken as a substitute for regularly scheduled courses and will not be used to replace courses needed for the degree except in unusual circumstances. Approval of the division chairperson is needed in these cases.

Residency Requirements

All degree-seeking students are required to earn a minimum of 24 credit hours of coursework from Governors State University prior to the awarding of each degree sought.

In completing the requirements for a degree, students must earn at least 50% of the credit hours required for their degree (as specified on their individual study plans) through on-campus work.

For the purpose of this policy, on-campus work is defined as all coursework taken at the Governors State University main campus, at sites within the Illinois Prairie #5 District or degree-granting sites currently approved for the M.A. in Counseling.

PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP



Practica and Internships are clinical experiences that meet specific guidelines established by CACREP. Practica are intended to help students develop their counseling skills under supervision and internship is meant to give students

to the opportunity to experience the professional role of counselors in an agency or school setting under supervision. **Students must earn a “B” or better in all practicum courses in order to be eligible for internship.**

Practicum

Students are eligible to enroll in the practicum courses after attaining candidacy. Scheduling conflicts can be minimized by keeping in close contact with the program advisor and by reading the helpful hints (located in the portal). Not all courses are offered every semester. ***School counseling students should start looking 6 – 9 months ahead of time for a practicum site.***

The practicum experience will be afforded to the students through the following courses: Practicum I: Individual and Vocational Counseling (COUN 8842); Practicum II: Individual and Vocational Counseling (COUN 8845); and Practicum in Group Counseling (COUN 8856). COUN 8844 is oriented to children and adolescents and is a required practicum course for school counseling majors. Sessions for this course are conducted in school settings. COUN 8842, COUN 8845, and COUN 8856 are designed for counseling adults and are necessary for working in community agencies.

The minimum requirement for the practicum courses is one hundred (100) hours, of which a minimum of forty (40) hours will be direct contact (individual/group counseling, consultation, etc.). These experiences should be documented on the Practicum Supervision form that the student is required to maintain and submit prior to internship.

During the practicum courses students should:

1. Earn 40 hours of direct client contact (including individual counseling and group work).
2. Participate in one hour per week of individual (up to two supervisees) supervision a week by a faculty member.
3. Participate in an average of 1.5 hours of group supervision a week provided by a faculty member.

Internship

A student is eligible to apply for internship after the successful completion of all courses, including practicum. **All counseling students should start looking 6 – 9 months ahead of time for an internship site.** Applications and instructions are available online in the portal under “Colleges”.

Application deadlines for internship are as follows: fall semester, June 15; spring semester, October 15; and summer term, March 15. If the application is late, site placement may be jeopardized. The completed application will be returned to the advisor. Each semester the advisor will review the applications and convene a meeting of the counseling faculty. The faculty will review the application and approve or make alternative recommendations. When applicable, students will be notified of their acceptance for internship.

NOTE: School Counseling students must have passed the School Counselor Content exam before being allowed into internship.

Students will be assigned to an internship supervisor with his/her sequence. Internship sites will be discussed and negotiated with the supervisor and clinical coordinator. When site approval has been established, the site procedures for interviews, hours, etc. must be followed.

It is recommended that each potential intern review the syllabus, taking special note of the student, university coordinator, and agency supervisor responsibilities.

The internship requires 600 hours—clinical mental health, marriage and family, and school students must complete two semesters of internship. A minimum of 240 hours will be direct service—individual/group counseling, testing, and/or consultation. The other 360 hours will include report writing, agency meetings, supervision, professional development, special projects, etc. Students are required to participate in one hour of individual supervision on-site and 1.5 hours of group supervision hours a week on-campus from a faculty supervisor. The evaluation of the intern will be conducted by the faculty supervisor and site supervisor. The intern will have an opportunity to evaluate the site and the supervision experience.

The internship experience is the culminating activity for all counseling students. It gives the student the opportunity to integrate what he or she has learned in the classroom and consolidate that learning in an applied setting. Internship placement for clinical mental health and marriage and family majors are normally available throughout the year. School counseling internships are not available during the summer session.

Students are not allowed to receive Incompletes in Internship. Internship is a continuous registration course. Students must sign up for one or two credits each semester until Internship II is passed. All portfolios must be defended at least two weeks before final grades are due.

Liability Insurance

The student must obtain liability insurance prior to participating in any practicum course. This insurance must be maintained throughout practicum and internship. Students in clinical courses are required to purchase liability insurance. Liability insurance is available through ACA, ASCA, and other insurance companies. Membership in ACA automatically includes liability insurance. Proof of insurance must be shown to the instructor or professor before participating in any clinical work with external clients.

Failure to obtain insurance may result in suspension or dismissal from course. Applications for the American Counseling Association (ACA), including insurance information, are available online at www.counseling.org.

GRADUATION

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In order to graduate students must complete coursework, practica, internship, internship defense, and have the recommendation of the faculty. In addition, students must complete these requirements within the specified time limit and complete an application for graduation.

Internship Defense/ Graduation

The internship defense is the final requirement prior to graduation. For the internship defense, the intern must prepare a packet that demonstrates the integration of their classroom learning and the application of this information and experience in their internship setting. The internship packet consists of a narrative journal of their experiences, a systems analysis paper or theory of change paper, audio or video tapes that best represents their clinical work, a case study including a conceptualization and treatment plan, a summary log of hours, and a site supervisor’s evaluation of the work. The intern must defend their internship work and experience at an internship defense consisting of three faculty members (the faculty supervisor, who chairs the committee and two other faculty members).

The committee chair has the responsibility for guiding the student through the process, choosing and convening the defense committee, and deciding when the student’s packet

is ready for submission to the committee. A complete copy of the packet must be delivered to all of the persons involved on the committee 14 days before the committee meets, including audio and video tapes. In addition, the defense must occur at least two weeks before grades are due. Students may have input into who comprises the committee and when the committee will meet for the defense, but final decisions are made by the chair. The committee for the internship defense will be chosen by the committee chair. If three faculty from the student's sequence are available, those three faculty must serve on the committee.

In order to pass the final internship defense, two of the three members must approve; however the chair has final decision whether competencies have been obtained. The committee has the right to suspend its evaluation until additional materials or information can be provided if some competencies are in question. In addition, students may be asked to revise parts of their packet and resubmit the material. These students may receive a decision of "pass upon revisions." Students can pass the defense, pass with revisions, or fail the defense.

Each graduate program at GSU is required to have a final project as part of the master's degree requirements. The counseling program meets this requirement through Practicum/Internship and the Portfolio Defense.

NOTE: All portfolios must be defended at least two weeks before final grades are due.

Time Limits

All course work for the degree, except the Master's Final Project (practica and internship), must be completed within four (4) years of a student's admission to candidacy within the counseling program. The practica/internship must be completed within five years of admission to candidacy.

Graduation

You must apply for graduation by the date listed in the Academic Calendar for the semester in which you anticipate graduating. Applications must be accurately completed and submitted to the Registrar's Office.

Application for Graduation

Upon completion of the application, students should arrange to meet with their academic advisor to review the student study plan and verify expected completion of degree requirements. Students should have no more than 16 credit hours outstanding toward degree requirements, either as

incomplete work or as current enrollment at the time of application. The application is approved by the advisor, division chair, and dean and should be forwarded to the Registrar's Office two months before the end of the last semester of enrollment. Students must meet all financial obligations to the university. A \$50 fee is billed to the student, covering the cost of application processing, diploma, cap and gown, and commencement.

Commencement

Participation in commencement is limited to students who have been certified by the registrar as having completed all requirements for the degree.

Diplomas

Diplomas are awarded upon verification of completion of all degree requirements and satisfaction of all financial obligations to the university. Diplomas are inscribed with the type of degree, the date, and the student name on record at the time the degree was conferred.

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

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Grievance Procedure for Student Retention

If a student has a serious complaint about a faculty member, the student could choose to invoke either a collegial or university grievance procedure. Often such complaints result from a failure of communication on one or both sides or a simple misunderstanding. Student complaints may relate to academic or non-academic (e.g. discrimination, harassment, or other unfair treatment not related to academic issues). The faculty in the Division of Psychology and Counseling urge you to resolve your grievances informally by talking with the faculty member in question and attempting resolution. If informal resolution proves impossible, you should follow the appropriate formal grievance procedures. These procedures can be found in GSU's Student Handbook under the section entitled, "**Student Grievance Procedures/Conduct Code.**" The Handbook is available online at www.govst.edu/studenthandbook.

You can also find the policy at www.govst.edu/policies. It is Policy 5.

CERTIFICATIONS, LICENSURE, AND ENDORSEMENTS

The counseling program is accredited and/or approved by several state and national organizations. All three counseling sequences, school counseling, clinical mental health counseling, and marriage and family counseling are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counselor Education and Related Programs (CACREP). Students graduating from a CACREP approved program are eligible to take the National Counselor Certification examination during internship or upon graduation. In addition, The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has approved the school counseling sequence as leading to the Educator License, with an endorsement in school counseling. GSU counseling degree seeking students who wish to be recommended for School Counseling endorsement shall either 1) hold or be qualified to hold a teaching certificate or 2) have completed the GSU or equivalent teaching ;competence courses (i.e. EDAD7801, COUN7620, COUN6622, and SPED6101).

All school counseling students must provide evidence of successful completion of the Test of Academic Proficiency or ACT prior to admission or by candidacy. All school counseling students must present evidence of passing the ISBE School Counselor Proficiency Test before they can register for internship and before they are recommended for the School Counseling endorsement.

A graduate of a CACREP program in Illinois who passes the National Counselor Certification examination may apply for licensure in the State of Illinois as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). All school personnel are required to pass state proficiency exams.

Acronyms and What They Mean

NCE = National Counselor Exam. This exam is given by NBCC and used by the state of Illinois for the LPC. Students are eligible to sit and take this exam as soon as they begin internship.

NBCC = National Board of Certified Counselors

LPC = Licensed Professional Counselor. This is the 1st tier of licensing in the state of Illinois.

It allows counselors to work within agencies (billing under an LCPC).

LCPC = Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor. This is the 2nd tier of licensing in the state of Illinois. It allows counselors to continue working in agencies, but also allows them to open up their own practices (can now bill under themselves).

NCC = National Certified Counselor. This is a nationally recognized credential and is required to obtain the LPC.

CCMHC = Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor.

National Counselor Examination (NCE)

The purpose of the NCE is to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities viewed as important for providing effective counseling services. The NCE is designed to be general in nature. It is intended to assess cognitive knowledge which should be known by all counselors regardless of their individual professional specialties.

Note: Since the NCE assesses knowledge in all content areas, students should be in internship before attempting the exam. The National Counselor Examination should be taken **before** graduation.

Criteria:

Students in internship are eligible to apply for the NCE exam.

Counseling alumni are eligible to apply and test as long as testing will occur **within one year** of the date of degree conferral. Individuals who have graduated more than one year prior to testing have to apply for the NCE through NBCC or the State of Illinois.

Application process:

An email will be sent to students from the NCE Campus Coordinator to request names of eligible students who wish to test. The list of prospective testers is sent to NBCC. NBCC will then email an electronic NCE application to the student's GSU email account. Application directions are included in the email and payment will be required in order to submit the application.

How to Re-register for the NCE:

You may take the NCE three times within a two-year period from the original test date for which you apply. NBCC will automatically send you a re-registration form in the mail if you do not pass the NCE or if you do not take the NCE as scheduled. To be re-registered, you must submit a completed re-registration form and the re-registration fee.

Special Examination Accommodations:

If assistance is needed, direct your request to one of the following telephone numbers: **217.782.8556** Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TDD) **217.524.6735**.

National Certified Counselor (NCC)

Criteria:

- Graduate degree in counseling or a closely related field from a regionally accredited university.
- The two years of post-masters professional counseling experience requirement is **waived for GSU applicants**.
- Assessment of counseling experiences by two professionals in the field.
- Pass the counselor certification examination administered by NBCC.
- NCCs are certified for a period of five years. In order to be re-certified at the conclusion of the five-year cycle the counselor must:
 - A) Demonstrate completion of 100 contact hours of approved continuing education or re-examination.
 - B) Adhere to the NBCC Code of Ethics in professional practice.

Application process:

After passing the NCE and graduating from Governors State University, send a sealed, official transcript (with your graduate degree posted) and a completed Counseling Supervisor's Endorsement Form to the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), 3 Terrace Way, Suite D, Greensboro, NC 27403.

Once NBCC has reviewed and approved your transcript and endorsement form, you will become a National Certified Counselor (NCC). Approximately 6-8 weeks after you are certified, you will receive your certificate and recertification information in the mail. View your status and keep your contact information current: www.mynbcc.org.

Recertification Information: www.nbcc.org/recertification
When you are certified, NBCC will send you an NBCC Continuing Education File folder. You will use this folder to keep track of your continuing education hours. NBCC requires 100 hours of continuing education every five years. You will also receive a bill each year for your annual maintenance fee. Annual payment is required to maintain good standing.

Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC)

Criteria:

This is for Clinical Mental Health students only; counselors can apply for this designation to demonstrate one's commitment and expertise in the area of clinical mental health. This credential can only be obtained when a counselor is applying for the LCPC.

NCC Credential and Licensure "Packages"

- NCE (for LPC) + NCC credential = \$310
- Exam and 3360 hours of clinical client contact (for LCPC) + NCC credential + CCMHC credential = \$425

Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)

Criteria:

In order to apply for the first level of state licensure in Illinois, you must have passed the National Counselor Examination (NCE) and you must be a National Certified Counselor (NCC).

Application process:

After passing the National Counseling Examination (NCE) and earning the credential as National Certified Counselor (NCC), contact the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation in Springfield at 217.782.8556 or www.idfpr.com/dpr/WHO/prfcns.asp to request an application for LPC. **NOTE: You must complete this step to become licensed in Illinois.**

Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC)

Criteria:

Applicant must possess 3,360 hours of clinical counseling work (basically 2 years of full-time work) with individuals, couples, families, or groups under the direction of a qualified, **licensed** supervisor.

Application process:

To apply, go to www.idfpr.com/profs/info/ProfCounselor.asp

EDUCATOR LICENSE

Licensure for School Counseling

Obtain Application for Entitlement online in the portal. This form should be completed during the semester in which you expect to graduate.

Once the advisor receives your application, all of the requirements will be verified. Once checked, your name will be forwarded to the Entitlement Officer at GSU for additional review. Entitlement means that GSU verifies for the Illinois State Board of Education that you have successfully completed an approved degree program that fulfills the state's requirements for Licensure.

Once entitled, you will receive an e-mail from the GSU Entitlement Officer stating that you are able to apply for your Educator License online through the ISBE website. Instructions will accompany the e-mail.

There are fees required for the issuance of the license.

Other helpful professional resources are:

Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation: www.idfpr.com/

Illinois State Board of Education: www.isbe.state.il.us/

Professional Counselor: www.idfpr.com/dpr/WHO/prfcns.asp

Marriage and Family Therapist License: www.idfpr.com/dpr/WHO/marfm.asp

Guide to School Counseling Certification: www.isbe.net/certification/requirements/toc.htm

American Counseling Association: www.counseling.org

American School Counselor Association: www.schoolcounselor.org/

REGIONAL OFFICES AND SUPERINTENDENTS

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SUBURBAN

COOK COUNTY: **Regional Superintendent**

10110 Gladstone
Westchester, IL 60154
708.865.9330

WILL: **Regional Superintendent**

302 N. Chicago
Joliet, IL 60432
815.740.8360

KANKAKEE: **Regional Superintendent**

Kankakee County Office Building
189 E. Court Street, Suite 600
Kankakee, IL 60901
815.937.2950

DUPAGE: **Regional Superintendent**

421 North County Farm Road
Wheaton, IL 60187
708.682.7150

FOR THOSE RESIDING OR TEACHING IN CHICAGO

Illinois State Board of Education Professional Preparation Office

Chicago Public Schools
1819 West Pershing Road
West Building, 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60609
312.535.7456 or 57

Vocational Placement Endorsement Policy

It is unethical for counselors to accept positions for which they are not professionally qualified. It is also unethical to claim professional qualifications exceeding those possessed. The counseling program faculty endorses graduates of the program to work in vocational settings for which they have been trained. Clinical Mental Health graduates are endorsed to work in community agencies and institutions. School counseling graduates are endorsed to work in school settings, provided that they meet the teacher certification requirements of the Illinois State Board of Education. Marriage and family graduates are endorsed to work in settings that primarily serve individuals, couples, and families.

Professional Organizations

University

Students are encouraged to join and become active in counseling associations at the local, state, and national levels. It is your (and our) lifelong responsibility to continue to learn new skills and concepts to update prior learning and information.

The counseling program has an active chapter of Chi Sigma Iota, the professional honor society for counselors. Membership is open to students who have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours with a GPA of 3.50.

State

GSU has a chapter of the Illinois Counseling association. Chapter members include students, alumni and other practicing counselors in the south suburban area.

The Illinois Counseling Association is a state branch of the American Counseling Association. Students are eligible to join ICA at a reduced rate. Membership benefits include:

- a newsletter that focuses on Illinois counseling issues
- a professional journal
- networking
- professional and personal development via the ICA annual convention and division workshops

Membership forms and insurance applications are available in the division office.

National

The American Counseling Association is our national professional association. ACA membership benefits include:

- subscriptions to the monthly newspaper, *Counseling Today*, and the bimonthly *Journal of Counseling and Development*.
- professional development opportunities via workshops, institutes, the annual convention, and home-study courses
- discounts on ACA published resources including books, journals and videotapes
- job search assistance
- liability insurance

ICA and ACA also offer membership in numerous divisions representing various work settings or interests.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. I have a degree in psychology (criminal justice, animal husbandry, etc.) and would like to be a school counselor. Any problem?

It used to be that school counselors in Illinois had to have a teaching certificate, but this is no longer the case. In order to earn the School Service Personnel Certificate with an endorsement in School Counseling, GSU students shall either 1) hold or be qualified to hold a teaching certificate or 2) have completed the GSU or equivalent teaching competence courses (i.e. EDAD 7801, COUN 7620, COUN 6622, and SPED 6101).

2. Will this program prepare me to open a private practice?

Although with licensure, you are eligible to open a private practice, this program focuses on preparing students to work in settings where there will be the opportunity for supervision and collegial support.

3. Why aren't there summer Internship courses for school counseling majors?

The purpose of the internship is to provide the student with an experience as a full time counselor. Summer schools are limited as to hours and student population and do not compare with the regular school program.

It is important for school counseling majors who work in schools to prepare their administrators for the fact that they will be missing for a semester long before the internship is to occur.

4. What is CACREP and what does it do for me?

CACREP stands for the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. It is the accrediting arm of the American Counseling Association. CACREP has very specific standards for masters and doctoral level programs. The GSU faculty worked over a period of several years to reorganize and modify the counseling curriculum to become eligible for CACREP approval. We were the fourth institution in Illinois to receive CACREP accreditation. Each year a written report is made for CACREP. Each seven years a team will visit us for reaccreditation purposes. The benefits to you include the following:

- assurance that you are being trained in a program that meets national professional standards.
- an advantage in the job market and doctoral programs that prefer CACREP graduates.
- the opportunity to sit for the National Counselor Examination (through NBCC) during your internship or immediately upon graduation. Non-CACREP graduates must have two years of supervised work experience before they can take this exam which leads to state licensure.

5. What are the employment prospects for counselors?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, overall employment of counselors is expected to increase by 18 percent between 2008 and 2018, which is faster than the average for all occupations. Employment for educational, vocational, and school counselors is expected to grow by 14 percent. Employment of mental health counselors is expected to grow by 24 percent, and marriage and family therapists will experience growth of 14 percent. All of these increases are faster than average for all occupations.

The internship provides an excellent opportunity for both prospective employer and employee to assess future employment possibilities. Although not guaranteed, many of our students are hired by the school or agency in which they do their internships.

The Office of Career Services has updated labor market information for counseling students. You can also receive assistance with your resume and developing a credential file from this office.

6. Why do I have to talk about myself so much in this program?

Counselors have to understand what counseling is like from the client's perspective. In COUN7810 you will be required to function as a peer counselor and as a client. In COUN7847 you will be required to function as a group member and as a group leader. Throughout the program you will be expected to talk about and write about the person you are and how you came to be that person. Our belief is that the better you understand yourself, the more likely it is that you will be open to understanding others.

7. Where do I start?

Start with the program prerequisites. Make certain that you have a grade of "B" or better for all of these courses. When you apply you will be scheduled for a screening experience. You will also be expected to attend an orientation session. Screening and orientation are offered in the Fall and Spring semesters. Review the admission requirements listed on page 9 of this Handbook. Remember that you should complete the four core courses as early in the program as possible so that you are ready to apply for candidacy.

8. Where will I do my internship?

That will be determined in collaboration with the Clinical Coordinator. We attempt to match your interests with the available sites. Many sites require an interview to select from the candidate pool.

9. I've heard that I could have all B's or better in my core courses and still be denied candidacy. Is that possible?

The short answer to your question is YES. The longer answer is that as counselor educators we have an ethical responsibility to our profession and to the public. If the professional judgment of the faculty is that a student has personal limitations or issues that will interfere with their effectiveness, candidacy will be denied. Whenever possible, remedial steps will be recommended.

Violations of the Student Conduct Code (See GSU Student Handbook) or the ACA ethical standards will be handled in accordance with university procedures. Student dismissal for non-academic reasons will occur as a result of the concurrence of the counseling faculty and will be reviewed by the division chair.

10. How long will take me to complete this program?

That depends on several things. The number of required hours varies from 57 to 60, based on the sequence you have selected. Full time students typically enroll in three or four courses per semester. If you are enrolled in the marriage and family sequence (60 hours) and faithfully take 12 hours per semester, you could finish in 6 semesters. The more realistic time line, with internship taking a minimum of two semesters, would be 7 semesters. The majority of our students are part-time students. A percentage take one course per semester, a greater percentage takes two courses per semester. On average it takes students 3 to 4 years to finish the degree.

