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**WESTERN CONNECTICUT
STATE UNIVERSITY**



**COUNSELOR EDUCATION
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Education and Educational Psychology Department
School of Professional Studies
Western Connecticut State University
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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.

WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

This handbook is designed to provide information regarding the Counseling Program at Western Connecticut State University. The School and Clinical Mental Health Counseling Programs are offered through the School of Professional Studies by the faculty of the Department of Education and Educational Psychology. In addition to courses within this department, students are also able to enhance their experience by taking courses within other divisions of the University.

Our 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 and is evident in the particular orientations of our faculty in such areas of specialization as assessment, consultation, development, family and marriage counseling, play therapy, group work, and multicultural counseling. 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 in the first semester as students visit community agencies and schools and hear from guest speakers from a variety of settings. 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 the Practicum and Internship, which are designed to provide supervised professional experiences for the counselor-in-training in schools and agency settings.

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Mission of the Counselor Education Program

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 life-span 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.

University Mission

Western aspires to be a public university of choice for programs of excellence in the liberal arts and the professions by providing full-time and part-time students with the necessary background to be successful in their chosen careers and to be productive members of society. It accomplishes this by emphasizing:

- A strong liberal arts foundation
- Strong skills in communication, problem solving, and critical thinking
- Opportunities for experiential, cooperative, and internships experiences
- A strong background in information technologies
- Interdisciplinary programs
- A strong sense of commitment to public service
- A personalized learning environment

Our mission as a public comprehensive university is given life through the principles and values that guide us.

Fulfilling the Mission

Principles

- Empowering students to attain the highest standards of academic achievement, public and professional services, personal development, and ethical conduct is our fundamental responsibility.

- Facilitating learning is our primary function, and it requires that our faculty be active scholars who have a lasting interest in enhancing instruction and that our curriculum be dynamic and include advanced instructional technologies.
- Preparing students for enlightened and productive participation in a global society is our obligation and is best fulfilled by developing the best possible academic programs and learning experiences.
- Promoting a rich and diverse cultural environment that allows freedom of expression within a spirit of civility and mutual respect is our abiding commitment.
- Strengthening our partnership with the people and institutions of Connecticut is a benefit to both the University and the state and endows our teaching and scholarship with a special vitality and dedication.

Values

- Quality in all that we do, and a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Integrity in the process of teaching and learning.
- Respect for the dignity and rights of each member of our University community.

Mission and Vision Statement for School of Professional Studies

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 the fields of education, health and human service professions must be uniquely positioned in the 21st century. As society becomes more complex and more technologically oriented, these 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 experimental 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.

Mission Statement and Objectives for the Education and Educational Psychology Department

The mission of the Education and Educational Psychology Department is to prepare candidates for careers in teaching and counseling professions. We believe in initiating and maintaining professional relationships with the broader educational community and are committed to the continuous support and development of cooperative projects and services with area schools and community agencies. We embrace the broader mission of Western Connecticut State University to empower students to "...attain the highest standards of academic achievement...personal development, and ethical conduct." Candidates in our teacher and counselor preparation programs must achieve the following objectives:

1. demonstrate academic competence in their selected fields,
2. complete a general program of studies (in Education) in addition to a recommended content area major other than Education,
3. know the historical, social, economic, political, comparative, and philosophical foundations of education or school counseling,
4. understand the variety of patterns of human growth and development,
5. value and infuse cultural diversity,
6. demonstrate proficiency in and working knowledge of the Connecticut Common Core of Teaching (with the embedded Connecticut Competency Instrument), Connecticut Common Core of Learning, Curriculum Frameworks K-12, the Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility,
7. demonstrate effective practices in the profession,
8. demonstrate a spirit of inquiry, the use of critical thinking skills, and the habits of the reflective practitioner, and,
9. demonstrate the ability to incorporate appropriately the use of technology in instructional practice.

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, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic classes. Counselor education faculty recruit students by speaking to undergraduate psychology and education classes and student organizations. They also meet with personnel in local organizations and schools as part of the outreach program to recruit diverse students.

Conceptual Framework for Education Programs at Western Connecticut State University

Shared Vision and Theme of the Education Unit

A conceptual framework captures the shared vision of the unit, guides the activities of faculty and candidates, and becomes the vehicle through which the unit's goals are articulated to the broader community.

The vision of the Western Connecticut State University Education Unit is reflected in the term **EDUCATOR** (Expertise in content knowledge, Diversity, Unity, Classroom and school leadership, Attitudes, Technology, Organize knowledge and facilitate learning, Reflective practitioner) and the theme *Preparing teachers and counselors to facilitate student growth and achievement in the 21st Century*.

EDUCATOR

E (Expertise in content knowledge,
D Diversity,
U Unity,
C Classroom and school leadership,
A Attitudes,
T Technology,
O Organize knowledge and facilitate learning,
R Reflective practitioner)

The components of our Conceptual Framework underscore our belief that teachers and counselors in the new millennium must understand how to use information technologies and how to work effectively with the diversity of students found in public schools in order to prepare all students for success in a technological, multicultural, and global society. Teachers and counselors must know how to work collaboratively with colleagues and communicate with a variety of constituencies in order to be classroom and school leaders capable of effecting change and ensuring quality educational programs for all students. They must be reflective practitioners who continually evaluate and modify

their practice, not only to meet the learning and developmental needs of students, but also to keep pace with a rapidly changing society and world.

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL AND CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

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 and Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CMHC) is to the individual, their responsibilities extend beyond the individual client to parents, schools, their community, and to the counseling profession. The School Counseling major prepares students to work as counselors in elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Graduates are also prepared to engage in crisis intervention. Graduates of the CMHC major are prepared to work in a variety of human service settings, including mental health centers, substance abuse, residential programs, and other agencies offering counseling services.

Both the 48-credit School Counseling Program and the 60-credit Clinical Mental Health Counseling program are accredited by *CACREP* (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs). *CACREP* is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA). Graduation from a *CACREP* accredited program includes the following benefits:

- Graduates of *CACREP* accredited programs are allowed to sit for the NBCC exam 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 exam.
- 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 and CMH Counseling Programs are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the Board of Governors of Higher Education, State of Connecticut, and the Connecticut State Board of Education. We subscribe to the Policy Statement on Graduate Education, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., a nongovernmental, national organization recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA).

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 their own state.

The Master of Science in School Counseling is a 48-credit curriculum with 39 credits of coursework, 3 credits of practicum, and 6 credits of internship. The Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is a 60-credit curriculum. Both school and CMHC tracks enable students to take electives for additional experience in areas of individual interest. Students attend part-time, taking two courses a semester and courses in the summer in order to complete the program in three years. Courses are offered during the academic year in the late afternoon and evenings, Monday through Thursday. There are three summer sessions, two five week sessions, one in June and one in July, followed by time-condensed sessions in August during which counseling elective courses may be offered. A variety of specialized electives are also offered during several intersession courses throughout the year.

All full-time and part-time faculty hold doctoral degrees in either counselor education, counseling psychology, school psychology, educational psychology, or related fields. In addition, part time faculty from our education department, 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.

STATEMENT OF PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Our primary objective is to prepare professionals for direct entry into counseling positions in agencies, schools and other human service organizations. The program is designed to: (1) develop knowledge of counseling concepts, theories, and practices; (2) develop experiential skills important for the functioning of a professional counselor; and (3) prepare students for certification in counseling.

The program objectives are:

1. Students will be exposed to a wide range of theoretical perspectives with an appreciation for the student's own belief system.
2. Students will be prepared to understand human developmental issues from cognitive, affective, behavioral, and contextual perspectives.
3. Students will be educated to view human issues from a multicultural perspective.
4. Students will demonstrate the ability to facilitate interpersonal and intrapersonal growth in both individual and group process.
5. Students will be educated to a life-span developmental model for viewing human behavior, including career development.
6. Students will be educated in methods of contextual evaluation, appraisal, and goal setting.
7. Students will demonstrate their ability to research and develop interventions for counseling issues.
8. Students will be encouraged to develop a strong identity with the counseling profession, including an understanding of its history and philosophy, and its present manifestations, through the American Counseling Association.
9. Students will be educated to the ethical and legal parameters of the counseling professions.

10. Students will be encouraged to view professional development as a career long process that includes continuing education and involvement with professional organizations beyond the attainment of the Master's degree.
11. Students will attain the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful entry-level counselors within their specific majors.

STATEMENT OF ADDITIONAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR STUDENTS IN SCHOOL COUNSELING

The school counselor master's and certification programs prepare students to meet the Connecticut State Board of Education requirements to receive the initial educator certificate as a school counselor. The students also meet the highest standards in the counseling profession nationwide. These standards are established by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (*CACREP*) which has accredited the school counseling program at WCSU.

The school counseling program prepares the student to work as a school counselor at the elementary, middle, and high school levels delivering school counseling services using the developmental model to a diverse student population. Clinical experience hours on site, through fieldwork, practicum, and internship, include practice in PK-12 settings with at least one experience in an urban setting.

The student is prepared to deliver comprehensive developmental counseling services through the five roles of the Developmental Guidance Model: teacher, counselor, consultant, coordinator, and manager. The practicum and internships include the counseling of students, individually and in group settings, consulting with parents and staff, observations and substantial participation in classroom instruction, involvement in curriculum development, and other professional activities in which a school staff is involved.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

The Counselor Education Program fully endorses the 2009 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 skill. Although the courses specified are targeted to offer the student information and skill 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 Counseling Program provides students with the *Eight Common Core* curricular experiences and opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills in each of these common curricular areas (*CACREP* 2009 Standards). These eight core curricular areas (listed below) are common to both the School and Clinical Mental Health Counselor Programs.

1. PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE—studies that provide an understanding of all of the following aspects of professional functioning.
2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY—studies that provide an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends in a multicultural society.
3. HUMAN GROWTH AND 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. HELPING RELATIONSHIPS—studies that provide an understanding of the counseling process in a multicultural society.
6. 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—studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation in a multicultural.
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 program option and the School Counseling program option ensure that those students preparing to work as clinical mental health counselors and school counselors, respectively, will demonstrate the knowledge, skills and practices necessary successful professional practice in their chosen fields. Additional information about the *CACREP* Standards can be found at www.cacrep.org

ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM: CRITERIA AND PROCESS

The Counselor Education Program faculty seeks to admit only those who are personally

and academically prepared to complete the Master's degree in Clinical Mental Health or school counseling successfully. Within these parameters, the faculty is committed to admitting students who represent diverse backgrounds and/or who have special abilities (lingual competence) to serve a diverse population as school or community counselors.

Admission to the program is competitive and is based on the criteria listed below. Students may take no more than two (2) courses before they have matriculated. In order to be matriculated, the student must:

1. Present evidence of academic ability and potential for graduate-level study; cumulative undergraduate GPA 2.8, or higher, nine credits in psychology. *If candidate does not meet the 2.8 GPA, the Miller's Analogy Test score, under advisement from the graduate office, will provide an alternative route for admittance;*
2. Have completed an undergraduate program which includes a general education distribution of courses in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and behavioral sciences, foreign language, and fine arts;
3. Demonstrate proficiency in English as demonstrated in a letter of application setting forth the reasons for wanting to enroll in a counselor education program, and emphasizing relevant experiences;
4. Present three letters of recommendation testifying to suitability as a prospective counselor;
5. Interview with the program's School or CMHC option advisor to prepare a planned program of study;
6. Demonstrate the potential for forming effective interpersonal relationships in individual and small group contexts;
7. Have appropriate vocational goals and objectives relevant to the Program;
8. Demonstrate openness to self examination and personal and professional self development;
9. Have had paid or volunteer experience indicative of an interest in the helping profession; and
10. Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively

ADDITIONAL SCHOOL COUNSELING ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Pass the state-mandated skills examination (Praxis I) in mathematics, reading, and writing, or present evidence of SAT or ACT scores which qualify the student for a waiver from the Praxis I requirement. Further information can be obtained from the Connecticut State Department of Education website. Information about the Praxis examination is also available in the Education and Educational Psychology office, WS 249.
2. Complete a 3-credit introductory course in special education which includes study of the gifted and talented.

PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY, AFFILIATION AND LIABILITY INSURANCE

Matriculated students in the CMHC and School Counseling programs are urged to consider affiliation with the professional association serving the counseling profession, e.g., the American Counseling Association (ACA), the American School Counseling Association (ASCA). Benefits of membership include receiving the professional journal(s) published by ACA, identification with current professional issues, opportunity to attend state, regional and national meetings, and professional liability insurance. Student membership in ACA is available at a reduced membership cost. Applications require a faculty member endorsement. Students will also be encouraged to join the Connecticut Counseling Association (CCA) and the Western Connecticut Counseling Association. Announcements for state and regional professional meetings are posted on the Counseling Program bulletin board (on the fifth floor, near Rooms 516/17). All students are required to obtain liability insurance before engaging in field experiences, Practicum or Internship. While lawsuits involving School or Clinical Mental Health Counselors are relatively uncommon, any service provided the public by a professional (or a professional in training) is vulnerable to the threat of lawsuit. Liability insurance is available to ACA members at special student rates. The ACA toll free phone number for membership and insurance information is 1-800-347-6647, ext. 284, or check with the faculty for an application. A copy of the student's liability insurance form must be presented to the Practicum or Internship faculty supervisor for inclusion in student's clinical folder.

ADVISEMENT

When a student is admitted into the Counseling Program, he or she is assigned an advisor who is the coordinator for the option in which the student is enrolled (either School or CMHC). It is the student's responsibility to make regular contact (usually once a semester) with his or her advisor regarding courses to be taken and overall progress in the program.

Among the advisor's responsibilities are the following:

1. To develop a plan of study with each advisee for 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.

ORIENTATION MEETINGS

Orientation meetings for new students are held each semester. When ED 585, Introduction to School Counseling, and EPY 618, Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling, are offered, the orientation meeting will occur during one class period. Otherwise, a meeting will be scheduled separate from course instructional periods. Announcements of orientation meetings, as well as announcements of all other information for students, will be communicated through the bulletin board located on the fifth floor of the Westside Campus Building. Students are advised to check this bulletin board regularly for information that is pertinent to them.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

The Counseling faculty meets regularly to evaluate the progress of each matriculated student. The student's advisor is responsible for collecting relevant feedback from the faculty about a particular student. When a student's progress is not satisfactory, based either on academic criteria or professional criteria unrelated to academic performance, she or he may be placed on probation. In this event, the following process will occur:

1. The student will receive a letter from his or her advisor (usually following a conference) outlining the faculty's concerns and stating that the student has been put on probation.
2. Furthermore, 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 dropped from the Program.
3. Finally, the letter will state how long the probationary period is to last. Usually, a probationary period is one semester.
4. At the end of the probationary period, the faculty will again assess the student 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.
5. Should a student continue to present work that is of marginal quality, academically or professionally, she or he will not be recommended for continuation in the Program.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

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. The grievance process is explained fully in the graduate catalog.

COURSE WAIVERS

The Graduate Counselor Education Program accepts only graduate level courses that meet Program curriculum requirements. Course waivers are limited in number and done under careful advisement.

SCHOOL COUNSELING CERTIFICATION ONLY STUDENTS

Students holding earned Master's degrees from other graduate level counseling programs may apply to the School Counseling program as "Certification Only" students. They must meet all entrance requirements (including Praxis I & a survey course in special education) and follow a planned program in school counseling services developed with the school counseling program advisor.

Students who are not certified teachers with three years of teaching experience who are seeking certification in Connecticut *must complete a full-time, 10 month internship*. This 10 month internship must involve at least 720 hours in a school setting. Certification regulations in New York State differ from those currently in effect in Connecticut. Students seeking certification in New York State are advised to contact the New York State Department of Education in Albany for information about these requirements. Required practica and internships must be completed in the state in which certification is sought.

CREDIT HOURS FOR CLINICAL INSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

All students in the program complete a practicum of at least 100 hours and an internship of at least 600 hours. All school counseling students who are not certified teachers with three years of teaching experience and who are seeking certification in Connecticut must complete a full-time, 10 month internship (in addition to practicum). This 10 month internship must involve at least 720 hours. We strongly advise students to complete 9 credits of clinical instruction (Practicum and Internship). However, a small percentage of students, with the consent of the counseling faculty, take 6 or 12 credits to complete the required number of clinical hours.

The following is used by students and their advisors to plan for clinical instruction:

Early in the program, students must contract to complete a full-time or a part-time Internship, i.e., whether the Internship is to be completed in three (3) credit hours or six (6). This decision will depend upon whether the student is a Certified Teacher with three (3) or more years of teaching experience and whether the student is a candidate for certification in Connecticut or New York. It is crucial that students understand that contracting for one semester means that both the total 600 hour requirement and the 240 hour direct service requirement must be fulfilled in one semester. This also means that any Practicum or Internship experience that is contracted over a summer cannot occur during a regularly scheduled university semester. Summer clinical experiences usually need to extend over a three (3) month period and be approved by a faculty supervisor.

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

Connecticut State Education Department Certification Requirements for Clinical Instruction

Students who already hold a master's degree, are certified teachers, and have taught for three or more years in public education do not have to complete an Internship for Connecticut certification. However, they must complete the 600 hour Internship as a requirement for the 48 credit Master's degree in counselor education.

Students in the School Counseling track who have not completed three years of successful elementary middle or secondary school teaching must complete a full-time supervised school internship of 10 school months. The clinical experience must provide students with exposure and practice in pre-K through 12, in urban, suburban, and rural settings. This experience must be of at least 720 hours duration across two full semesters.

Students who want to be certified in Connecticut must complete their clinical training in a Connecticut public school or a school recognized by the SDE.

PRACTICUM

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

1. **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** There are three (3) requirements for the practicum that are necessary to consider in identifying an appropriate site.
 - a. Student complete 100 clock hours to the site to meet the requirements of Practicum.
 - b. Direct service hours involve "face-to-face interaction with clients which includes the application of counseling, consultation, or human development skills." Ten (10) of the forty (40) direct hours must consist of group counseling.
 - c. Students will develop program-appropriate audio/video recordings for use in supervision or live supervision of the student's interactions with clients.
 - d. One hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision throughout the practicum provided by a program faculty member, or a site supervisor who is working in biweekly consultation with a program faculty member in accordance with the supervision contract.
 - e. The student meets for a minimum of one (1) hour per week for individual or triadic supervision and a minimum of one and one-half (1 ½) hours per week of group supervision with other students.
 - f. *Formative Evaluation* of the student's counseling performance throughout the practicum, including documentation of a formal *Summative Evaluation* after the student completes the practicum.
2. **SUPERVISION:** Practicum represents the first opportunity for the student to engage in direct service with "real" clients. The school site supervisor must be a

certified school counselor with a minimum of two (2) years of professional experience. The CMHC site supervisor must have a minimum of a Master's degree in counseling or a closely related field and appropriate certification and/or licenses as well as a minimum of two (2) years of pertinent experience. The faculty assumes primary responsibility for the student's supervision. This allows the faculty the opportunity to tie in didactic instruction and pre-practicum preparation will occur on campus. The site supervisor, therefore, is not expected to provide intensive supervision during Practicum. The site supervisor is asked to:

- a. Organize the practicum experience and assure that the student will have an opportunity to work with appropriate clients.
- b. Help orient the student to the site.
- c. Provide appropriate space for the student to meet with clients.
- d. Monitor the practicum generally in order to determine that the student's needs and to ensure that the clients' needs are being met.
- e. Provide the faculty supervisor with evaluation of the student's overall performance and professionalism during the practicum.
- f. Be available to the student in case of emergency.
- g. Provide any additional supervision for reasons of necessity or preference. (In other words, the university faculty welcomes the site supervisor's involvement in supervision above and beyond the minimum expectations listed above.)

3. **EARLY PLANNING FOR PRACTICUM:** Practicum should not be viewed as other courses in terms of the amount of time required to prepare adequately for the experience. At the time of matriculation into the program, when a student first meets with his or her advisor, it would be appropriate to begin planning for the approximate time of Practicum. Later, after the student has taken several prerequisite courses, more deliberate planning should begin to take place. Practicum proposals are distributed in classes, one year prior to Practicum. Proposals are finalized the next semester and contracts are completed and shown to faculty before the beginning of Practicum. Be aware that:

- a. It can be a time consuming process finding a practicum site, and this should not be delayed until the beginning of the Practicum semester.
- b. Because of the amount of supervision required for Practicum, faculty assignments will be determined by the number planning to enroll in the course. Staff planning takes place a few months before the beginning of each semester.
- c. With other counseling programs in our geographic area, there is competition for Practicum sites and early contracting with a site is recommended.

4. **FINDING A PRACTICUM SITE:** During the initial meeting with the student's advisor, the discussion will center on the student's career objectives and the availability of Practicum sites within the student's area of interest. Usually, the Coordinator will be able to recommend sites that the student might consider. The student may be aware of a site that he or she is hoping will be acceptable for Practicum. By the end of the meeting, there should be a plan for the student to use to approach sites. It is the student's responsibility to keep the Coordinator current

until the student has successfully contracted with a Practicum site. *Although the Coordinator assumes the role of guiding the student toward appropriate Practicum sites, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to find an appropriate site.*

5. **SITE VISIT:** Prior to or at the beginning of the course, the Practicum instructor along with the student assigned to the site visits the Practicum site. At this time, requirements for the course and the site supervisor's role are reviewed. The purpose of this meeting is for the faculty instructor to be assured that the site is an appropriate one for Practicum and for the site supervisor and/or student to clarify any issues that may be pending.
6. **THE PRACTICUM AGREEMENT FORM:** During the site visit, the Practicum Agreement Form is reviewed. This document must be signed by all parties where indicated and kept in the student's clinical file. There is also an orientation meeting at the University, as well as supervision instruction, upon request, for all site supervisors and students the semester prior to the Practicum experience.
7. **STUDENT LIABILITY INSURANCE:** Students must provide proof of Student Liability Insurance at, or before the signing of their Practicum Agreement Form at the Site Visit.

INTERNSHIP

Following successful completion of the counseling Practicum, students must complete a counseling Internship either in a school counseling or in a clinical mental health or community counseling facility. This internship is a two semester, full-time commitment for those students who do not hold a Connecticut Teaching Certificate but wish to be certified as school counselors. For all others, the Internship will be completed in one or two semesters (see Master's Credit Hours For Clinical Instruction for details).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: There are five (5) requirements for Internship that are necessary to consider in identifying an appropriate site.

- a. The student must commit 600 (720 for school certification candidates in Connecticut who are not certified teachers with 3 years of experience) clock hours to the site to meet the requirement of Internship.
- b. Of these 600 (or 720) hours, 240 must be direct service hours. Direct service hours involve "face-to-face" interaction with clients which includes the application of counseling, consultation, or human development skills."
- c. If the site does not allow the intern to audiotape (or videotape) direct service hours for the purposes of supervision, students will be observed at the site. The site (School or CMHC) must provide supervision by a counselor or clinician acceptable to the counseling program. The identified site supervisor must be a certified school counselor or, in the case of a CMHC setting, hold a minimum of a Master's degree in the program emphasis area and possess appropriate certification or licenses. In addition, the site supervisor must have a minimum of two (2) years experience as a counselor.

- d. The site must permit the student intern to participate in a variety of professional activities in addition to direct service work. These activities should be those that a regularly employed staff member in the setting would expect to perform.
 - e. The student must meet for a minimum of one and one-half (1 ½) hours per week for group supervision with the program faculty supervisor throughout the internship.
3. **SUPERVISION:** The site supervisor is the primary supervisor for the student intern and must commit to a minimum of one (1) hour weekly of individual supervision to the intern. Clinical supervision should include supervision of counseling cases and related professional activities. This site supervisor will be asked to provide the counseling program with evaluations of the student intern's overall performance and professionalism during the Internship. Supervision also takes place on campus with a faculty supervisor on a weekly basis. Group supervision for one and one-half hours (1 ½) includes peer feedback.
4. **EARLY PLANNING FOR INTERNSHIP:** Students should be in contact with the Coordinator to begin planning for Internship. Few internship sites are ideal. The search for an acceptable site involves a number of variables, including mission of the site, qualifications of the site supervisor, availability of experiences that will enhance the intern's professional growth, and physical proximity of the site to the student intern's residence and to the University. Sometimes a site will appear acceptable to the intern but not to the Coordinator; at other times the intern may find the site unacceptable; and sometimes the site supervisor will not find the intern to be a good fit for the site. For all of these reasons, it is important that the student not delay the search for a best fitting site. Anticipating when the Internship will begin is as important as planning when other required courses will be taken. Early in the program, the student, with his or her faculty advisor, should identify approximately when he or she will reach the Internship. In the first month of the student's Practicum, he or she should be informing the Coordinator of plans for Internship (expected semester to start Internship, sites under consideration, etc.). In other words, if you are beginning Practicum in the fall semester, you should make contact with the Coordinator in September.

School counseling interns who do not have three (3) or more years of public school teaching must contract with a site for a full-time position, i.e., over a 10-month academic year and consisting of at least 720 hours on site.

5. **FINDING AN INTERNSHIP SITE:** The student should meet with the Coordinator prior to contacting any potential internship site to discuss the program's requirements for the site. As with the Practicum placement, this discussion will center on the student's career objective, the availability of Internship sites within the student's area of interest, and the level of client services provided by the potential site. At the end of this meeting, a plan should have been formulated for which sites the student should approach, with a time schedule for completing these initial contacts. As with the Practicum site selection, the Coordinator stands ready

to offer suggestions, but the ultimate responsibility for finding an acceptable site remains with the student.

6. **SITE VISITS:** Prior to, or at the beginning of the semester, the Internship instructor, student intern and site supervisor meet. At this time, requirements for the course and the site supervisor's role are reviewed. The purpose of this meeting is to assure that the site is an appropriate choice for the intern and to allow the site supervisor and/or the student to clarify any issues that may be pending. Additional visits will be arranged as needed, including visits to observe the student in the role of counselor and meetings with the student and site supervisor to assess progress.
7. **THE INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT FORM:** The Internship Agreement Form is discussed and conditions agreed upon by the site supervisor, the internship instructor, and the intern. This document is signed by all parties and kept in the student's clinical file.
8. **STUDENT LIABILITY INSURANCE:** Students must provide proof of Student Liability Insurance at, or before the signing of their Internship Agreement Form at the Site Visit.

GRADUATION

Students registering for their final course in the program should apply for graduation in the Graduate Office, Warner Hall. This should be done at the same time that they register. **It is the student's responsibility to submit an "Intent to Graduate" form prior to the deadline set by the University. This deadline appears each semester in the *Course Schedule* bulletin.**

COUNSELING SERVICES, FINANCIAL AID AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The WCSU Counseling Center, located in the Student Center on the Midtown Campus offers free counseling services to all WCSU students. The Counseling Center main office phone number is 837-8652. Additional information can be found in the University's Graduate Catalog.

Students receiving financial assistance under the federal supported Title IV Programs must comply with the following criteria to be eligible for such assistance.

1. **Quality of academic performance:** Students must be matriculated and must maintain a 3.0 GPA to remain a matriculated graduate student in the University.
2. **Speed of completion of the graduate program, i.e. satisfactory progress.**

3. Students who do attain the levels of satisfactory progress indicated above may complete the required credits in summer school without Title IV financial assistance. Students who increase the number of semester hours required for satisfactory progress will not be eligible for any Title IV financial assistance for the following academic year.
4. Upon presentation of evidence of medical emergencies or other legitimate personal or family emergencies, students who have been denied financial assistance under this policy may appeal to the campus officer designated by the President.
5. Title IV Programs are:
 - a. College Work-Study Program (CWSP)
 - b. Carl D. Perkins National Direct Student Loan
 - c. Guaranteed Student Loan Program (GSLP)
 - d. Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students Program (PLUS)/Supplemental Loan Program (SLP)

The Financial Aid Office is located in room 301 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. Application forms can be from the Office of Graduate Studies.

ENDORSEMENT

Students who successfully complete all requirements for the Master's degree in CMH Counseling or in School Counseling will receive formal endorsement in their area of specialization by the faculty of the training program. Formal endorsement includes recommendation for state certification and employment for those students successfully completing the program in school counseling, or recommendation for employment as a CMH counselor in a setting consistent with the training provided by the CMHC counseling program. 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 48 or 60 credit Master's Degree as required by *CACREP*. Candidates must maintain a 3.1 (B) average.

SCHOOL COUNSELOR CERTIFICATION

Students in the school counseling program may apply for Connecticut certification

as a school counselor, grades K-12, under the Initial Educator's Certificate. The student must request an application for certification from the Program Coordinator or University's Certification Officer. The completed application is then returned to the Certification Officer. Once processed, the application is sent back to the student who must send it to the SDE, along with the required fee.

Students who want to be certified in New York State must contact the New York State Education Department in Albany for information about requirements and procedures. All required practica and internships must be completed in the state in which certification is sought.

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). At least 42 of the graduate credits must be an earned master's degree from a regionally accredited institution with a major deemed to be in professional counseling by the NBCC.
- Acquisition of three thousand (3000) hours of post graduate degree supervised experience in professional counseling performed over a period of not less than one year, that 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 or the National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Exam for Licensure and Certification (NCE).

THE 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 recertified 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.

Western Connecticut State University offers a special administration of the NCE once in the spring and once in the fall, on campus. This special administration is open to students enrolled in a *CACREP*-accredited master's degree program who graduate 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 is also one of the requirements for licensure in Connecticut.

Assessments and 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 skill among our counseling students. While we employ multiple methods of data collection, two of these result in fees for students. These fees are required for all students and are not negotiable.

1. Tk-20: This is a data collection system that is used to archive major projects from core courses. All students must pay a one-time licensing fee of \$100 to obtain an account. The fee must be paid in the first semester and the account will remain active throughout your training or for 7 years.
2. CPCE: The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam is administered to all students in their final year during the spring semester. The CPCE assesses all of the required *CACREP* training areas. The exam consists of 160 items, 20 items for each of the eight *CACREP* areas. This exam is helpful in both program assessment as well as student preparation. The CPCE is often viewed as a practice exam for National Counseling Exam and the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam, offered by the National Board for Certified Counselors. The fee for this exam is currently \$45, payable on the day of testing.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Sequence of Courses

YEAR	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
1	EPY 618 Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling	EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors	ED 587 Counseling Diverse Populations SSI
1	ED 586 Theories of Counseling	EPY 602 Interviewing and Consultation Across the Lifespan	EPY 619 Crisis Counseling in the Community and School SSII
2	EPY 605 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Skills	EPY 630 Introduction to Psychopathology	EPY 620 Marriage & Family Counseling SSI
2	EPY 603 Group Work Foundation: Theory and Practice	EPY 606 Advanced Group Work: Theory and Practice	EPY 621 Drug and Alcohol Counseling SSII
3	EPY 611 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	EPY 614 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	EPY 615 Internship In Clinical Mental Health Counseling SSI-II
3	EPY 608 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Case Management and Delivery	EPY 572 Career Education	EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics & Research Design SSII

This 60-credit program includes 54 hours of required coursework and 6 hours of electives

(18 additional hours of course electives are provided during this program sequence).

CMHC students should note the courses listed above are offered only in the semesters indicated. Any student-initiated changes in plans of study may result in your inability to complete your program within the three year sequence.

School Counseling Sequence of Courses

Year	Fall	Spring	Summer
1	ED 585 Introduction to School Counseling ED 586 Theories of Counseling	EPY 602 Interviewing and Consultation Across the Life-Span: Principles And Techniques EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors ED 572 Career Education and Development	ED 587 Counseling Diverse Populations ED 500 Contemporary Educational Issues
2	EPY 603 Group Work Foundation: Theory and Practice EPY 604 Individual Counseling in The Schools	EPY 606 Advanced Group Work: Theory and Practice EPY 610 Practicum in School Counseling	EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics & Research Design
3	EPY 612 Internship in School Counseling EPY 607 Pupil Personnel Services: Philosophy & Organization	EPY 613 Internship in School Counseling	Note: One elective must be taken to complete this 48-credit program.

**WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF SCIENCE - COUNSELOR EDUCATION
Option in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

Name: _____ Date: _____
Address: _____ Telephone: _____

**OPEN TO STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO PROGRAM OR BY PERMISSION OF CHAIR (9 S.H.) Fall
Spring Summer**

EPY 618 Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling 3 S.H. _____

ED 572 Career Education and Development 3 S.H. _____

ED 586 Theories of Counseling 3 S.H. _____

FOR STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO PROGRAM ONLY - (45 S.H.)

ED 587 Counseling Diverse Populations (*Prereq. ED 586*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors (*Prereq. ED 586*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics & Research Design (*Prereq. EPY 604 or 605*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 602 Interviewing & Consultation Across the Life-Span:

Principles & Techniques(*Prereq. ED 586*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 603 Group Work Foundation: Theory & Practice (*Prereq. EPY 602*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 605 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Skills (*Prereq. EPY 602*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 606 Advanced Group Work: Theory & Practice (*Prereq. EPY 603*) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 608 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Mgt., Delivery & Consultation 3 S.H. _____

EPY 619 Crisis Counseling in the Community and School 3 S.H. _____

EPY 620 Marriage and Family Counseling 3 S.H. _____

EPY 621 Drug and Alcohol Counseling 3 S.H. _____

EPY 630 Introduction to Psychopathology 3 S.H. _____

*EPY 611 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling 3 S.H. _____

*EPY 614 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (*Prereq. EPY 611*) 3 S.H. _____

*EPY 615 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (*Prereq. EPY 611*) 3 S.H. _____
(54 S.H.)

* **CORE COURSES:** ED 572; ED 586, 587;

EPY 600-603; EPY 605, 606, EPY 618-621; EPY 630

All required Core Courses must be completed prior to EPY 611, 614 and 615. (*Some exceptions for full-time students*)

ELECTIVES (6 S.H.) (*See Advisor's List*)

_____ 3 S.H. _____
_____ 3 S.H. _____

Portfolio ☐ Paper ☐

TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS 60S.H.

1. Complete requirements for admission to the Division of Graduate Studies

2. Personal interview with Graduate Program Advisor

- Required for interview:

A) Letter of application stating reasons for entering program;

B) A written personal history;

C) Three current references, including two from previous employers.

3. Prerequisites:

Nine (9) semester hours of psychology including but not limited to:

Introduction to Psychology; personal Adjustment; Developmental Psychology; Abnormal Psychology;

Psychology of Learning.

The admission requirements have been explained to me and I understand my obligation to read the Graduate Catalog.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Advisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

8/94, 8/95, 3/96, 7/09, 9/09

**WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
MASTER OF SCIENCE - COUNSELOR EDUCATION
Option in School Counseling**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Social Security No. _____

Fall Spring Summer

ED 500 Contemporary Educational Issues 3 S.H. _____

ED 572 Career Education and Development 3 S.H. _____

ED 585 Introduction to Community & School Counseling 3 S.H. _____

ED 586 Theories of Counseling 3 S.H. _____

FOR STUDENTS ACCEPTED TO PROGRAM ONLY - (33 S.H.)

ED 587 Counseling Diverse Populations (Prereq. ED 585/586) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 600 Assessment for Counselors (Prereq. ED 585/586) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 601 Fundamentals of Statistics & Research Design (Prereq. EPY 604 or 605) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 602 Interviewing & Consultation Across the Life-Span:

Principles & Techniques(Prereq. ED 585/586) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 603 Group Work Foundation: Theory & Practice (Prereq. EPY 602) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 604 Individual Counseling in the Schools: Clinical Skills (Prereq. EPY 602) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 606 Advanced Group Work: Theory & Practice (Prereq. EPY 603) 3 S.H. _____

EPY 607 Pupil Personnel Services: Philosophy & Organization 3 S.H. _____

*EPY 610 Practicum in School Counseling 3 S.H. _____

*EPY 612 Internship in School Counseling (Prereq. EPY 610) 3 S.H. _____

*EPY 613 Internship in School Counseling (Prereq. EPY 612) 3 S.H. _____

(45 S.H.)

*ED 500, 572 585-587 and EPY 600-606 must be completed prior to EPY 610, 612 & 613.

ELECTIVES (3 S.H.) (See Advisor's List)

_____ 3 S.H. _____

Portfolio Paper

TOTAL SEMESTER HOURS 48

1. Must complete all requirements for admission to the School Counseling Program before taking more than two courses.

2. Personal interview with Graduate Program Advisor

- Required for interview:

A) Letter of application stating reasons for entering program;

B) A typewritten personal history;

C) Three current references, including two from previous employers.

3. Prerequisites:

Nine (9) semester hours of psychology including:

Introduction to Psychology

Human Development

Introduction to Special Education or equivalent course

4. All students must take Praxis I (see Advisor for exceptions)

5. Undergraduate QPR 2.8

The admission requirements have been explained to me and I understand my obligation to read the Graduate Catalog.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Advisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Counselor Education Handbook Signature Page

I affirm that I have read the WCSU Counselor Education Student Handbook. I understand the program policies and procedures. I have been given opportunities to ask questions about policies and procedures with regard to the Counselor Education program.

Student Name

Date

Student Signature

Faculty Advisor's Signature