



WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
COUNSELOR EDUCATION
STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026

School of Professional Studies
Department of Educational Psychology
Counselor Education Program

Western Connecticut State University
181 White Street
Danbury, CT 06810

This handbook is provided to students and applicants for their general information and guidance only. It does not constitute a contract; either expressed or implied and is subject to revision at the University's discretion.

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WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

Program Overview

Western Connecticut State University offers a Master of Science degree in Counselor Education with options in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling. The MS in Counselor Education Program is a 60-credit, part-time, hybrid program that is designed to be completed in three years. The program primarily uses online synchronous learning in combination with asynchronous learning for all courses and supervisory activities. Please note that our skills courses do have an in-person synchronous learning component associated with the online courses. When enrolled in these courses (EPY 501, EPY 603, EPY 507, EPY 508), students are required to meet on campus three Saturdays per semester to participate in clinical labs. The Saturday dates will be published in advance at the time of enrollment. Students who need an alternative date for clinical labs due to religious or health reasons must notify their instructor at the start of the semester. In-person learning is a required part of the program, and attendance is mandatory. The Counselor Education Program, Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling options are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and attending in-person learning is a CACREP requirement.

This handbook is designed to provide information regarding the Counselor Education Program. Courses are taught by the faculty of the Department of Educational Psychology. In addition to courses within this department, students are also able to enhance their experience by taking courses within other graduate divisions of the University.

All full-time faculty have doctoral degrees in Counselor Education or related fields. In addition, part-time faculty hold a minimum of a master's degree in their respective field. Part-time faculty from our education department, addictions program, and from the professional community at large provide our students with a wide variety of theoretical and experiential perspectives regarding the role of professional counselors.

The program is informed by research and shaped by the needs of the communities and schools who require the services of professional counselors. A strong theoretical thread runs through the core courses and the advanced courses. Theory also drives skill development with an initial exposure to the cornerstones of the counseling relationship followed by exposure to skills and intervention techniques important to major theories of counseling.

The experiential thread begins early in the program as students interact with counselors from a variety of settings and learn about counseling in communities and schools. In their subsequent coursework, they add depth and breadth by engaging in experiences that allow them to practice individual and group counseling skills, both on and off campus, with diverse populations. These experiences culminate in Practicum and Internship, which are designed to provide supervised professional experiences for the counselor-in-training in schools and agency settings.

STUDENT INFORMATION

Orientation Meeting

An online orientation meeting for new students is held during the first semester of enrollment. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the student handbook, discuss ethical and professional obligations and expectations, explain personal growth expectations as counselors-in-training, and review eligibility and requirements for licensure/certification.

Advisement

When a student is admitted into the Counselor Education Program, they are assigned an advisor who is a core faculty member for the option in which the student is enrolled (either Clinical Mental Health Counseling or School Counseling).

It is the student's responsibility to make regular contact (usually once a semester) with their advisor regarding courses to be taken and overall progress in the program. Among the advisor's responsibilities are the following:

1. To monitor the program sheet, which is the plan of study that was provided to each student when they were admitted to the program. Meeting with each advisee helps to ensure the timely completion of the degree requirements.
2. To advise the student each semester about courses to take in the subsequent semester.
3. To communicate any corrective feedback to the student as a result of faculty evaluations of students.
4. To review the advisee's records at the time that the student registers to graduate to determine that the student has met all program requirements.
5. To serve overall as a liaison between the program and the advisee.

Students will be contacted by their advisor to schedule official advisement meetings but students are welcome to make appointments with their advisor at any time.

Advisor Assignments

| Cohort Start Date | School Counseling | Clinical Mental Health |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 2025 1 st Year Students | | Dr. Jessi Gutheil & Dr. Hyemi Jang |
| 2024 2 nd Year Students | | Dr. Jessi Gutheil & Dr. Hyemi Jang |
| 2023 3 rd Year Students | | Dr. Jessi Gutheil |

Time to Complete Degree Requirements

The Master of Science in Counselor Education must be completed within six years.

TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Technical Requirements & Knowledge

Students are expected to have a reliable computer with a microphone and speakers and access to a reliable internet service provider throughout the program. Students are expected to be proficient with installing and using basic computer applications (Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel), navigating the internet, and have the ability to send and receive email attachments to successfully participate in the Counselor Education Program.

WCSU Student Accounts

All students are provided with a student identification number and a student user account which is your WCSU email account. This account will serve as the log-in for all applications you will use during the program such as Outlook, Blackboard, and Library Services. All communication from our program once you have enrolled comes through your university email. Here is the link to obtain a WCSU student user account: https://support.wcsu.edu/?ht_kb=how-do-i-obtain-a-wcsu-user-account.

Educational Platforms and Applications

Blackboard Learn Ultra

All courses are taught using Blackboard Learn Ultra as the interface. To access Blackboard, students will need a WCSU student account. Once logged into Blackboard, students will find a course shell for each course in which they are enrolled. Clicking on the course shell will direct students to all of the materials necessary for participation in that course including items such as syllabi, instructor contact information, discussion boards, portals to submit assignments, grades/feedback, and tests/quizzes. Students will also find the link to the virtual classroom where synchronous meetings will occur. Links for academic and technology support are found on the Blackboard home page.

Special note to Mac/Apple Users: Blackboard does not interface well with Pages. Assignments will need to be saved and submitted as a pdf or Word document otherwise your instructor will not be able to open your document.

Virtual Meeting Spaces

Students can expect to meet synchronously with professors for classes and for advisement via one of four virtual meeting spaces, Zoom, Collaborate Ultra, Microsoft Teams, or WebEx. Course instructors will post links to the meeting space on the Blackboard page associated with the class. Students will have access to Microsoft Teams and Collaborate Ultra (housed within Blackboard) via their WCSU student user accounts. Students may join Zoom and WebEx meetings as guests using the course meeting link.

Digital Requirements

System Requirements & Software

- [Mozilla's Firefox \(latest version; Macintosh or Windows\)](#)
- [Google Chrome \(latest version; Macintosh or Windows\)](#)
- [Apple's QuickTime plug-in \(latest version\).](#)
- Virus protection Software ([Click here for various options](#))
- Microsoft Office ([WCSU's Software link](#))

Blackboard Learn Ultra

The Counselor Education Program at WCSU uses Blackboard Learn Ultra as our classroom interface. Blackboard Learn Ultra supports the following browsers:

| | Desktop Browser Versions | Mobile Browser Base Versions ¹ |
|-------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Chrome | 87+ | 33+ |
| Edge ² | 87+ | 46+ |
| Firefox | 78+ | 33+ |
| Safari | 13+ (desktop, Mac OS only) | On iOS 12+ |

1. Mobile browsers are also supported for the original experience. Older themes are not supported on these browsers even though users may have success using them. [Blackboard App](#) and [Blackboard Instructor](#) are supported native apps for mobile and tablet devices that interact with Blackboard Learn Ultra servers. These apps may have their own device requirements.

2. A known Microsoft Edge issue has caused problems attaching and submitting open Microsoft Office files in Blackboard courses. To help prevent file submission problems, if you use Microsoft Edge, Blackboard warns you that you should close files before uploading them. The message only displays the first time you encounter a file upload workflow in a Blackboard session.

Blackboard Learn Ultra does not require any other browser plug-ins.

Assistive Software & Accessibility Within Blackboard Ultra

For the best Blackboard Learn Ultra experience with your screen reader, use Chrome™ and Jaws on a Windows® system. On a Mac® use Safari® and VoiceOver.

To learn more about assistive technologies through Blackboard Learn Ultra visit https://help.blackboard.com/Blackboard_App/Accessibility

Technical Assistance

Blackboard Support

Explore Blackboard Learn Ultra through the [Blackboard Learn Help for Students - Ultra Course View](#) which includes short videos, Getting Started Guides, and other documentation.

Blackboard Support Services

Blackboard Support Services provides 24/7/365 supplemental support for Blackboard Learn Ultra and general technical issues. Please continue to call our local Service Desk phone number (203-837-8467) for technical issues or questions. Calls will be forwarded to the Blackboard Support Help Desk. If for any reason, our local team is not available. Blackboard will forward any unresolved tickets to WCSU's Service Desk for Tier II support.

Zoom Technical Support

WCSU has limited support for Zoom users. Please call our local Service Desk (203-837-8467) for assistance. In the event the WCSU Service Desk is unable to assist, please visit the Zoom Customer Support site at <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

WCSU Service Desk

The hours of operation during regular semester are Monday through Thursday 8:30am-8:30 pm and Friday 8:30-4:30 pm. The hours of operation during the summer, spring break, and winter intersession are Monday through Friday 8:30-4:30. Email the IT Service Desk at RequestIT@wcsu.edu or call 203-837-8467.

Online Professionalism

Students should think carefully when using social media for personal and professional use. It is vitally important that students ensure that their Tik Tok, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook, X, or other social media accounts have privacy settings enabled that will prevent unauthorized people from accessing their personal information. Remember that the content you post may be permanent, and privacy settings are not perfect. At the beginning of the Counselor Education Program and throughout your professional life, it is recommended that you monitor your own Internet presence through search engines. Students should not interact with clients electronically unless directed to do so by the agency/school at which they are completing their fieldwork and only while on site during business hours at the agency/school. Students should strictly abide by agency/school

policies when digitally interacting with clients. Do not take or post any pictures of clients or provide any client information through your personal social media.

Professional Identity & Affiliation

Matriculated students in the Counselor Education Program are strongly encouraged to become members of and get involved with the national professional associations serving the counseling profession, such as the [American Counseling Association](https://www.counseling.org/) (ACA) (<https://www.counseling.org/>) and/or the [American School Counselor Association](https://schoolcounselor.org/) (ASCA) (<https://schoolcounselor.org/>). Benefits of membership include receiving the professional journal(s) published by the association, identification with current professional issues, opportunities to attend state, regional and national meetings, and professional liability insurance.

Students are also strongly encouraged to become members of and get involved with the local counseling professional associations, such as the [Connecticut Counseling Association](https://www.ccacounseling.com/) (CCA) (<https://www.ccacounseling.com/>), the [New York Mental Health Counselors Association](https://nymhca.org/) (NYMHCA) (<https://nymhca.org/>), the [Connecticut School Counselor Association](https://cscs.wildapricot.org/) (CSCA) (<https://cscs.wildapricot.org/>) and the [New York State School Counselor Association](https://nyssca.org/) (NYSSCA) (<https://nyssca.org/>).

Student membership in professional associations is available at a reduced membership cost. Announcements for state and regional professional meetings will be shared with students.

ADMISSION TO THE COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM: CRITERIA & PROCESS

Counselor Education Student Recruitment Policy

The graduate program in counselor education believes that the needs of a diverse society can only be met by encouraging diversity in the counseling professions. Thus, the program actively recruits students who represent a variety of cultures, ethnicities, races, genders, ages, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic classes. Counselor Education faculty recruit students by speaking to undergraduate classes and student organizations. They also meet with personnel in local organizations and schools as part of the outreach program to recruit diverse students.

The Counselor Education Program faculty seeks to admit only those who are personally and academically prepared to complete the Master of Science degree in Counselor Education with options in Clinical Mental Health Counseling or School Counseling successfully. Within these parameters, the faculty is committed to admitting students who represent diverse backgrounds and/or who have special abilities (i.e. bilingual competence) to serve a diverse population as school or clinical counselors.

Admission Criteria

WCSU uses a cohort model. The deadline for applications is January 10th of each year. Applications will continue to be accepted after this date based on a space available basis. Candidates are invited to interviews in February and are expected to begin the program in the summer (mid-May) if admitted.

Admission to the program is competitive and is based on all of the criteria listed below. In order to be considered for acceptance to the program, the applicant must:

1. Thoroughly and accurately complete an online application via the Western Connecticut State University website. <https://www.wcsu.edu/graduate/application/>
2. Present evidence of academic ability and potential for graduate-level study by submitting transcripts from all colleges/universities attended regardless of if a degree was earned.
3. Achieve a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher for all undergraduate courses. If a candidate does not meet the 3.0 GPA, under advisement from the graduate office, an alternative assessment will be provided.
4. Complete a bachelor's degree (or its international equivalent) that includes a general-education distribution of courses in English, mathematics, science, social and behavioral sciences, foreign language, and fine arts.
5. Submit a comprehensive and current resume or curriculum vitae that specifies all academic, work, and volunteer experience.
6. Paid or volunteer experience indicative of an interest in the counseling profession documented on the resume or curriculum vitae is highly preferred.
7. Submit an essay demonstrating proficiency in English that sets forth the reasons for wanting to enroll in a counselor education program, highlights any relevant counseling related experience, and emphasizes the suitability for online learning.
8. Provide the names and contact information for three individuals who are willing to recommend the applicant and testify to the applicant's suitability as a prospective counselor. The Office of Graduate Studies will email a specific recommendation form to the recommenders. Recommendations from applicants' family members, friends, or personal therapist will not be accepted.
9. Be interviewed by the program's faculty admissions committee, which will assess the applicant's academic background and personal attributes that might affect the student's performance as a counselor.
10. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately.
11. Demonstrate the ability to properly use online technology.
12. Have appropriate vocational goals and objectives relevant to the program.
13. Demonstrate openness to self-examination and personal and professional self-development.
14. Demonstrate the potential for forming effective interpersonal relationships in individual and small group contexts.

Course Waivers & Transfer Credits

The WCSU Counselor Education Program only accepts graduate level courses from CACREP accredited programs that meet program curriculum requirements. Course waivers are limited in number and done under careful advisement. Students who wish to use transfer credits toward the WCSU Counselor Education Program must make this request at the time of initial application to the university. The amount of graduate credit transferable into the Counselor Education Program from a master's degree program from another CACREP accredited institution is limited to six (6) credits. To be considered for transfer, the courses must have been completed with a grade of B or better in the three years prior to enrollment in WCSU's Counselor Education Program. Students must complete core courses, skills courses, fieldwork courses (practicum & internship) and the comprehensive examination at WCSU.

School Counseling Special Course Requirement

The State of Connecticut requires all persons seeking certification through the Department of Education to complete a 3-credit introductory course in special education that includes study of the gifted and talented. If applicants have not completed this prior to admission, they must complete ED 509 Introduction to Special Education as part of their planned program. Students who have taken this prior to admission must make a request for waiver or transfer at the time of initial application to the university.

Background Checks & Fingerprinting

Students with a criminal history may face challenges in obtaining clinical licensure or school counselor certification as certain convictions may disqualify individuals from being eligible for certification or licensure. All state licensing and certification authorities and boards require fingerprinting and conduct state and national criminal background checks.

In addition, clinical and school fieldwork sites also require fingerprinting and state and national background checks. Clinical placements and school districts require students to be fingerprinted prior to the start of fieldwork, and students must pay the cost of the fingerprinting. Students must complete the fingerprinting and background process as required by their sites. Some placements also mandate drug testing, and/or vaccinations prior to interactions with clients or students. Each site supervisor retains the right to withdraw a placement if the fingerprinting indicates information that is problematic for the site.

For more information on clinical licensure or school counselor certification, students should research the relevant state licensing board or professional association regulations.

Faculty in the Counselor Education Program should be informed of any concerns you may have with regard to your background. Please contact your advisor at the beginning of the program for an appointment if you think this might be an issue for you.

Course Schedule

Students attend part-time, generally taking two courses a semester during the summer, fall, and spring in order to complete the program in three years. Courses are offered during the academic year and in the summer in the late afternoon and evenings, Mondays through Thursdays. There are three summer sessions. The first summer session is a five-week session that starts in May. The second summer session is a five-week session that starts in June. Students in fieldwork will attend one full fifteen-week summer session (May through August).

Assessments & Related Fees

Accredited institutions of higher education are charged with the responsibility of collecting data on student work. These data are used for a variety of purposes, such as exhibits for visitors from accreditation site teams, and for portfolios of student work. These data show evidence of competence, knowledge, and skills among our counseling students. While we employ multiple methods of data collection, one of these results in fees for students. These fees are required for all students and are not negotiable.

TYPHON: Data Collection and Fieldwork Documentation

Students are expected to purchase a license to Typhon, a secure platform that will be used throughout the Counselor Education Program to manage and collect performance data and fieldwork documents. Students will upload assessments called Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), track fieldwork hours, and manage fieldwork contracts using Typhon. Subscriptions must be purchased in the fall of the first year. The cost is approximately \$100 for a five-year subscription. Dr. Monte is the contact for questions and technical assistance for Typhon. She can be reached at montel@wcsu.edu.

WCSU Counselor Education Comprehensive Exam

The WCSU Counselor Education Comprehensive Exam (CECE) is administered to all students in their final year during the spring semester. The CECE assesses all the required CACREP training areas, and all core and specialization required courses. This exam is helpful in both program assessment as well as student preparation. The CECE can be viewed as a practice exam for the National Counseling Exam (NCE) and the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam (NCMHCE) offered by the National Board for Certified Counselors. The exam is free for students. Students are required to pass the CECE within 2 standard deviations of the mean.

Accreditation

The Counselor Education Program, Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling options are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). To learn more about the accreditation, please see the [CACREP website](https://www.cacrep.org/) (<https://www.cacrep.org/>).

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Western Connecticut State University Vision

Western Connecticut State University will be widely recognized as a premier public university with outstanding teachers and scholars who prepare students to contribute to the world in a meaningful way.

Western Connecticut State University changes lives by providing all students with a high-quality education that fosters their growth as individuals, scholars, professionals, and leaders in a global society. To achieve this, we:

1. Offer undergraduate and graduate programs that weave together liberal arts and professional education and instill a desire for life-long learning.
2. Sustain a vibrant, inclusive campus that connects individuals through co-curricular programs, cultural events, and service to the community.
3. Attract student-centered faculty who are passionate teachers and accomplished scholars.
4. Establish partnerships that create opportunities for internships, research, and experiential learning.

Western Connecticut State University Values

Excellence. We value outstanding achievement through persistence, effort, honest feedback, and self-reflection.

Curiosity. We value the questions that drive learning, innovation, and creativity, which serve as the beginning and the desired outcome of education.

Dialogue. We value conversations that explore diverse perspectives and encourage shared understanding.

Engagement. We value the interactions with ideas, peers, and community that are essential to a vibrant university environment.

Opportunity. We value the possibilities created by affordable, accessible educational environments in which students can grow into independent thinkers and confident leaders.

Respect. We value the right of all people to be treated with dignity and fairness and expect this in our policies, classrooms, and community.

School of Professional Studies Mission and Vision Statement

The Mission of the School of Professional Studies is to prepare students as highly competent professionals in careers of education, health, and human services, who are also culturally competent advocates and professional leaders. The objective of the school is to provide students with a foundation of knowledge in the liberal arts, as well as professional

coursework and community-based experiential learning opportunities which values open communication, respect for others, and fosters creative and critical inquiry.

The school recognizes the critical role that technology will continue to play in preparing students for education, health, and human service careers. Faculty is committed to a curriculum that reflects the important role and impact that technology will have on these professions. In the 21st century, as society becomes more complex and more technologically oriented, the fields of education, health, and human service professions will become more critical.

The School of Professional Studies recognizes that traditional approaches to the delivery of instruction must change. Limited funding for higher education, significant changes in career patterns (e.g. greater numbers of nontraditional and second career students) and changing demographics in the state are factors likely to impact the ways in which students learn.

The faculty within the school will continue to actively contribute to the body of knowledge of the education, health, and human service fields through applied research and scholarly activities and will continue to challenge students in scientific inquiry and performance-based practice. The faculty remains committed to lifelong learning in response to changes in the education, health, and human service professions by offering continuing education for its alumni and practicing professionals.

Departments in the School of Professional Studies must be responsive, as well as creative in providing best practice teaching methods in each of their disciplines, including evidence based experiential learning practices, and interdisciplinary and collaborative efforts with other units within the University, and the professional communities. With this as the goal, the School of Professional Studies is becoming the leading education center for Western Connecticut in the disciplines of education, health, and human services.

Vision, Mission, and Values for the Department of Educational Psychology (EPY)

Department of Educational Psychology Vision

The Western Connecticut State University Department of Educational Psychology will be widely recognized as offering a premier Applied Behavior Analysis Program and a Counselor Education Program with outstanding faculty who prepare students to contribute to the world and their professions in a meaningful way.

Department of Educational Psychology Mission

The mission of the Department of Educational Psychology is to provide high quality education to practitioners in the fields of Applied Behavior Analysis and Counselor Education. The department is committed to professional standards of excellence and the implementation of evidence-based practices. We are dedicated to producing practitioners who exemplify compassion, cultural humility, and professionalism in the provision of services within their fields of study.

We seek to meet the larger goals of Western Connecticut State University, which serves as an accessible, responsive, and creative intellectual resource for the people and the

institutions of Connecticut and abroad. We strive to meet the needs of a diversified student body through instruction, scholarship, and service.

Department of Educational Psychology Values

As a department, we seek to emulate the values of Western Connecticut State University.

- **Excellence.** We value outstanding achievement realized through persistence, effort, honest feedback, and self-reflection.
- **Curiosity.** We value the questions that drive reflective learning and critical thinking which serve as the beginning and the desired outcome of professional education.
- **Dialogue.** We value conversations that explore diverse perspectives and encourage shared understanding.
- **Opportunity.** We value the possibilities created by affordable, accessible educational environments in which students can grow into high quality professionals.
- **Respect.** We value the right of all people to be treated with dignity and fairness and expect this in our policies, classrooms, and clinical practice.
- **Professional Development.** We value the interactions with research, colleagues, and evidenced-based practices that are essential to best practices in our professions.

Vision, Mission, and Values for the Counselor Education Program

Counselor Education Vision

The Western Connecticut State University Counselor Education Program will be widely recognized as a premier Counselor Education Program with outstanding faculty who prepare students to contribute to the counseling profession in a meaningful way.

Counselor Education Mission

We are committed to standards of excellence in the counseling profession. The graduate program in Counselor Education acknowledges a commitment to the students who will pursue professional preparation as school and clinical mental health counselors and to the larger public served by these graduates. We believe in and respect the inherent worth and dignity of each person. Our preparation program incorporates the need to develop throughout the lifespan a greater sense of self-realization with a commitment to serve a diverse society. We are committed to the service of others for the prevention and remediation of life's problems. We seek to meet the larger goals of Western Connecticut State University, which serves as an accessible, responsive, and creative intellectual resource for the people and the institutions of Connecticut. We strive to meet the needs of a diversified student body through instruction, scholarship, and service.

Counselor Education Values

The Counselor Education Program strictly follows the 2014 American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics which sets the standard for the core professional values of the counseling profession.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

The Counselor Education Program is committed to creating a program that is inclusive in its design and supports diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences as well as honors identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.) and provides an accessible learning opportunity for all students.

COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| Program Goals | Program Objectives |
|---|---|
| <p>1. The Counselor Education Program provides students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful professional counselors</p> | <p>1.A. Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional identity and be able to apply ethical standards. 1.B. Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and maintain a helping relationship and successfully practice as professional counselors. 1.C. Students will demonstrate the ability to research evidence-based practices and create interventions for counseling issues. 1.D. Students will demonstrate career theory knowledge and strategies for facilitating client skill development for career, educational, life-work planning, and management. 1.E. Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in group counseling and group work.</p> |
| <p>2. The Counselor Education Program prepares students to recognize, respect, and uphold the dignity, worth, and potential of each client and to consider all clients as unique, multi-dimensional individuals throughout the counseling relationship.</p> | <p>2.A. Students will apply multicultural competencies in both the individual and group counseling settings. 2.B. Students will apply theories and models of individual and family lifespan development to promote resilience, optimal development, and wellbeing throughout the lifespan. 2.C. Students will demonstrate the ability to select, conduct, and interpret assessments, and to use the data to formulate culturally and developmentally appropriate goals and interventions.</p> |
| <p>3. The Counselor Education program ensures students have developed dispositions aligned with the legal, ethical, and humanistic parameters of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and/or the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).</p> | <p>3.A. Students will demonstrate dispositions in line with the humanistic, legal, and ethical parameters of the counseling profession.</p> |
| <p>4. The Counselor Education Program prepares students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively serve clients in their specialized practice area.</p> | <p>4.A Students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively serve clients as Clinical Mental Health Counselors. 4.B Students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively serve students as School Counselors.</p> |

CACREP Alignment

The table below lists the key assessments aligned with the 2024 CACREP standards, program goals, and program learning objectives.

| MS in Counselor Education Program Objectives | | | | |
|--|--|-----------------------|---|--|
| Counselor Education Program Objectives | 2024 CACREP Core Standards & KPI Alignment | Goal Alignment | Key Assessments | Courses |
| 1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional identity and be able to apply ethical standards. | Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice (CACREP 3.A) KPI 1 | 1 | Professional Identity Project, Fitness to Practice, Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 585 EPY 618 EPY 610-615 |
| 2. Students will apply multicultural competencies in both the individual and group counseling settings. | Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences (CACREP 3.B) KPI 2 | 2 | Cultural Immersion Project, Individual Counseling Project, Assessment Project, Group Counseling Project, Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 587 EPY 507 EPY 508 EPY 600 EPY 603 EPY 610-615 |
| 3. Students will apply theories and models of individual and family lifespan development to promote resilience, optimal development, and wellbeing throughout the lifespan. | Lifespan Development (CACREP 3.C) KPI 3 | 2 | Developmental Reflection Project, Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 500 EPY 610-615 |
| 4. Students will demonstrate career theory knowledge and strategies for facilitating client skill development for career, educational, and life-work planning, and management. | Career Development (CACREP 3.D) KPI 4 | 1 | Career Advisement Session & Case Conceptualization Project, Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 572 EPY 610-615 |
| 5. Students will demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to develop and maintain a helping relationship and to identify and successfully practice as professional counselors. | Counseling Practice and Relationships (CACREP 3.E) KPI 5 | 1 | Individual Counseling Project, Fitness to Practice, Practicum & Internship Evaluation, CECE | EPY 507 EPY 508 EPY 610-615 |
| 6. Students will demonstrate knowledge and skills in group counseling and group work. | Group Counseling and Group Work (CACREP 3.F) KPI 6 | 1 | Group Counseling Proposal Project, Fitness to Practice, Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 603 EPY 610-615 |
| 7. Students will demonstrate the ability to select, conduct, and interpret assessments, and to use | Assessment and Diagnostic | 2 | Assessment Project, Individual Counseling Project, Practicum & | EPY 600 EPY 507 EPY 508 |

| | | | | |
|---|--|-------|--|--|
| the data to formulate culturally and developmentally appropriate goals and interventions. | Processes (CACREP 3.G) KPI 7 | | Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 610-615 |
| 8. Students will demonstrate the ability to research evidence-based practices and create interventions for counseling issues. | Research and Program Evaluation (CACREP 3.H) KPI 8 | 1 | Research Proposal Project, Group Counseling Project, Fitness to Practice, Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 601 EPY 603 EPY 610-615 |
| 9. Students will demonstrate dispositions in line with the humanistic, legal, and ethical parameters of the counseling profession. | Counseling Professional Dispositions (CACREP 2.C.2) KPI 9 | 3 | Fitness to Practice (3x), Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE | EPY 585 EPY 618 EPY 501 EPY 507 EPY 508 EPY 610-615 |
| 10a. Students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively serve clients as Clinical Mental Health Counselors. | Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CACREP 5.C) KPI 10a | 1,2,3 | Fitness to Practice (3x), Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE, Site Supervisor Survey, Alumni Survey, Employer Survey | EPY 618 EPY 501 EPY 508 EPY 611, 614-615 |
| 10b. Students will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to effectively serve students as School Counselors. | School Counseling (CACREP 5.H) KPI 10b | 1,2,3 | Fitness to Practice (3x), Practicum & Internship Evaluations, CECE, Site Supervisor Survey, Alumni Survey, Employer Survey | EPY 585 EPY 501 EPY 507 EPY 610, 612-613 |

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

The Counselor Education Program fully endorses the 2024 CACREP Standards adopted by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). The following list of the eight common core areas as established by CACREP and the National Board of Certified Counselors are addressed by courses that produce the identified knowledge and skills. Although the courses specified are targeted to offer the student information and skills relating to the identified standard, this is not meant to imply the standard will not be addressed in other courses, or that content may extend beyond stated standards. The Counselor Education Program provides students with the eight common core curricular experiences and opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills in each of these common curricular areas (2024 CACREP Standards). These eight core curricular areas (listed below) are common to both the Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling options.

1. **Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice**—studies that provide an understanding of the history, foundational knowledge, legal, and ethical responsibilities of the counseling profession and all of the following aspects of professional functioning.
2. **Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences**—studies that provide an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends in a multicultural society.
3. **Lifespan Development**—studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of persons at all developmental levels and in multicultural contexts.
4. **Career Development**—studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors.
5. **Counseling Practice and Relationships**—studies that provide an understanding of the counseling process in a multicultural society.
6. **Group Counseling and Group Work**—studies that provide both theoretical and experiential understandings of group purpose, development, dynamics, theories, methods, skills, and other group approaches in a multicultural society.
7. **Assessment and Diagnostic Processes**—studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation in a multicultural society.
8. **Research and Program Evaluation**—studies that provide an understanding of research methods, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation.

In addition to the eight common core curriculum areas, program area standards specific to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling option and the School Counseling option ensure that those students preparing to work as clinical mental health counselors and school counselors, respectively, will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to be successful professionals in their chosen fields. Additional information about the CACREP Standards can be found on the [CACREP website](https://www.cacrep.org/) (<https://www.cacrep.org/>)

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM OPTION: CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING

Counselors are skilled professionals who are trained to enable others to gain an understanding of their lives, make decisions, resolve problems, and be active. While the primary duty of the clinical mental health counselor (CMHC) is to the individual, their responsibilities extend beyond the individual client to parents, families, schools, the community, and to the counseling profession. Graduates of the clinical mental health counseling option are prepared to work in a variety of human service settings, including mental health centers, substance use rehabilitation centers, residential programs, hospitals, and other agencies offering counseling services.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling option is accredited by CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs).

Graduation from a CACREP accredited program includes the following benefits:

- Graduates of CACREP accredited programs are allowed to sit for the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), National Counselor Exam (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Exam (NCMHCE) immediately upon graduation, instead of providing documentation of two years of post-graduate supervision. NBCC recognizes the necessity for counselors to demonstrate proficiency in the CACREP core areas of study and utilizes the core as a basis for its national exams.
- Many states, including Connecticut, acknowledge the importance of CACREP standards by requiring applicants to pass the NBCC exam or by including language in their regulations that gives preference to graduates of CACREP-accredited programs.

Courses for Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The Master of Science in Counselor Education, Clinical Mental Health Counseling option has a 60-credit curriculum that consists of 51 credits of coursework and 9 credits of fieldwork. Of the 51 credits, six (6) are elective credits (typically 2 classes) that students will choose to complete the degree. Electives are offered throughout the program, and a list of electives will be provided to students.

Program Sheets for the MS in Counseling: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Each student receives a program sheet upon matriculation into the program which outlines the courses and the course sequence in which the courses must be taken. CMHC students should note that courses are only offered in the semesters indicated. Any student-initiated changes in plans of study may result in an inability to complete the program within the three-year sequence. The program sheet for Clinical Mental Health Counseling can be found in the graduate catalog. <http://www.wcsu.edu/graduate/programsheets/>

The following are the required courses for Clinical Mental Health Counseling:

| REQUIRED COURSES | CREDITS |
|--|----------------|
| EPY 500 Human Growth and Development | 3 |
| EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics and Research Design | 3 |
| EPY 586 Theories of Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 618 Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 501 Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships (*) | 3 |
| EPY 587 Counseling Diverse Populations | 3 |
| EPY 619 Crisis Counseling in the Community and School | 3 |
| EPY 621 Drug and Alcohol Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 508 Advanced Counseling Skills for Clinical Mental Health Counselors (*) | 3 |
| EPY 603 Group Work Foundation: Theory and Practice (*) | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors | 3 |
| EPY 630 Introduction to Psychopathology | 3 |
| EPY 611 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (**) | 3 |
| EPY 620 Marriage and Family Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 608 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Management, Delivery, and Consultation | 3 |
| EPY 614 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling I (**) | 3 |
| EPY 572 Career Education and Development | 3 |
| EPY 615 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling II (**) | 3 |

* Indicates course requires an in-person, on-campus Clinical Skills Lab

** Successful Completion of all Core Courses: EPY 500, EPY 601, EPY 586, EPY 618, EPY 501, EPY 587, EPY 619, EPY 621, EPY 508, EPY 603, EPY 600, and EPY 630 is required before enrollment in Practicum Course EPY 611. Completion of all Core Courses, EPY 611, and EPY 620 is required before enrollment in Internship Course EPY 614. Completion of all Core Courses, EPY 614, and EPY 608 is required before enrollment in Internship Course EPY 615. Fieldwork courses must be completed in numeric order, EPY 611, EPY 614, and EPY 615.

Course Sequence for the MS in Counselor Education: Clinical Mental Health Counseling

| Clinical Mental Health Counseling (60 credits) | | |
|---|--|---|
| Summer | Fall | Spring |
| EPY 500 Human Growth and Development | EPY 586 Theories of Counseling | EPY 501* Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships |
| EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics and Research Design | EPY 618 Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling | EPY 587 Counseling Diverse Populations |
| EPY 619 Crisis Counseling in the Community and School | EPY 508* Advanced Counseling Skills for Clinical Mental Health Counselors | EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors |
| EPY 621 Drug and Alcohol Counseling | EPY 603* Group Work Foundation: Theory and Practice | EPY 630 Introduction to Psychopathology |
| EPY 611 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling | EPY 608 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Management, Delivery, and Consultation | EPY 572 Career Education and Development |
| EPY 620 Marriage and Family Counseling | EPY 614 Internship In Clinical Mental Health Counseling I | EPY 615 Internship In Clinical Mental Health Counseling II |
| Electives: Students must take two electives (6 credits) provided through the program to complete the 60 credits. | | |
| *Indicates course requires an in-person, on-campus Clinical Skills Lab. | | |

Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Fieldwork Experience Requirements

Practicum and Internship

Didactic instruction and pre-practicum coursework are intended to prepare the student to be placed in a counseling setting (hospital, agency, or clinic) that matches the student's career objectives.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling students complete nine (9) credits of clinical instruction fieldwork:

- The Practicum course (EPY 611) is a three (3) credit course, and students complete at least 100 clock hours at the site to meet the requirements of Practicum.
- The Internship I course (EPY 614) is a three (3) credit course, and students complete at least 300 clock hours at the site to meet the requirements of Internship I.
- The Internship II course (EPY 615) is a three (3) credit course, and students complete at least 300 clock hours at the site to meet the requirements of Internship II.

Practicum Total Hours: 100

Internship I Total Hours: 300

Internship II Total Hours: 300

Total Hours of Fieldwork: 700 Hours

Please note that students must have the flexibility to complete the fieldwork experiences at an approved site during the fieldwork portion of their training. Students who are employed at a clinic/agency and wish to do fieldwork at their place of employment should obtain approval prior to admission to the Counselor Education Program.

To ensure the integrity of the fieldwork experience, there must be complete separation between a student's employment and that student's field placement. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator, on behalf of the Program, contracts in writing with the agency in which a student is, or seeks to be, employed to insure: 1) that the student's fieldwork experience is conducted in a part of the agency program that is separate from the student's employment; 2) that the Fieldwork Site Supervisor for the student is not the same person who is supervising the student in his or her employment at the agency; and 3) that credit for fieldwork will be given only for those hours in which the student is engaged in fieldwork learning assignments.

It is the faculty's prerogative to require any student to repeat Practicum and/or Internship I or II for credit if it is the faculty's judgment that this is in the student's best interest. If the student contracts for two semesters of part-time Practicum or Internship, the student will use 12 or more credit hours to complete the clinical instruction component of the program.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling students choose one fieldwork site and complete both the practicum and internship fieldwork experiences at that site. If a site does not offer the group counseling hours required, the student will need to obtain a second site to meet the group requirement. Students may also choose an additional site if needed, only with the

guidance and approval of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator.

Students are responsible for finding practicum and internship fieldwork sites with the assistance and advice of their faculty advisor and the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator. The coordinator also acts as a liaison between the students and site supervisors to assist with initial and evaluation paperwork required by the Program.

Note: Private practices and group practices are not eligible sites for the clinical fieldwork experience.

Note: All fieldwork must be completed in person at the fieldwork site. Virtual fieldwork sites are not eligible sites for the clinical fieldwork experience.

Note: If an in person fieldwork site also conducts telemental health virtual counseling as part of their regular process, the site must meet certain requirements and conditions in order for the WCSU to participate in the virtual counseling.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator reviews all proposed fieldwork sites and determines whether each site meets eligibility requirements.

Liability Insurance

All students are required to obtain liability insurance prior to engaging in the fieldwork experiences, Practicum, and Internship. All students are required to be members of the American Counseling Association (ACA) which provides liability insurance as a benefit of student membership. A copy of the student's liability insurance form must be presented to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator, the Practicum and Internship faculty supervisors, and the Fieldwork Site Supervisor. It must also be posted in Blackboard and Typhon.

For detailed information regarding Practicum and Internship, please see the Student Fieldwork Manual.

Licensure and Endorsement Policy

Students who successfully complete all requirements for the Master of Science degree in Counselor Education, Clinical Mental Health Counseling option will receive formal endorsement in their area of concentration by the by the Program Coordinator. Formal endorsement includes recommendations for licensure and employment as a clinical mental health counselor in a setting consistent with the training provided by the program. Students will receive formal program endorsement only in that option for which they have met training requirements. Successful completion of a program means the completion of all didactic and experiential coursework including practicum and internship and marked by performance sufficient to ensure that the candidate possesses the skills and competencies necessary for ethical provision of services to clients in the setting for which endorsement is made. Completion of all requirements means that the candidate has completed the 60-credit master's degree as required by CACREP. Candidates must maintain a cumulative 3.0 (B) average.

Licensed Professional Counselor

The State Department of Connecticut, Department of Public Health, accepts applications for licensure as a Professional Counselor.

- Successful completion of 60 graduate semester hours in the discipline of professional counseling at a regionally accredited institution of higher education, which includes the core and clinical curriculum of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) (Western's program is CACREP approved).
- Upon graduation, students are eligible to apply for the Professional Counselor Associate Licensure through the CT Department of Public Health.
- Acquisition of three thousand (3000) hours of post graduate degree supervised experience in professional counseling performed over a period of not less than two years and included a minimum of one hundred (100) hours of direct supervision by a Connecticut licensed mental health professional.
- Successful completion of the National Counselor Examination (NCE) for those in CT or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Exam for Licensure and Certification (NCMHCE) for students in NY or CT.

The Western Connecticut State University Clinical Mental Health Program meets the educational requirements for both the Connecticut Department Health for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and the New York State Office of the Professions for licensure as a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC).

Students seeking licensure in another state should notify the program coordinator of the state in which they wish to be licensed in to confirm educational requirements before starting the program.

National Board for Certified Counselors

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) is an independent, not-for-profit organization whose primary purposes are to establish and monitor a national certification system, to identify to professionals and the public those counselors who have voluntarily sought and obtained generic counselor certification, and to maintain a registry of these counselors. This process grants recognition to counselors who have met predetermined NBCC standards in their training, experience, and performance on the National Counselor Examination. A counselor who is certified by the NBCC uses the designation NCC, National Certified Counselor.

Criteria for Certification as an NCC:

1. Graduate degree in counseling or a closely related field from an accredited university.
2. At least two years post-masters professional counseling experience. (This requirement is waived for graduates of a CACREP-Approved Program.)
3. A documented supervised counseling experience.
4. Assessment of counseling experience by two professionals in the field.

5. Many states administer the National Counselor Examination as a component within their respective licensure processes.

NCC's 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 demonstrate completion of 100 contact clock hours of approved continuing education or re-examination as well as adhere to the NBCC Code of Ethics in professional practice.

Students enrolled in a CACREP-accredited master's degree program may register to take the NCE or NCMHCE either the semester they get their degree or the semester right after they have earned their degree. This enables students to be Nationally Certified Counselors at the same time they are earning their M.S. degree in Counselor Education. The NCE or the NCMHCE is also one of the requirements for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Connecticut. Candidates in NY must take the NCMHCE, and they can only take it after they graduate and receive approval to take the examination from the NY Office of the Professions.

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM OPTION: SCHOOL COUNSELING

Counselors are skilled professionals who are trained to enable others to gain an understanding of their lives, make decisions, resolve problems, and be active. While the primary duty of the school counselor is to the individual, their responsibilities extend beyond the individual client to parents, families, schools, the community, and to the counseling profession. Graduates of the School Counseling option are prepared to work as counselors in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Master of Science in Counselor Education: School Counseling

The 60-credit Master of Science in Counselor Education, School Counseling option is accredited by CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs).

Graduation from a CACREP accredited program includes the following benefits:

- Graduates of CACREP accredited programs are allowed to sit for the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), National Counselor Exam (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Exam (NCMHCE) immediately upon graduation, instead of providing documentation of two years of post-graduate supervision. NBCC recognizes the necessity for counselors to demonstrate proficiency in the CACREP core areas of study and utilizes the core as a basis for its national exams.
- Many states, including Connecticut, recognize the significance of CACREP standards through requirements of passage of the NBCC exam or through statements or options in their regulations which give preference to CACREP graduates.

The School Counseling Program is approved by the State of Connecticut and prepares the student to be eligible for the Initial Educator Certificate (explained in this handbook and in the Graduate Catalog). While New York students cannot be certified by Connecticut to be school counselors in New York State, they can meet the requirements that allow them to apply for certification in NY.

Courses for School Counseling

The Master of Science in Counselor Education, School Counseling option has a 60-credit curriculum that consists of 51 credits of coursework and 9 credits of fieldwork.

Program Sheet for MS in Counselor Education: School Counseling

Each student receives a program sheet upon matriculation into the program which outlines the courses and the course sequence in which the courses must be taken. School Counseling students should note that courses are only offered in the semesters indicated. Any student-initiated changes in plans of study may result in an inability to complete the program within the three-year sequence. Program sheets for the option in School Counseling can be found in the graduate catalog. The link is <http://www.wcsu.edu/graduate/programsheets/>

The following are the required courses for School Counseling:

| ALL COURSES ARE FOR STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO THE PROGRAM ONLY | CREDITS |
|--|----------------|
| EPY 500 Human Growth and Development | 3 |
| EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics and Research Design | 3 |
| EPY 585 Introduction to School Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 586 Theories of Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 501 Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships (*) | 3 |
| EPY 587 Counseling Diverse Populations | 3 |
| ED 509 Introduction to Special Education | 3 |
| EPY 502 Career Readiness Planning | 3 |
| EPY 625 School-Based Family Counseling | 3 |
| EPY 507 Advanced Counseling Skills for School Counselors (*) | 3 |
| EPY 603 Group Work Foundation: Theory and Practice (*) | 3 |
| EPY 503 School Counseling Frameworks | 3 |
| EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors | 3 |
| EPY 610 Practicum in School Counseling (**) | 3 |
| EPY 609 Counseling People with Physical Disabilities | 3 |

| | |
|---|---|
| EPY 619 Crisis Counseling in the Community and School | 3 |
| EPY 504 School Counselors as Change Agents | 3 |
| EPY 612 Internship in School Counseling I (**) | 3 |
| EPY 572 Career Education and Development | 3 |
| EPY 613 Internship in School Counseling II (**) | 3 |

* Indicates course requires an in-person, on-campus Clinical Skills Lab

** Successful Completion of all Core Courses: EPY 500, EPY 601, EPY 585, EPY 586, EPY 501, EPY 587, ED 509, EPY 502, EPY 625, EPY 507, and EPY 603 is required before enrollment in Practicum Course EPY 610. Completion of all Core Courses and EPY 503, EPY 600, EPY 610, EPY 609, and EPY 619 is required before enrollment in Internship Course, EPY 612. Completion of all Core Courses, EPY 504, and EPY 612 is required before enrollment in Internship Course, EPY 613. Fieldwork courses must be completed in numeric order, EPY 610, EPY 612, and EPY 613.

Course Sequence for the MS in Counselor Education: School Counseling

| School Counseling (60 credits) | | |
|--|--|---|
| Summer | Fall | Spring |
| EPY 500 Human Growth and Development | EPY 585 Introduction to School Counseling | EPY 501* Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships |
| EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics and Research Design | EPY 586 Theories of Counseling | EPY 587 Counseling Diverse Populations |
| ED 509 Introduction to Special Education (Outside of Program) | EPY 507* Advanced Counseling Skills for School Counselors | EPY 503 School Counseling Frameworks |
| EPY 502 Career Readiness Planning | EPY 603* Group Work Foundation: Theory and Practice | EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors |
| EPY 625 School-Based Family Counseling | | EPY 610 Practicum in School Counseling |
| EPY 609 Counseling Students With Physical Disabilities | EPY 504 School Counselors as Change Agents | EPY 572 Career Education and Development |
| EPY 619 Crisis Counseling in the Community and School | EPY 612 Internship in School Counseling I | EPY 613 Internship in School Counseling II |
| <p>Electives: School Students are only required to take one elective (3 credits) provided through the program if exempted from ED 509.</p> <p>If students have not taken ED 509 or an equivalent course, they must take ED 509 as a requirement to complete the 60 credits. Please monitor NY certification for any changes.</p> <p>*Indicates course requires an in-person, on-campus Clinical Skills Lab.</p> | | |

School Counseling Fieldwork

Practicum and Internship

Didactic instruction and pre-practicum coursework are intended to prepare the student to be placed in a counseling setting (school) that matches the student's career objectives.

School Counseling students complete nine (9) credits of clinical instruction fieldwork.

- The Practicum course (EPY 610) is a three (3) credit course and students complete at least 100 clock hours at the site to meet the requirements of Practicum.
- The Internship I course (EPY 612) is a three (3) credit course and students complete at least 350 clock hours at the site to meet the requirements of Internship I.
- The Internship II course (EPY 613) is a three (3) credit course and students complete at least 350 clock hours at the site to meet the requirements of Internship II.

Practicum Total Hours: 100

Internship I Total Hours: 350

Internship II Total Hours: 350

Total Hours of Fieldwork: 800 Hours

Please note that students must have the flexibility to complete the fieldwork experiences at an approved site during the fieldwork portion of their training. Students who are employed at a school and wish to do fieldwork at their place of employment should obtain approval prior to admission to the Counselor Education Program.

To ensure the integrity of the fieldwork experience, there must be complete separation between a student's employment and that student's field placement. The School Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator, on behalf of the Program, contracts in writing with the school in which a student is, or seeks to be, employed to insure: 1) that the student's fieldwork experience is conducted in a part of the school program that is separate from the student's employment; 2) that the Fieldwork Site Supervisor for the student is not the same person who is supervising the student in his or her employment at the school; and 3) that credit for fieldwork will be given only for those hours in which the student is engaged in fieldwork learning assignments.

All school counseling students who are seeking certification in Connecticut or in New York must complete a full-year, 10-month internship (in addition to practicum). This 10-month internship must involve at least 700 hours. New York Certification also requires that students have two internship sites (one site in a K-8 school and one site in a 9-12 school). Internship hours should be divided up equally between the two sites (350 hours at each site).

It is the faculty's prerogative to require any student to repeat Practicum and/or Internship I or II for credit if it is the faculty's judgment that this is in the student's best interest. If the student contracts for two semesters of part-time Practicum or Internship, the student will use 12 or more credit hours to complete the clinical instruction component of the program.

Students are responsible for finding practicum and internship fieldwork sites with the assistance and advice of their faculty advisor and the School Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator. The coordinator also acts as a liaison between the students and site supervisors to assist with initial and evaluation paperwork required by the Program.

School Counseling students choose one fieldwork site for practicum and a second site for internship. If a site does not offer the group counseling hours required, the student will need to obtain a second site to meet the group requirement. NY students are required to have two internship sites. One site must be a K-8 school, and the second site must be a 9-12 high school.

Note: All fieldwork must be completed in person at a school. Virtual schools are not eligible sites for the school counseling fieldwork experience.

The School Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator reviews all proposed fieldwork sites and determines whether each site meets eligibility requirements.

Liability Insurance

All students are required to obtain liability insurance before engaging in the fieldwork experiences, Practicum and Internship. Liability insurance is available through HPSO at special student rates. A copy of the student's liability insurance form must be presented to the School Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator, the Practicum and Internship faculty supervisors, and the Fieldwork Site Supervisor. It must also be posted in Blackboard and Typhon.

For detailed information regarding Practicum and Internship, please see the Student Fieldwork Manual.

Certification and Endorsement Policy

Students who successfully complete all requirements for the Master of Science degree in Counselor Education will receive formal endorsement in School Counseling by the Counselor Education Program Coordinator and/or the university certification officer. Formal endorsement includes recommendations for state certification and employment for those students who successfully complete the program in school counseling. Students will receive formal program endorsement only in that program for which they have met training requirements. Successful completion of a program means the completion of all didactic and experiential coursework including practicum and internship and marked by performance sufficient to ensure that the candidate possesses the skills and competencies necessary for ethical provision of services to clients in the setting for which endorsement is made. Completion of all requirements means that the candidate has completed the 60 credit Master's Degree as required by CACREP. Candidates must maintain a cumulative 3.0 (B) average.

School Counselor Certification

All students in the school counseling program may apply for Connecticut certification as a

school counselor, grades K-12, under the Initial Educator’s Certificate at the completion of internship. Students will be provided with directions on how to set up an online account and pay the required fee. The application for certification will be provided to the student from the Program Coordinator or the University’s Certification Officer. The completed application is then returned to the Certification Officer. Once processed, the Certification Officer will submit the application to the State Department of Education. The Western Connecticut State University School Counseling Program meets all the educational requirements for certification as a school counselor in Connecticut.

The Connecticut State Department of Education cannot grant certification in New York. Students who want to be certified in New York State must apply through the New York State Education Department in Albany using the “Individual Evaluation Pathway” ([click here for details](#)). In addition, students must attend three state sponsored workshops on the following topics: Dignity for All Students (DASA), Child Abuse Identification & Reporting, and School Violence Prevention and Intervention, complete internship at two separate locations (one K-8 school and one 9-12 school) and pass a certification exam. Information regarding certification in NY is available on the New York State Department of Education ([NYSED](https://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/school-counselor-init-prof.html)) website (<https://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/school-counselor-init-prof.html>).

Students pursuing certification in another state should notify the program coordinator of the state they wish to be certified to confirm the educational requirements before starting the program.

National Board for Certified Counselors

The National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC) is an independent, not-for-profit organization whose primary purposes are to establish and monitor a national certification system, to identify to professionals and the public those counselors who have voluntarily sought and obtained generic counselor certification, and to maintain a registry of these counselors. This process grants recognition to counselors who have met predetermined NBCC standards in their training, experience, and performance on the National Counselor Examination. A counselor who is certified by the NBCC uses the designation NCC, National Certified Counselor.

Criteria for Certification as an NCC:

1. Graduate degree in counseling or a closely related field from an accredited university.
2. At least two years post-masters professional counseling experience. (This requirement is waived for graduates of a CACREP-Approved Program. The WCSU Counselor Education Program is CACREP approved.)
3. A documented supervised counseling experience.
4. Assessment of counseling experience by two professionals in the field.
5. Many states administer the National Counselor Examination as a component within their respective licensure processes.

NCC’s 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 demonstrate completion of 100 contact clock hours of approved continuing education or re-examination as well as adhere to the NBCC Code of Ethics in professional practice.

Students enrolled in a *CACREP*-accredited master's degree program may register to take the NCE either the semester they get their degree or after graduation. This enables students to be Nationally Certified Counselors at the same time they are earning their M.S. degree in Counselor Education. Taking an examination with the NBCC is optional for school counseling students.

Bridge to LPC

School Counseling students have the opportunity to participate in bridge coursework to earn the necessary educational components to be eligible to apply to become a Licensed Professional Counselor Associate (LPCA) in CT. Full LPC licensure can only be obtained after the completion of 3,000 hours of supervised clinical work which includes 100 hours of supervision by a licensed approved professional. Students must take an additional 21 credits of course work including a two-semester internship in a clinical mental health setting. The courses required for the bridge program are EPY 618, EPY 619, EPY 620 or 625, EPY 621, EPY 630, EPY 614, and EPY 615. The Bridge coursework is only open to WCSU Counselor Education graduates and current students. Students interested in the Bridge coursework should speak with Dr. Monte for more information.

COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES: POLICY FOR STUDENT RETENTION, REMEDIATION, AND DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Policy on Gatekeeping

Counselors have a duty and obligation to do no harm to clients and to support their safety and wellbeing. Therefore, it is vitally important that student counselors-in-training must constantly self-reflect and make responsible decisions. Student counselors-in-training must effectively manage their own intrapersonal and interpersonal challenges, such as mental health issues and/or substance use problems to ensure that their judgment is not impaired and that they do not harm any clients.

Working as an impaired counselor is a violation of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics Section F.5.b, which states:

F.5.b. Impairment: Students and supervisees monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others. They notify their faculty and/or supervisors and seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work.

All Counselor Education Program faculty and site supervisors are gatekeepers of the

counseling profession and have a legal and ethical responsibility to regularly monitor students/supervisees and intervene whenever students exhibit signs of impairment in professional behavior. Faculty and site supervisors want students to be successful and will assist students in developing plans for remediation when appropriate and necessary. However, Counselor Education Program faculty can recommend dismissal from the program and/or practicum and/or internship sites when students are unable to demonstrate the necessary dispositions, behaviors, and competencies required of a professional counselor.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Academic Honesty Policy

Students are responsible for adhering to the WCSU [Academic Honesty Policy](https://www.wcsu.edu/faculty-handbook/policies-pertaining-to-students/academic-honesty-policy/) (<https://www.wcsu.edu/faculty-handbook/policies-pertaining-to-students/academic-honesty-policy/>). It defines various forms of academic misconduct and describes the procedures an instructor should follow when they suspect that a student has violated the Academic Honesty Policy.

Student Code of Conduct

The Student Code of Conduct sets forth the rules, regulations, and expected behavior of students enrolled at Western Connecticut State University. Violations of any rules, regulations, or behavioral expectations may result in a charge of violating the Student Code of Conduct. It is the student's responsibility to read the Student Code of Conduct and comply with these expectations. Students are responsible for following the [Student Code of Conduct Policy](https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/2.1%20StudentCodeofConduct.pdf) (<https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/2.1%20StudentCodeofConduct.pdf>).

Student Counselor-in-Training Legal and Ethical Responsibilities

Students are responsible for following and conforming to all federal and state laws, statues, regulations, other legal guidelines, and national and state ethical codes of professional associations in counseling, and all related national and state licensure and certification boards. Per the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics Section F.5.a. Ethical Responsibilities: Students and supervisees have a responsibility to understand and follow the ACA Code of Ethics. Students and supervisees have the same obligation to clients as those required of professional counselors.

In addition, per the 2014 American Counseling Association Code of Ethics Section C.4.a. Accurate Representation: Counselors are required to always represent their professional qualifications and training accurately. Therefore, all students in the Counselor Education Program will identify as a student counselor-in-training while in the Counselor Education Program and during all fieldwork experiences.

Student failure to follow all state and federal laws, statues, regulations, other legal guidelines, and ethical codes of the counseling profession may result in dismissal from the Counselor Education Program.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

Per the 2014 American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, Section B, Confidentiality and Privacy, student counselors-in-training have a duty and obligation to understand the ethical and legal requirements of confidentiality and to protect the confidentiality of clients. Students should not discuss client information or cases with anyone not specifically involved with or supervising the client or case. Students should always be aware of the location in which they are discussing client issues with appropriate individuals. Students should not discuss clients in hallways, stores, cafeterias, restaurants or on the phone in open public spaces. Students must be aware of and follow the agency/school policies regarding note taking, formal documentation, and releases. Students must obtain signed releases from clients when appropriate and under supervision from their site supervisor. Students must always protect client clinical information and paperwork documentation. Client records and paperwork must never be taken out of the agency/school, and they must be kept in locked files in a secure location in the agency/school. Any notes taken for university supervision will exclude client identifying information. Students will follow WCSU Fieldwork Manual policies and procedures regarding recordings. The use of recording must be approved by the fieldwork site, faculty supervisor, and signed releases must be obtained in advance of any recordings. Recordings must be kept secure at all times and can only be viewed by site supervisors and faculty supervisors. Students must maintain the privacy and confidentiality of recordings and records. Students must follow the rules of HIPAA and/or FERPA.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Academic Evaluation

Grades

Graduate students in the Counselor Education Program must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average to be in good standing. Students who fail to maintain a 3.0 average will not be eligible to continue in the program and will be dismissed. Credit will not be awarded for course grades below a C. Students who fail to earn a C in any course may be permitted to retake a course once. Total course retakes may not exceed two. Students who fail to maintain a 3.0 average after repeating two courses will not be eligible to continue in the program and will be dismissed. All grades are calculated in the cumulative GPA.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The Counselor Education Program systematically assesses student learning through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) identified from the core curriculum and area of program specialization, which are aligned with program objectives. KPIs are assessed by faculty and stakeholders (e.g., site supervisors) at multiple points during the student's academic program, measuring both content knowledge and applied knowledge and skills. Types of KPI data collected include standardized test scores (WCSU CECE), dispositions checklists (Fitness to Practice), and class assignments that are graded using specific assessment rubrics. Data is collected using the Typhon software system. Students are expected to obtain an 80% or higher grade on all KPIs. If a student receives a grade

below 80% on any KPI, the professor of the course will schedule a meeting with the student to discuss the grade and assist them in creating a plan for improvement, if appropriate.

Evaluation of Student Dispositions

The Counselor Education faculty meets regularly to evaluate the progress of each matriculated student. The Program has a Fitness to Practice Policy (FTP) to regularly evaluate the professional dispositions of students (See below). The student's advisor is responsible for collecting relevant feedback from the faculty about a particular student. Students' competence is evaluated using the Professional Dispositions Competency Assessment (PDCA) and documented with the FTP Evaluation Form. All students will be reviewed by individual faculty using the PDCA during Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling and/or Introduction to School Counseling (EPY 585 and/or EPY 618), Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships (EPY 501), Advanced Counseling Skills (EPY 507 or EPY 508), Practicum (EPY 610 or EPY 611), Internship (EPY 612 and EPY 613 and/or EPY 614 and EPY 615) and as necessary throughout the program. Students will be provided with the evaluation criteria of the PDCA.

Probationary Process:

When a student's progress is not satisfactory, based either on academic criteria or professional criteria unrelated to academic performance, they may be placed on probation. In this event, the following process will occur:

1. The student will be contacted to schedule a meeting to discuss the concerns of the faculty. The meeting will be held with the issuing faculty member and the core faculty of the Counselor Education Program.
2. During the meeting, faculty concerns will be discussed with the student. Based on the information discussed at the meeting, another meeting may be scheduled, or a plan to assist the student may be developed, if appropriate.
3. Following the meeting, the student will receive a letter from their advisor or the Program Coordinator outlining the faculty's concerns and stating the outcome of the meeting.
4. If the student has been put on probation, the letter will delineate what conditions the student must meet to be removed from probationary status. In addition, the student will be informed of the consequences should the faculty's conditions not be met, including the possibility that the student will be removed from the Program.
5. Finally, the letter will state how long the probationary period is to last. Usually, a probationary period is one semester.
6. At the end of the probationary period, the faculty will again meet with the student for assessment and will inform the student (in writing) of their evaluation. Usually, a student is either reinstated into the Program fully or is terminated from the Program at this time. However, it is possible for probation to be extended if the student has met prior conditions outlined by the faculty but has shown evidence of new deficits.
7. Should a student continue to present work that is of marginal quality, academically or professionally, he or she will not be recommended for continuation in the Program.

Fitness to Practice Policy

The Counselor Education Program Fitness to Practice (FTP) policy is designed to ensure that students are not impaired and are prepared for fieldwork placement. The FTP policy is an addendum to this handbook and should be reviewed with your advisor. (See Appendix A). Counselor Education faculty cannot allow candidates who are currently impaired to engage in a fieldwork placement course.

Students whose academic work is of marginal quality, less than a 3.0 average, in all MS in Counselor Education courses or who demonstrate personal qualities that are not conducive to the role of Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, and/or School Counselor per the Fitness to Practice Policy will not be recommended for continuation in the program.

Incomplete Policy

To receive an incomplete (“INC”) grade in a class, students must formally request it from the instructor in writing. Once approved by the instructor, the incomplete grade denoted as “INC” will be assigned by the instructor during the final grading period. The INC grade must be made up within a semester of the time the INC was recorded. If not completed within that time, the grade becomes an F unless the instructor recommends an extension of time for justifiable cause; the extension not to exceed one additional semester (fall, spring, or summer session).

Incomplete grades may not be removed by repeating a course. During their graduating semester, students must coordinate with their degree auditor regarding the timeline for resolving the incomplete grade.

When a student opts for an incomplete, it signifies their commitment to completing the coursework and earning a final grade. Therefore, a “W” grade (withdrawal) cannot serve as a resolution for an incomplete. A “W” denotes a course registration status and cannot be applied to a student’s academic record once the withdrawal period for a specific term has passed.

If the course receiving the INC is a pre-requisite for a future course, the INC grade must be completely and successfully resolved before a student can register for a future course. Students with multiple INC courses in the same semester will not be allowed to register for any future courses until all INC grades are successfully completed.

Withdrawal from a Course Policy

Students who find it necessary to drop a course must immediately notify their instructor, advisor, and the Office of Graduate Studies in writing. Failure to withdraw in writing will generate a grade of F for the course. Students may withdraw from a full semester course without academic penalty until the end of the tenth week of the semester. Withdrawals are recorded on the student’s transcript with the notation “W.” There is no penalty attached to

this notation. Withdrawals after the tenth week of a course normally result in an automatic penalty of WF. Withdrawals through the tenth week are initiated by the student in the Office of Graduate Studies. Later requests for withdrawal from a course without penalty are initiated through conference with the instructor. Students who withdraw from any one course or multiple courses in a semester three times during the program will not be allowed to continue in the program.

Withdrawal/ Leave of Absence from the University Policy

Any student in the Counselor Education Program has the right to withdraw from the program. A terminal interview with the student's faculty advisor must be arranged by the withdrawing student. There is no guarantee that a student who has withdrawn will be readmitted to the Counselor Education Program. Students who withdraw from the program or take a semester or longer leave of absence (LOA) and wish to return to the program, must request readmission within one academic year of withdrawal/LOA. Students must contact the Program Coordinator to request returning to the program, and the student must attend a meeting with the core faculty prior to registering for courses. Readmission is not guaranteed and is dependent upon the students' potential for success, current availability of learning opportunities, and department resources. Students must follow the designated plan for readmission, including demonstration of clinical competency. If more than two academic years have passed since withdrawal from the program, the student will not be eligible to return to the program without retaking courses. Students who withdraw from all courses in a semester three times during the program will not be allowed to continue in the program.

Time to Complete Degree Requirements

The Master of Science in Counselor Education must be completed within six years.

Academic Appeal Policy: Grievance Policy

If a student believes that he or she has been treated unfairly, either in a particular course or as a result of the formal evaluation process, it is the student's right to initiate a grievance process.

Grade Appeal Policy

When disagreements occur between student and instructor on the accuracy of a grade, the university regards it as important for the matter to be settled within a reasonable period of time. A specific procedure is in place that ensures students will get an impartial hearing of such a complaint.

Academic grading reflects careful and deliberate judgment by the course instructor. Academic evaluation of student performance requires expert consideration of cumulative information and is to some extent subjective.

The university recognizes that in rare instances there may be "palpable injustice(s)" in the determination of a final grade. Students may use the appeal process when they believe there is evidence to show that 1) a final grade was determined by methods and criteria different

from those used for determining final grades for others in the same class or 2) the evaluation was made as the result of bias or caprice. The grievance procedure consists of the following steps that students can take to have their matter settled.

Students should follow the Western Connecticut State University Grade Appeal Policy as written in the WCSU [Graduate Catalog \(https://catalogs.wcsu.edu/grad/academic-policies/\)](https://catalogs.wcsu.edu/grad/academic-policies/).

GRADUATION

Students registering for their final course in the program should apply for graduation with the Graduate Office. **It is the student's responsibility to submit an "Intent to Graduate" form prior to the deadline set by the University. Directions to register will be emailed by the Graduate Office.**

COUNSELING SERVICES, FINANCIAL AID & GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The WCSU **Counseling Center**, located in the Student Health & Wellness Center (Connected to Newbury Hall) on the Midtown Campus offers free counseling services to all WCSU students. The Counseling Center main office phone number is 203-837-8690. Both in-person and telemental health services are available. Additional information can be found in the University's Graduate Catalog and on the Counseling Center website, <https://www.wcsu.edu/counseling/>.

WCSU collaborates with **The Center for Empowerment and Education** (formerly the **Danbury Women's Center**) to offer domestic violence and sexual assault resources for our campus community. They can be reached at 203-837-3939 and online at <http://www.wcsu.edu/thecenteree/>.

Additionally, please see Appendix B of this document for a list of local service providers that offer mental health and counseling services in the Danbury area.

The **WCSU Career Success Center** offers resume writing, interviewing skills, job search assistance, career testing, career counseling, and other related services. They can be reached at 203-837-8263 or online at <http://www.wcsu.edu/careersuccess/>.

The **WCSU Financial Aid office** offers assistance for qualified students to meet their financial obligations. They also manage work-study employment. They can be reached at 203-837-8580 or online at <http://www.wcsu.edu/finaid/>. The Financial Aid Office is located in room 105 Old Main at the Midtown Campus. The office will assist you in obtaining information on how to apply for grants, work-study, and loans.

Several **Graduate Assistantships** are available to matriculated graduate students. Students should see the program coordinator who will address questions. The program coordinator will send out a call for interest when positions are announced.

Tuition

For more information regarding tuition costs and fees please visit the [Cashier's Office](https://www.wcsu.edu/cashiers/tuition-fees/) (<https://www.wcsu.edu/cashiers/tuition-fees/>).

Academic Calendar

For more information regarding the start date of classes and other important dates, please visit the [Calendars website](https://www.wcsu.edu/calendars/) (<https://www.wcsu.edu/calendars/>).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The WCSU Office for **Accessibility Services** assists students with disabilities in accessing their program of study. They can be reached at 203-837-8225 or at <http://www.wcsu.edu/accessability/>.

Students with Disabilities: AccessAbility Services engages in an interactive process with each student and reviews requests for accommodations on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Depending on the nature of the functional limitations of the student's documented disability, they may be eligible for accommodations. AAS collaborates with students and their faculty to coordinate approved accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact AccessAbility Services (AAS) as soon as possible. You may contact AAS by calling 203-837-8225 (voice), 203-837-3235 (TTY) or by e-mailing aas@wcsu.edu. Detailed information regarding the process to request accommodations is available on the AAS website at: [AccessAbility Services](http://www.wcsu.edu/accessability/) (www.wcsu.edu/accessability). If your request for accommodation(s) is approved and you request accommodation letters, an accommodation letter will be emailed to faculty members. (Note: Student request for accommodations must be filed each semester and accommodations are not retroactive.)

PROGRAM FACULTY & UNIVERSITY CONTACT INFORMATION

| Core Faculty | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Lorrie-Anne Monte, Ph.D., M.P.H., CHES, LPC, BC-TMH Department of Educational Psychology Co-Chair Counselor Education Program Coordinator (Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling) CACREP Coordinator School Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator HRSA Grant Director Associate Professor Office #: (203) 837-3262 Location: WH 322 Email: montel@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Jessica Gutheil, Ph.D., LPC, NCC Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator Assistant Professor Office #: (203) 837-8513 Location: WH 322 Email: gutheilj@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Hyemi Jang, Ph.D., NCC Assistant Professor Office #: (203) 837-8617 Location: WH 322 Email: jangh@wcsu.edu</p> |

| Affiliate Faculty | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Aram Aslanian, Ph.D. Professor Emeritus Adjunct Professor Email: aslaniana@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Theresa Canada, Ph.D. Professor Departments of Education and Educational Psychology Email: canadat@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Curtis Darragh Adjunct Professor Email: darraghc@wcsu.edu</p> |
| <p>Lisa Kilcourse Adjunct Professor Email: kilcoursel@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Gabriel I. Lomas, Ph.D. Adjunct Professor Certified Trainer in CSTAG and PREPaRE Founder - Connecticut Center for School Safety and Crisis Preparation Email: lomasg@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Mary Murphy, LADC, Ph.D. Adjunct Professor Department of Psychology Assistant Professor, Masters in Addiction Studies Program Graduate Program Coordinator, Undergraduate Internship Coordinator Email: murphym@wcsu.edu</p> |
| <p>Diana Naddeo, Psy.D. Adjunct Professor Email: naddeod@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Sharon Young, Ph.D., LCSW Professor Department of Social Work Email: youngs@wcsu.edu</p> | |

| Administration | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Joan Palladino, Ed.D. Dean, School of Professional Studies Office #: (203) 837-9500 Location: WH 123 Email: palladinoj@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Maryann Rossi, Ph.D. Associate Dean, School of Professional Studies & Certification Officer Office #: (203) 837-8950 Location: WH 121 Email: rossim@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Stephanie Kuhn, Ph.D. Department of Educational Psychology Co-Chair Office #: (203) 837-3206 Email: kuhns@wcsu.edu</p> |

| University Support | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Dr. Yaseen Hayajneh Dean of the School of Graduate, International, and Career Studies (Interim) Office #: (203) 837-8183 Email: hayajneh@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Dr. Jessica Coronel Assistant Dean of the School of Graduate, International, and Career Studies Office #: (203) 837-8243 Email: coronelj@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Mary Champion Administrative Assistant School of Graduate, International, and Career Studies 101 Old Main Building 181 White Street, Danbury, CT 06810 Office: (203) 837-8243 Visit us: www.wcsu.edu/graduate/</p> |

| Department and Program Support | |
|--|---|
| <p>Therese Richardson Secretary, Education and Educational Psychology Departments Dept. Office #: (203) 837-8510 Location: WH 321 Email: richardsont@wcsu.edu</p> | <p>Christina (Chris) Davis University Assistant Office #: (203) 837-8034 Location: WH 322 Email: davisc@wcsu.edu</p> |



Counselor Education Program Disclosures

(This will be completed online in Forms)

I affirm that:

- I attended the WCSU Counselor Education New Student Orientation.
- I read the Counselor Education Program Student Handbook, the Counselor Education Program Fieldwork Manual, and the Graduate Catalog.
- I have been given opportunities to ask questions about the policies and procedures of the Counselor Education Program.
- I understand the policies and procedures of the Counselor Education Program.
- I agree to follow the policies and procedures of the WCSU Counselor Education Program.
- I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to ensure that I take the courses as specified on my Counselor Education Program Sheet, which was provided to me upon acceptance to the program.
- I have read and have a responsibility to follow the ACA Code of Ethics as a student counselor-in-training.
- I must take the WCSU Counselor Education Exit Examination at the end of the program to be eligible for graduation.
- I acknowledge that background checks, fingerprinting, and/or immunizations may be required by state certification/licensure boards and/or by school or clinical fieldwork sites. Students with a criminal history may face challenges in obtaining school counselor or clinical licensure. Licensing authorities often conduct criminal background checks, and certain convictions may disqualify individuals from being eligible for certification or licensure. For more information on school counselor or clinical licensure, students should research the relevant state licensing board or professional association regulations.
- I acknowledge that licensure/certification requirements vary by state, and that I am responsible for understanding the licensure/certification laws in the state in which I intend to practice, and that I have read and am aware of the licensure/certification requirements in my state.
- The Counselor Education Program is only designed for students who reside in Connecticut or New York.

Student Name:

Student Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX A

Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedures

As part of meeting the program objectives set forth in the Counselor Education Program Student Handbook, Student Fieldwork Manual, and Graduate Catalog, students are expected to always conduct themselves in an ethical, responsible, and professional manner in the classroom and in fieldwork. This conduct is evaluated through the Fitness to Practice (FTP) policy as an element of students' academic performance. The purpose of the FTP review process is to regularly monitor students' professional and personal development (CACREP, 2024) to ensure students demonstrate appropriate progress towards developing the necessary behaviors, attitudes, and professional competencies to practice as a student counselor-in-training. Student progress is routinely monitored and discussed during faculty meetings, in consultation with other faculty members, and fieldwork supervisors.

At the beginning of their academic program, students are directed to review these standards and seek clarification as needed.

In order to successfully complete the program and be endorsed for any relevant certifications or licensure, students must demonstrate academic performance meeting or exceeding department standards in all settings, including classes, advising sessions, fieldwork sites, and all verbal and written communication, including:

A. Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better and present grades of a C or higher in all required courses.

B. Demonstrate fitness in their interactions with others as measured on the Professional Dispositions Competency Assessment (PDCA), which includes the following competencies:

1. Legal and Ethical Behavior: Follows and conforms to all federal and state laws, statues, regulations, other legal guidelines, national and state ethical codes of professional associations in counseling, and all related national and state licensure and certification boards policies and procedures.

2. Conscientiousness: Dependable in meeting obligations; meets responsibilities in a timely fashion; consistent class and fieldwork attendance; timeliness for class and fieldwork; meets commitments and obligations; follows directions; timely submission of work; advance preparation; effective management of appointment/scheduling; industrious behaviors; and/or evidence of executing plans.

3. Coping and Self-Care: Consistently displays the ability to articulate a consistent approach to personal wellness; physical appearance suggestive of good self-care (well groomed; professional appearance; lack of extreme fatigue); effective management of

health issues in relation to professional/academic work; lack of evidence of behaviors indicative of excessive use of substances; energetic in academic and professional commitments; not overextended; evidence of effective coping and self-care strategies.

4. Openness: Open to new ideas; has tolerance for ambiguity; imaginative; curious; open to new experiences; intellectually interested and engaged; able to engage in novel situations; assimilates or accommodates new information appropriately; uses good judgment to temper selection of intense experiences.

5. Cooperativeness: Responsive, adaptable, and cooperative; works well with supervisors and authority figures; avoids inappropriate competition or power struggles; accepts influence from supervisors and other authorities; receptive to and uses feedback; displays helpful behaviors; collaborative; good team member.

6. Moral Reasoning: Reliable and truthful in dealings with others; displays the ability to judge the rightness or wrongness of actions; exercises good judgment; except in rare circumstances, upholds rules, policies, and/or laws. May reflect Kohlberg's social system/social relationships perspective.

7. Interpersonal Skills: Accurately reads and appropriately responds to social cues; energetically engages in relationships; connects well with the external world; appropriately warm in relationships; demonstrates the capacity to interact effectively verbally and non-verbally with others based upon the context of the situation; expresses feelings effectively and appropriately; aware of own impact on others; manages and responds to conflict appropriately; speaks up/contributes ideas in academic and professional situations; displays empathy.

8. Cultural Sensitivity: Displays multicultural competence; shows appreciation for the culture and lifestyle differences of others; cultural sensitivity to the multiple possible factors that make up an individual's identity and how those influence the counseling process; comfortable with differences; aware of one's own heritage; willing to engage in cultural experiences, in spite of possible discomfort.

9. Self-Awareness: Shows the ability to accurately report goals, motives, strengths, and weaknesses; can (if needed) produce documentation of their efforts to respond to professional or academic weaknesses; capacity to accurately identify poor habits; demonstrates ability to predict the impact of their own behavior on others and/or on groups or organizations; capacity to connect past experiences to current beliefs and values; accepts personal responsibility.

10. Emotional Stability: Evidence of behaviors appropriate for clinical settings, such as (but not limited to) consistently making positive contributions in academic and clinical settings, attentive body language, emotionally appropriate responses to peers, faculty, and supervisors; calm verbal and behavioral responses to frustrating situations; impulse control; not socially isolated; appropriate humor.

The FTP Evaluation Process

Students' competence is evaluated using the Professional Dispositions Competency Assessment (PDCA). All students will be reviewed by individual faculty using the PDCA during Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling and/or Introduction to School Counseling (EPY 585 and/or EPY 618), Counseling Skills and Helping Relationships (EPY 501), Advanced Counseling Skills (EPY 507 or EPY 508), Practicum (EPY 610 or EPY 611), Internship (EPY 612 and EPY 613 and/or EPY 614 and EPY 615) and as necessary throughout the program. Admission to the program does not guarantee fitness to remain in the program. Students will be provided with a copy of the evaluation criteria of the PDCA.

Performance on the PDCA standards will be rated on the following scale for the regular evaluation of student dispositions and for any issues of concern:

1 (Below Expectation), 3 (Meets Expectation), or 5 (Above Expectation) as described in the PDCA.

A rating of 3 or better on all PDCA standards will indicate competence. The evaluation will be documented, and the results of the evaluation will be shared with the student by their advisor.

Concerns with Student Dispositions

If a student scores a 1 (Below Expectation) on any category of the PDCA, then a formal FTP review meeting will be initiated and documented with the student and core faculty. In addition, to regular dispositions monitoring, an FTP review may be initiated on any student at any time if a faculty member, staff member, course instructor, program advisor or fieldwork supervisor believes the student has displayed behavior which suggests the student does not possess sufficient competency on one or more FTP criteria. In this case, a formal FTP review meeting will be initiated and documented with the person issuing concerns, the core faculty, and the student. The student's advisor is responsible for collecting relevant feedback from the faculty about a particular student.

Concerns with Student Legal, Ethical and Code of Conduct Violations

Faculty will initiate a formal FTP review at any time for:

- a. Students who engage in illegal or unethical behaviors
- b. Students who present a threat to the wellbeing of others
- c. Students who violate the WCSU or CSU Student Code of Conduct, any other applicable WCSU policies or procedures, or any other WCSU Counselor Education policies or procedures.

If the FTP review process is initiated due to concerns with student legal, ethical, and/or code of conduct violations, WCSU administration will be notified and may become part of the FTP process. Administration includes: the Co-Chair of the Department of Educational Psychology, the Dean of the School of Professional Studies, the Associate Dean of the School of Professional Studies, and the WCSU Office of Judicial Affairs.

In such cases, depending upon the circumstances, the Fitness to Practice process may result in the student being dismissed from the WCSU Counselor Education Program without the opportunity for remediation. However, students should be aware that faculty in

the WCSU Counselor Education Program will make strong efforts to remediate students who show desire and/or potential to improve and correct the competency deficit(s). Faculty members, staff, course instructors, program advisors, and field supervisors may evaluate all students according to these standards. Students will have the opportunity to participate and respond at each step of the FTP process.

A rating of 1 on any of the PDCA FTP standards at any time will initiate the review procedure below.

FTP Review Procedure

A. The student will be contacted to schedule a meeting to review the PDCA and discuss faculty concerns. The meeting will be held with the issuing faculty member and the core faculty of the Counselor Education Program. The meeting will be documented using the FTP Evaluation Form.

1. The student has five business days to respond to the request to schedule a meeting. If the student does not respond by the close of business on the fifth business day, the WCSU Administration will be notified of the matter and will become involved in the FTP process.

B. At the meeting, faculty concerns will be discussed with the student. The student will be allowed to share their perspective on the situation and respond to the concerns of the faculty. Based on the information discussed at the meeting, another meeting may be scheduled, or a remediation plan to assist the student may be developed, if appropriate.

The remediation plan may include:

1. The specific competency(ies) from the Fitness to Practice Standards which require(s) remediation
2. Specific recommendations to achieve remediation
3. Specific requirements to demonstrate that remediation efforts have been successful
4. A specific outline for subsequent monitoring to evaluate progress

C. Once a decision has been reached, the faculty will contact the student to either schedule another meeting or the student will receive a letter via email from their advisor or the Program Coordinator outlining the concerns of the faculty and stating that outcome of the meeting.

- Within fifteen business days after the meeting, the issuing faculty will provide a final copy of the remediation plan (incorporating any changes agreed upon at the meeting) to the student for review and signature.
- The student will have ten business days to review, sign, and return the remediation plan. Failure of the student to sign and/or return the remediation plan by the close of business on the tenth business day will not impede the process and may be considered during the Fitness to Practice process.
- Both the student and issuing faculty may retain copies of the signed FTP Evaluation Form and remediation plan. A copy will also be placed in the student's

permanent university file.

Potential Outcomes

- A. The faculty will monitor the student's progress on the remediation plan.
- B. Faculty may place an academic hold on course registration for students who do not resolve concerns using the FTP process.
- C. If a student fails to show reasonable progress in the remediation plan and/or receives more than one FTP Evaluation Form rated 1 during their Program of Study, WCSU Administration will be notified of the matter and may become involved in the FTP process.
- D. If at any time the student is determined not to be making satisfactory progress, the faculty may either modify the remediation plan or dismiss the student from the program.
- E. All faculty review committee decisions for a student's dismissal from the Counselor Education program will be forwarded to the Department Co-Chair. The Department Co-Chair will forward the committee's decision to the Associate Dean of the School of Professional Studies and the Dean of the School of Professional Studies. The student may appeal the committee's decision to the Dean of the School of Professional Studies. Decisions by the Dean may be appealed in accordance with the general policy of the university.

APPENDIX B

**A List of Mental Health Service Providers in the Danbury Area from the WCSU Counseling Services Office
(This is only a partial listing of providers in the community, and inclusion in the list is not an endorsement of providers.)**

WCSU Counseling Services Community Referrals

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Counseling & Medication:</p> | <p>Medication Only:</p> |
| <p>Behavioral Medicine/Counseling 72 North Street, Danbury, CT (203) 748-1200 *Private Insurance, Medicare</p> | <p>CPC Associates 84 Hospital Avenue <u>or</u> 57 North Street Danbury, CT (203) 792-0400 *Private Insurance, Medicare</p> |
| <p>Blue Sky Behavioral Health, LLC. 52 Federal Road, Ste 2A, Danbury, CT (888) 822-7348 *Private Insurance</p> | <p>Substance Use: MCCA 38 Old Ridgebury Road, Danbury, CT (203) 792-4515 Ext. 1211 *Private Insurance, Husky</p> |
| <p>Community Health Center (CHC), Inc. 8 Delay Street, Danbury, CT (203) 797-8330 *Private Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, Husky. Must be seen by a CHC PCP in order to receive mental health treatment. *Sliding scale for uninsured.</p> | <p>Silver Hill Hospital 208 Valley Road, New Canaan, CT (866) 542-4455 *Most Private Insurance, Medicare</p> |
| <p>CT Institute for Communities CIFC Greater Danbury Community Health Center 120 Main Street, Danbury, CT Adult Behavioral Health: (203) 791-5005 *Sliding scale for uninsured</p> | <p>Eating Disorders: The Renfrew Center 1025 Westchester Avenue, White Plains, NY (800) 736-3739 *Private Insurance</p> |
| <p>Silver Hill Hospital 208 Valley Road, New Canaan, CT (866) 542-4455 *Most Private Insurance, Medicare</p> | <p>LGBTQ+ Resources: APEX Community Care 30 West Street, Danbury, CT (203) 778-2437 *Private Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid</p> |
| <p>Sterling Institute Neuropsychiatric & Behavioral Medicine 7 Kenosia Ave, Danbury, CT (475) 329-2686 *Most Private Insurance, Husky</p> | <p>Triangle Community Center 650 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT (203) 853-0600 ctpridecenter.org</p> |
| <p>Near Bridgeport: The Waynik Group 160 Hawley Lane, Trumbull, CT (203) 386-0096</p> | <p>True Colors 30 Arbor Street, #201A, Hartford, CT (860) 232-0050</p> |

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| *Private Insurance, Medicare | | |
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WCSU Counseling Services Community Referrals

Off-Campus Mental Health Referral List Thriving Campus: <https://wcsu.thrivingcampus.com/>

24-Hour Emergency Numbers

- Call or text 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline
- Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741
- Crisis Text Line for Student of Color: Text STEVE to 741741
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233 or Text LOVEIS to 22522
- Sexual Assault Hotline 888-999-5545
- Trans Lifeline 877-565-8860
- Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ) 866-488-7386

Additional Resources

Information on financial stability, health & food security and child-care contact:

United Way of Western Connecticut

3101 Main Street, Danbury, CT
(203) 792-5330

24 Bank Street, New Milford, CT
(860) 354-8800

1150 Summer Street, Stamford, CT
(203) 348-7711

Information on how to apply for state health insurance, contact:

<https://connect.ct.gov/access/jsp/access/Home.jsp>

DISCLAIMER: This information is for educational purposes only. You should not rely on this information as a substitute for personal medical or psychological attention, diagnosis, or face-to-face treatment. If you are concerned about your mental health, it is recommended that you consult a mental health provider immediately and do not wait for an electronic response from any webpage professionals or from the Counseling Services staff.