



Official Newsletter of the Counselor Education Program

SPRING 2025

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Looking to get more involved in your graduate program?

Join us to plan events, collaborate with professors, peers, and alumni, and network with professionals! Become a Counselor's Corner leader. Get Involved Now!

Email Dr. Gutheil at gutheilj@wcsu.edu



UPCOMING EVENTS



MARCH

13

Virtual Alumni Panel Event

APRIL

26

Counselor Education Graduation Celebration

MAY

22

CSCA Annual Conference at Trinity College

CONFERENCES

The Connecticut Counselor Association (CCA) Spring Conference will take place on **April 24, 2025**, at the Hilton Garden Inn - Wallingford, CT. The conference provides an excellent opportunity to network with clinical mental health counselors from Connecticut while exploring a range of contemporary counseling topics. Join us to engage, learn, and collaborate with colleagues and exhibitors in the field, all while enjoying shared meals and meaningful discussions. Four presentations will allow for 6 CE hours. For further information, visit: <https://www.ccacounseling.com/conference.html>

SAVE THE DATE!

ALUMNI PANEL

On **March 13, 2025**, Counselor's Corner will be hosting a virtual Alumni Panel event via Zoom. This event offers an excellent opportunity for first, second, and third-year students to engage with WCSU Counselor Education Alumni. We will offer Q&A so we can learn from both their observations as students and gain insights into their experiences as professional counselors. The panel will feature both mental health and school counseling professionals. For further information, please contact Chris Davis at davisc@wcsu.edu.



GRADUATION CELEBRATION

On **Saturday, April 26**, at 1:00 PM, the WCSU Counselor Education Program will host an in-person end-of-year and graduation celebration for first, second, and third-year students. This event will honor the third-year students graduating in May. The celebration will take place at the Student Center on the Midtown Campus, where food will be provided, and attendees will have the option to bring additional food to share. Look for your invite soon!



CSCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

On **May 22, 2025**, the Connecticut School Counselor Association (CSCA) will host its annual conference at Trinity College. This event offers a valuable opportunity to network with fellow school counselors from across Connecticut and gain insights into the innovative practices being implemented in schools statewide.

Don't miss the chance to connect, collaborate, and expand your professional knowledge. For further information, visit the CSCA site: <https://cscawildapricot.org/2025-Conference>

New Professor

ALERT!

NEW ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

WCSU is pleased to welcome Lisa Kilcourse as a new adjunct professor for the Counselor Education Program. She is currently teaching two sections of EPY 610: Practicum in School Counseling. Professor Kilcourse earned her master's degree in Counselor Education (School Counseling) at WCSU and has over 10 years of experience as a school counselor. Currently, she serves as a school counselor at an elementary school in Newtown, CT. Professor Kilcourse is excited to return to WestConn and share her expertise in school counseling with second-year graduate students.

FUN FACTS

- "I'm a certified yoga instructor"
- "I like to do the recumbent bike everyday"
- "I love Disney!"



A Coffee-Chat

FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS DISCUSS RESILIENCY



With the first year of graduate school quickly coming to its completion, first-year graduate students have a lot to share about resiliency. From navigating life as a first-generation college student to enjoying a night of moonlight bowling with a group of friends, resilience and finding balance is of the utmost importance to the class of 2027.

In our “Coffee Chat,” we shared many personal challenges along with ways in which we remain resilient. We hope that through the act of sharing these stories we can help build resilience and an understanding of differing life experiences throughout the Counselor Education community.

**ANDY BONILLA,
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH '27**

CHALLENGE:

- “I will say it’s hard being a first-generation student. I’m still trying to learn as I go, and I can’t explain well enough for my parents [or friends] to understand what I’m going through.”

RESILIENCE:

- “I’ve been going to the gym for like ten years and it’s the only outlet that really does it for me.”
- “I do game nights with friends on the weekends. We play board games, Cards Against Humanity, Mario Party, anything like that.”
- “Our cohort’s Discord channel is a really great thing that Jay started for all of us. It’s separate from the school, and we can all just kind of get on there and talk.”

CONTINUED...

**SAM VIDAL,
SCHOOL COUNSELING '27**

CHALLENGE:

- "As someone who works full time Monday through Friday in a very high stress job...it's hard [to find time for balance and self-care]."

RESILIENCE:

- "Once you find a routine, it gets better."
- I think the professors also make a big difference. I had [Professor Darragh] for undergrad and he's the reason I applied to school counseling."
- "Joining the Discord channel really helps because you're able to communicate with people who understand what you're going through."



**TINA KEO,
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH '27**

CHALLENGE:

- "For me, the reading is a lot. [Before finding a study routine] it would take hours because for me I would reread [the chapters] to really sink it in."

RESILIENCE:

- "Using the electronic book helps. I can highlight just pieces that I don't know as much about...or that are hard to dissect."
- "I try not to binge too much on shows because when I get hooked, I don't stop. I could go on for hours. I usually just have like one or two comfort shows."
- "I like watching other people online reacting to my favorite shows as they watch them for the first time. It's kind of like a psychological practice too, in a way."



**AMANDA RODRIGUES,
SCHOOL COUNSELING '27**

CHALLENGE:

- “I think one of the challenges I had when starting the program was time management and kind of figuring out what study style I should use. At the beginning of the program...I was handwriting everything...I felt like all my time was going to handwriting these notes.”

RESILIENCE:

- “This semester I decided that I’m going to type my reading notes and handwrite only the lecture notes, which I feel has been a lot more helpful and definitely helpful for my self-care because it frees up so much time!”
 - “Last week, at like 10:00 PM it was moonlight bowling with lights and a DJ. It was two hours, and I went with my cousins. I actually did well!”
 - “My friend did her master’s in speech. Her master’s was two years full-time and I got to see her experience that and that made me like the three-year program. She barely had a life for two years. The fact that [our program] is three years gives you more of that work-life balance.”
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CHALLENGE:

- “My challenge for me personally is kind of biding my time because of the three-year program. I’m not right out of college so a rather large change, a change of career is coming. But it’s coming in three years.”

RESILIENCE:

- “I feel we have learned so many important concepts already, and on the Saturday [in person skills] session last week. Practice by doing, I feel is important”
- “When you have people that inspire you, I believe it pushes you as well. It makes it worth it in the end. Is it three years? Yes, but you need to look at the end goal. You’ll be graduating having learned from the best.”
- “Despite it being a three-year program, it was never an issue of do I still want to do this. I’m still going to become a counselor. I can’t say enough about [our professors]. Dr. Gutheil is amazing. That’s just someone I want to learn from.”

THANK YOU

Thank you to Andy, Sam, Tina, Amanda, and Mike for sharing your insights regarding challenges and resilience as first-year graduate students. In addition, a big thank you to Jay Z for setting up the Discord channel for our 2027 graduating class.

The topic of a strong community added to everyone’s resilience and all our “Coffee Chat” attendees wanted to ensure that you were thanked for your efforts!