



GRADUATE COUNSELING PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK

2016-2017

(Updated 8/1/2016)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADUATE COUNSELING PROGRAM	1
MISSION AND EDUCATIONAL GOALS OF THE COUNSELING PROGRAM	1
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	2
DESIGN OF THE COUNSELING PROGRAM	2
WHAT WE OFFER	3
<i>Master of Arts in Counseling</i>	3
<i>A Certificate in Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) in Counseling</i>	3
<i>CACREP Accreditation</i>	3
EVALUATION OF CRITICAL COMPETENCIES	3
STUDENT EVALUATION AND REMEDIATION	5
<i>Process and Procedure for Evaluation</i>	5
ACADEMICS	7
COURSES REQUIRED AT MESSIAH COLLEGE.....	7
ACADEMIC ADVISORS.....	7
REGISTRATION	7
TERMS / SCHEDULE / CALENDAR	8
CURRICULUM.....	9
CURRICULUM LIST	9
COURSE DESCRIPTIONS.....	10
COURSE SEQUENCING	17
DECLARING YOUR TRACK	17
APA CITATION STYLE.....	17
PERSONAL COUNSELING	18
FIELD EXPERIENCES.....	18
COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAM.....	19
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS	19
NATIONAL COUNSELOR EXAM	20
PRAXIS II EXAMINATION	20
COUNSELOR PREPARATION COMPREHENSIVE EXAM	20
LICENSING AND CERTIFICATION	21
GENERAL POLICIES.....	21
PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND STANDARDS	21
STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS	21
PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-CARE.....	22
FINDING A COUNSELOR	22
ENDORSEMENTS	23
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	23

INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADUATE COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Counseling Graduate Program Handbook serves as a reference guide regarding the program's policies, procedures, and services. This handbook is not intended to, nor does it contain the complete and exact text of all rules, regulations, policies and procedures that relate to graduate students. The Messiah College Graduate Catalog also contains policies, procedures and information about services for graduate students and should be used in conjunction with this program-specific handbook. It is not uncommon for individual programs to establish policy and expectations that exceed the minimum standards delineated in the general Graduate Catalog. When this occurs, the text of this program-specific handbook supersedes that which addresses the same topic in the general graduate student handbook.

The provisions and requirements stated in the Counseling Graduate Program Handbook are not considered to be an irrevocable contract between the student and Messiah College. The College reserves the right to amend, revise or modify content at any time and to revoke any rule, regulation and schedule, both academic and financial, within this publication. Changes will be communicated to all students with the effective date that has been established by the College. The College will endeavor to inform graduate students of any changes. However, it is the student's responsibility to keep apprised of current policy and procedures by referencing the website. Publishing on the graduate programs website shall be deemed to be reasonable notice of any such change.

In addition, students should also be familiar with the policies and requirements for counseling graduate students contained in the practicum and internship handbooks for Messiah College.

Mission and Educational Goals of the Counseling Program

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Messiah College Graduate Program in Counseling is to provide curricular experiences and a meaningful learning environment that prepare students to become competent counselors working with a variety of clients in multiple setting. The program is intended to develop students' awareness, knowledge, and skills to serve others through the counseling process and become skilled practitioners with a strong sense of professional and personal identity. To carry out this mission, the Graduate Program in Counseling offers three programs of study; clinical mental health counseling, marriage, couple, and family counseling, and school counseling. All of the programs are facilitated by educators who have experience in the field, set high expectations for students, implement a rigorous standard-based curriculum, and possess a desire to build authentic relationships with students.

Program Objectives:

For students to acquire the specific knowledge and skills required of clinical mental health counselors, school counselors, or marriage, couple and family counselors as delineated by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

To prepare students to meet the educational requirements for state licensure as a licensed professional counselor (LPC) or as a licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT), or for certification as a school counselor in the state of Pennsylvania and/or many other states.

To prepare students to understand and evaluate current research and engage in scholarly activities related to the field of counseling.

To provide students with the knowledge and skills that enables them to incorporate faith, religion, and spirituality into counseling.

To provide students with curricular experiences and a meaningful learning environment that encourages self-awareness and evaluation of their own values, attitudes, and beliefs.

To assume professional identities grounded in self-reflection, leadership, ethical service, and advocacy.

Design of the Counseling Program

The counseling program is designed for (1) those who have graduated from an accredited undergraduate institution; (2) those who wish to become competent counselors who are capable of working with a variety of clients in multiple settings; (3) those who wish to serve others in the counseling process; (4) those who are interested in exploring how faith is related to the counseling profession; (5) those who wish to be trained by seasoned faculty members from a faith-based institution; and/or (6) those who wish to be academically prepared to sit for the exam to become a licensed professional counselor, a licensed marriage and family therapist, or a certified school counselor in Pennsylvania or many other states.

What We Offer

Master of Arts in Counseling

- Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track (60 credits)
- School Counseling Track (Elementary and Secondary) (60 credits)
- Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling Track (60 credits)

A Certificate in Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) in Counseling is also available through the Graduate Counseling Program at Messiah College. This certificate is designed for students who already have a master's degree in an appropriate counseling-related field but would like to earn additional credits possibly for state licensure or certification. Students wishing to complete a group of courses in a specialized area of study may also choose to earn a certificate. The specific course work, tailored to the needs of the certificate student, will consist of a minimum of 12 credits.

CACREP Accreditation

All three tracks of Messiah's M.A. in counseling are accredited by The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs. CACREP is the national accrediting agency for graduate-level degree programs in counselor education that demonstrate prescribed levels of academic and professional excellence.

Evaluation of Critical Competencies

The Messiah College Counseling Program is committed to ensuring that students from our program are well-suited for the professional demands, roles, and responsibilities of the counseling profession. In order to help assess the students' preparation we have developed four critical competencies that all students must achieve throughout the program.

The four critical competencies are:

1. **Quality of work** including:
 - a. the student's timely completion of all work
 - b. the student completes the course at a satisfactory level (B or better)
 - c. the student's ability to work collaboratively and cooperatively with others
 - d. the student's active participation in discussion boards, synchronous experiences, and other class-related activities
 - e. the student consistently demonstrates an understanding of the content of the course through completion of the course assignments at a satisfactory level (B or better)
 - f. the student demonstrates the ability to apply the skills taught in the course (including counseling skills, research skills, diagnosis skills or others as relevant to the course)
2. **Interpersonal and professional competence** including:
 - a. the student demonstrates respect for others' opinions
 - b. the student demonstrates a willingness to understand and respect diversity (including but not limited to race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or any other area of diversity)

- c. the student demonstrates interpersonal and professional competence (e.g. the ways in which the student relates to peers, faculty, professionals, the public, and individuals from diverse backgrounds or histories)
 - d. the student resolves problems or issues that interfere with professional development or functioning in a satisfactory manner by responding constructively to feedback from supervisors or program faculty
3. **Self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation** including:
- a. the student demonstrates the use of critical thinking skills in the areas of self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation
 - b. the student demonstrates personal and professional discretion in disclosing information about herself or himself
 - c. the student demonstrates self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation (e.g. knowledge of the content and potential impact of one's own beliefs and values on peers, faculty, professionals, the public, and individuals from diverse backgrounds or histories)
 - d. the student demonstrates an openness to and application of feedback from the course instructor during the course
 - e. the student demonstrates appropriate interaction with others in the course (e.g. no inappropriate conflicts, confrontations, or disagreements)
4. **Written and oral communication** including:
- a. the student demonstrates professional level standards for written communication
 - b. the student demonstrates professional level standards for oral communication
 - c. the student clearly articulates ideas, thoughts, and concepts effectively through written communication
 - d. the student clearly articulates ideas, thoughts, and concepts effectively through oral communication

Students will self-reflect upon these competencies from their application for admission to their application for graduation and at various points throughout their program. Instructors will assess each student on these competencies in every class the student completes. If deficiencies are noted a Critical Competencies Evaluation Form (CCE) will be completed. A copy of the CCE will be sent to the student and program's administrative assistant by the instructor. The faculty and staff of the Graduate Program in Counseling meet three times per year (January, May and August) to review student grades and critical competencies and refer to the Remediation Committee if needed. Meeting with advisors will be scheduled or plans will be created as needed to help support students as they continue in the program. Just before graduation, all students will reflect on their growth in these areas over the course of their program as part of their final internship reflection paper.

Student Evaluation and Remediation

Students are assessed on the department's critical competencies, professionalism, and performance on an ongoing basis. Evaluation of fitness for the profession occurs both during courses and during other program-related interactions students have with faculty and staff. The purpose of this process is to ensure all students will be well prepared to ethically and competently serve clients. It is the program's view that there are times when some students need support or development beyond the planned curriculum to achieve this standard. Department faculty and administrators meet tri-annually to review the progress of all students. If students are deemed in need of development outside of the standard curriculum they will be contacted by the remediation committee and a remediation plan may be put in place. The remediation committee consists of three core faculty members from the Graduate Counseling Program who are appointed by the Program Director. Committee members will serve staggered two year terms.

Process and Procedure for Evaluation

At the end of each course term faculty submit grades and rate students on the critical competencies evaluation. The program administrative assistant and chair will review all grades and evaluations. The assistant alerts advisors of advisees who received below a B in a class (see "Standards of Scholarship" in this handbook) or received "An area of significant concern" rating on one or more critical competency criteria. If there is an urgent need for intervention (e.g. the student has failed a class or exhibited unethical conduct with a client) the advisor may bring the issue to a weekly faculty meeting to determine next steps. If the concern is not urgent, the advisor may wait until the next student review meeting to address the issue.

The Counseling Department meets three times a year to discuss the progress of all students in the Counseling Program based on course grades, Critical Competency Evaluations, and faculty and site supervisor field experience evaluations. After reviewing the information gathered, the Counseling Department's remediation committee will develop student remediation plans for students who are not achieving at the expected level.

The goal of the remediation plan will be to help the student work toward meeting the stated goals of the program. Remediation plans will be included in student files and will be reviewed with the student in a live meeting on campus or through video conference. Remediation plans could include: utilization of the Writing Center at Messiah College; having papers reviewed before submission; completing particular assignments a second time to insure adequate level of competence; retaking a course; reducing the number of courses taken at one time; taking a break from the Program; checking in periodically with his or her advisor; additional assignments; delay of field experiences; or other requirements as determined by the Counseling Department. If the student does not successfully complete the remediation plan outlined by the Department, the Department reserves the right to remove the student from the Counseling Program.

The remediation process generally follows the following steps unless there is an urgent concern to be addressed in which case the timeline may be altered.

1. Prior to a student review meeting, the program administrative assistant will notify all advisors about any students who have received a rating of "an area of significant concern" on a critical competencies course assessment, received below a B on a field experience final evaluation, or received below a B in a course since the last student review. Students who meet these criteria will heretofore be referred to as "flagged" students.
2. At the student review meeting, any department faculty or staff who has knowledge of the concerns on the evaluations will verbally summarize areas of concern for flagged students. The department faculty will discuss whether the student needs intervention or monitoring for the areas of concern.
3. All other students in the program (not flagged) will be placed on the table for in-depth review if requested by someone present at the meeting.
4. If further monitoring or intervention is agreed upon, the student's advisor may speak with the student or the concern will be passed to the remediation committee for the creation of a remediation plan.
5. The remediation committee will either draft a plan or have a preliminary meeting with the student to gather additional information.
6. A written remediation plan will be presented to the student in person or in a face-to-face online format by two members of the remediation committee (or committee designee/s), and the student will either agree to the plan or ask to make a rebuttal and propose modifications. The student will make a rebuttal with proposed modifications in writing that will be presented to the whole faculty for discussion.
7. The student will sign the plan and send it to the committee.
8. An original signed plan will be uploaded to the student's electronic folder (which is housed in the Graduate Counseling Program departmental drive) by the program administrative assistant.
9. The student's advisor will be notified by the committee of the agreed upon plan and the outcome of the plan.
10. If and when the student has met the terms of the plan, the committee will notify the student in writing and a copy of this notification will also go in the student's electronic file. This file is part of the Graduate Counseling program's records.
11. If the terms of the plan are not met, the committee will consult with the program director and/or the entire faculty as to next steps.

ACADEMICS

Courses Required at Messiah College

For the MA in Counseling the following courses must be completed at Messiah College and may not be counted as incoming transfer credits:

1. Professional Issues and Ethics for Counselors (COUN 501)
2. Counseling Theories (COUN 520)
3. Counseling Techniques (COUN 540)
4. Evidence Based Treatment of Psychopathology (COUN 570)
5. Practicum and Internships

Academic Advisors

Students who are granted admission to the Counseling Program will be assigned an academic advisor. This individual will assist students with their academic and professional goals and growth (e.g. course selection and preparation for advancement through the program). Before registering for courses, each student, in consultation with his/her advisor, will create a written Plan of Study (POS) for completing the program in the desired timeframe.

Academic advisors are charged with the responsibility of communicating with students regularly while they are enrolled, but it is ultimately the students' responsibility to keep their advisors informed of any changes in their student record information or circumstances that may prohibit them from staying on track with the required course work.

Academic advisors, though likely licensed counselors, are not ethically permitted to function as the students' personal counselor. Students who feel they may benefit from professional counseling may ask any faculty member in the Counseling Program for a referral. More information may be found at the Personal Counseling page of our website.

Registration

Students admitted to the College formally register for classes through the academic advisement process. Prior to registration, students must ensure their accounts are up-to-date with the Business Office. Students must also sign the Student Acknowledgement Form and complete the Academic Integrity Quiz and submit them to their advisor. Any student not in compliance with these requirements will be blocked from registration.

Students should make arrangements to communicate with their academic advisor to discuss course selections for the upcoming registration period. Students will not be permitted to register until their advisor has lifted their registration hold, which will take place when the advisor has approved the course selection proposed by the student.

New students that have completed less than 2 terms will not be allowed to take three 8-week classes in one term. Although not recommended, other students will be required to submit a proposal if interested in taking three 8-week classes during one term. Practicum/Internship students will not be required to submit a proposal to enroll in two 8-week classes plus the semester long Practicum/Internship class during one term.

Terms / Schedule / Calendar

Messiah College graduate programs follow a three semester calendar: fall, spring, and summer. In the Counseling Program, these semesters are further divided into terms, as shown below.

Fall Semester

Early Fall Term (8 weeks)

Late Fall Term (8 weeks)

All Fall Term (17 weeks)

Spring Semester

January Term (1 week intensive)

Early Spring Term (8 weeks)

Late Spring Term (8 weeks)

All Spring Term (17 weeks)

Summer Semester

Early Summer Term (8 weeks)

Late Summer Term (1 week intensive)

All Summer Term (14 weeks)

Students register for multiple terms at one time. During the fall registration period (around April 1), students should register for Early Fall and Late Fall courses. During the spring registration period (around November 1), students should register for the January intensive, Early Spring, and Late Spring courses. During the summer registration period (around mid-March), students should register for Early Summer and Late Summer (intensive) courses.

The late summer and January intensive courses require students to be on campus for one week (Monday-Friday). Following the week on campus, students will be required to complete further assignments for their courses. All other courses, with the exception of practicum and internships, are conducted online over an eight-week period.

This schedule allows for one week breaks between eight week courses, time off for major holidays, and few consecutive weeks of unscheduled time during the summer months.

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-2017	
Term	Dates
Late Summer (Summer Intensive)	July 25, 2016 - July 29, 2016 (on campus)
Early Fall	August 21, 2016 - October 15, 2016
Late Fall	October 23, 2016 - December 17, 2016
Early Spring (January Intensive)	January 3, 2017 - January 7, 2017 (on campus)
Early Spring	January 8, 2017 - March 4, 2017
Late Spring	March 12, 2017 - May 6, 2017
Early Summer	May 21, 2017 - July 15, 2017

CURRICULUM

Curriculum List

CORE CLASSES (30 CREDITS)

- COUN 501: Professional Issues and Ethics for Counselors (3)
- COUN 510: Lifespan Development (3)
- COUN 511: Multicultural Issues for Counseling Professionals (3)
- COUN 520: Counseling Theories (3)
- COUN 528: Career Counseling Across the Lifespan (3)
- COUN 532: Group Counseling (3)
- COUN 537: Spiritual Formation and Faith Based Counseling (3)
- COUN 540: Counseling Techniques (3)
- COUN 541: Assessment Techniques for Individuals, Couples, and Families (3)
- COUN 545: Research Design and Statistics (3)

TRACK: CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING (30 CREDITS)

- COUN 507: Foundations of Mental Health Counseling (3)
- COUN 523: Psychopathology and Diagnosis across the Lifespan (3)
- COUN 524: Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling (3)
- COUN 543: Substance Abuse/Addiction and Families (3)
- COUN 550: Crisis, Trauma, and Grief Counseling (3)
- COUN 570: Evidence Based Treatment of Psychopathology (3)
- COUN 580: Mental Health Counseling Practicum (3) (semester long)
- COUN 581: Mental Health Counseling Internship I (3) (semester long)
- COUN 582: Mental Health Counseling Internship II (3) (semester long)
- ELECTIVE: COUN 539: Human Sexuality (3) OR COUN 522: Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)
OR COUN 514: Counseling Children and Adolescents (3)

TRACK: SCHOOL COUNSELING (30 CREDITS)

- COUN 508: Foundations of School Counseling (3)
- COUN 525: Effective Practices of School Counselors (3)
- COUN 526: Organization and Administration of School Counseling Programs (3)
- COUN 551: Effective Practices for Every Learner (3)
- COUN 583: School Counseling Practicum (3) (semester long)
- COUN 584: Elementary School Counseling Internship (3) (semester long)
- COUN 585: Secondary School Counseling Internship (3) (semester long)
- ELECTIVES (to be selected with academic advisor) (9)

TRACK: MARRIAGE, COUPLE AND FAMILY COUNSELING (30 CREDITS)

- COUN 509: Foundations of Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling (3)
- COUN 523: Psychopathology and Diagnosis across the Lifespan (3)
- COUN 530: Contemporary and Integrative Theories of Family Counseling (3)
- COUN 531: Premarital and Marital Counseling (3)
- COUN 539: Human Sexuality (3)
- COUN 543: Substance Abuse/Addiction and Families (3)
- COUN 573: Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling Skills and Practice (3)
- COUN 587: Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Practicum (3) (semester long)

COUN 588: Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Internship I (3) (semester long)
COUN 589: Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Internship II (semester long)

TOTAL CREDITS

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (60 credits)

School Counseling (Elementary and Secondary) (60 credits)

Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling (60 credits)

Course Descriptions

COUN 501 Professional Issues and Ethics for Counselors (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of the history and philosophy of the counseling profession, professional roles and functions, ethical and legal considerations, and professional organizations and credentialing. Current issues within the professional counseling field will provide a context for exploring ethical and professional orientation. An emphasis will be placed on multicultural and self-care issues as related to ethical decision making. Students will demonstrate knowledge of and ability to apply the ACA ethical code. Students will also be introduced to the practice of essential interviewing and counseling skills, as well as various basic crisis response skills within the realm of professional counseling practice.

COUN 507 Foundations of Clinical Mental Health Counseling (3)

This course provides students with an introduction to the field of clinical mental health counseling. Students will learn about the mental health system and the roles of counselor, consultant, and advocate within that system. Students will gain knowledge about professional issues affecting mental health counselors including licensing, ethical and legal issues, program evaluation and multicultural competence. Students will practice treatment planning and documentation within a biopsychosocial model.

COUN 508 Foundations of School Counseling (3)

This course provides a basic understanding of the counseling process in school settings. Students will develop an awareness of the professional, ethical, and legal issues specific to counseling in the school setting. Students will learn of counseling techniques and interventions which are commonly used in schools for children and adolescents. Family, social, and cultural contexts as they affect school-age children, as well as treatment planning will be considered and will be given a brief overview of the *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders - 5*.

COUN 509 Foundations of Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of the historical and theoretical bases for the practice of marriage, couple, and family counseling. Students will also learn about the scope of marriage, couple and family counseling. Special attention is given to family systems theory including an overview of foundational systems-oriented theories (Bowenian, Strategic, Structural, etc.). Students are encouraged to examine their own assumptions about families and to develop increased congruence between their assumptions and the various theoretical perspectives on family development, functioning, interaction and intervention. Special attention will be given to the impact of issues such as gender, culture, and ethnicity on the family system.

COUN 510 Lifespan Development (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental stages and from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. Topics will include theories of individual and family development across the life span, the family life cycle, theories of learning and personality development, human behavior, community resilience, theories of addictions, and strategies for facilitating optimum development over the lifespan.

COUN 511 Multicultural Issues for Counseling Professionals (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues and trends in multicultural and diverse societies. In addition, students will learn about multicultural and pluralistic trends and treatment strategies related to such factors as culture, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental and physical characteristics, education, disability, family values, religious and spiritual values, socioeconomic status and unique characteristics of individuals, couples, families groups and communities.

COUN 514 Counseling Children and Adolescents (3)

This course will explore therapeutic strategies used with children & adolescents. The focus will be on the practice of techniques used in counseling interventions with children and adolescents as well as a consideration of the presentation of common childhood and adolescent disorders. In addition to the role of practitioner, the role of consultant, advocate, and collaborator will be explored. Relevant legal and ethical issues will also be considered, such as the role of parental privilege, child/adolescent client's rights, confidentiality, and child abuse notification requirements. Pre-requisite: COUN 501.

COUN 520 Counseling Theories (3)

This course provides students with an intensive look at counseling theories to provide consistent models to conceptualize client presentation and to select appropriate counseling interventions. Students will examine the historical development of affective, behavioral and cognitive theories and will apply material to case studies. Students will also explore counseling models that are consistent with current professional practice and research to help facilitate a personal theoretical approach. Students will demonstrate essential interviewing skills, communication of empathy, and the application of a particular counseling theory in mock counseling sessions. Prerequisites: COUN 501 and COUN 507, 508, or 509.

COUN 522 Autism Spectrum Disorders (3)

The course will focus on effective educational practices designed to meet the needs of children and early adolescents with autism spectrum disorders in the continuum of alternative educational settings. Specific emphasis will be placed on understanding the characteristics and impact of these disorders on learning, assessment for the purpose of designing instruction and monitoring progress, curriculum selection and development and implementation of evidence-based practices and strategies found to be effective in supporting students with autism spectrum disorders. Pre-requisite: Security clearance on file with program.

COUN 523 Psychopathology and Diagnosis Across the Lifespan (3)

This course is an exploration of mental illness across different ages. It includes the study of the classification, etiology, and treatment of psychopathology and personality disorders which are present across the lifespan, as well as an examination of the current Diagnostic and Statistical

Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-5). Students will explore diversity issues that may influence the diagnosis and treatment process.

COUN 524 Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling (3)

This course is designed for those focusing on the clinical mental health track and is intended to help these students develop a conceptual knowledge and effective professional skill for work with couples and families. Emphasizing systems theory, this course examines foundation theories as well as models and methods of intervention with couples and families.

COUN 525 Effective Practices of School Counselors (3)

This course focuses on school counselors in K-12 settings as they work with students in contexts that include parents, administrators, and teachers. Students will learn strategies and techniques to facilitate effective communication and share information/resources with parents, administrators, and teachers. This course will also provide an overview of crisis prevention and intervention for school counselors. Students will learn and practice designing school counseling curriculum responsive service components (e.g., individual counseling, group counseling, and classroom guidance lessons) necessary to deliver a comprehensive school counseling program to all students including those with disabilities, special needs, and those who are gifted.

Prerequisite: COUN 526.

COUN 526 Organization and Administration of School Counseling Programs (3)

This course covers the nature, development, and management of school counseling programs, and differences between elementary and secondary school contexts. Students will learn to assess, plan, and integrate the elements of a comprehensive school counseling program that reflects the programmatic and ethical standards of the ASCA, including services that foster personal, social, education, and career development in students. Consideration will be given to the use of both formative and summative data disaggregation and analysis to ascertain the success of program elements.

COUN 528 Career Counseling Across the Lifespan (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of career development theories and decision making models, career information resources, career planning, and career counseling processes. The course also addresses the special issues concerning legal and ethical standards in career counseling, multicultural issues and gender bias, the mutual impact of career and cultures, as well as an appreciation for career trends across the lifespan.

COUN 530 Contemporary and Integrative Theories of Family Counseling (3)

This course centers on contemporary (e.g., solution-focused, narrative, constructivist, etc.) and integrative (multi-systemic, metaframeworks, etc.) theories and models of marriage, couple and family counseling. A focus will be on understanding appropriate modalities for family assessment and treatment including developing one's theoretical basis for practice and responsible use of integrative techniques. Special emphasis will be placed on evidence-based treatments and a common factors approach.

COUN 531 Premarital and Marital Counseling (3)

This course focuses on approaches that have been developed for thorough counseling with premarital and marital couples. Students will be introduced to selected counseling/therapy models which seek to identify and describe both normal (functional) and abnormal

(dysfunctional) marital and coupling patterns or facilitate client goals throughout the family life cycle and with couples from diverse backgrounds. A variety of possible theoretical approaches and interventions useful in the assessment and treatment of couples will be examined. Emphasis will be on utilizing the resources, strengths, and creative change generating capacities of the couple in moving toward a set of mutually agreed upon goals.

COUN 532 Group Counseling (3)

This course provides students with theoretical and experiential understandings of group development and dynamics. A focus will be on principles of group dynamics, developmental stage theories, group member roles and behaviors, leadership styles, theories of group counseling, types of groups and professional preparation standards for group leaders. In order to facilitate self-understanding, a critical component to becoming a professional counselor, students will spend 10 hours as a member of a group during the course and will reflect upon that experience. Prerequisite: COUN 501.

COUN 537 Spiritual Formation and Faith Based Counseling (3)

In this course, students explore personal and professional issues of faith and spirituality as they pertain to clinical competency in professional counseling. The first half of the course consists of a review of historical spiritual formation and diversity among faith traditions as related to each student's spiritual faith journey and identity. The second half of the course provides students with an overview of several common approaches to Christian counseling, including an examination of their content and validity, as well as a brief overview of other commonly practiced faith-based approaches. Throughout the course, students will have opportunity to develop a counseling framework that integrates faith perspectives, with particular emphasis on a Christian perspective. Students will also consider how to appropriately integrate faith perspectives into the practice of counseling.

COUN 539 Human Sexuality (3)

This course is designed for counseling professionals whose work will bring them into contact with clients experiencing problems and concerns with their sexuality. The course is designed to develop: a) students' knowledge base related to human sexuality, b) an understanding of the varied sexuality issues which may be encountered in professional counseling practice, c) the assessment and intervention skills required to deal with sexuality issues, and d) increased awareness of one's personal perceptions, attitudes and ethical considerations related to sexuality issues. Students will consider how counseling about sexuality issues is related to the counselor's and the client's spiritual framework and belief system.

COUN 540 Counseling Techniques (3)

This course offers the student the opportunity to continue to investigate and practice some of the foundational and advanced counseling techniques used by professional counselors. Since instruction is both didactic and experiential, the course offers the student the opportunity for supervised practice of several different types of counseling techniques which will increase the student's skill and insight. Students will begin to develop an understanding of the relationship between the particular techniques chosen by professional counselors and the problems presented by clients. Students will also begin to develop a system of conceptualization that fosters an understanding of the client as a whole and an orientation towards wellness and prevention as desired counseling goals. In addition, basic supervision models practices, and

processes will be discussed during this course. Prerequisites: COUN 501; COUN 507, COUN 508 or COUN 509; and COUN 520.

COUN 541 Assessment Techniques for Individuals, Couples and Families (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of intellectual, academic achievement, personality, and psychopathology tests and other appraisal methods used in the counseling field for individuals, couples and families. Focus will be given to assessment of different dimensions of functioning- behavioral, emotional, psychological, and personality among children, adolescents, adults, couples, and family dynamics. Students will develop skills in the selection, administration, and interpretation of assessment tools used to evaluate client issues and functioning for individuals, couples and families.

COUN 543 Substance Abuse/Addiction and Families (3)

This course provides students with an overview of the processes of substance abuse counseling. Topics include issues related to addictions, assessment and diagnosis, and treatment strategies and treatment planning. Special emphasis will be given to family dynamics related to addiction and addiction recovery.

COUN 545 Research Design and Statistics (3)

This course provides students with an understanding of research methods such as qualitative, quantitative, single case designs, action research, and outcome based research. Fundamentals of statistics and statistical analysis, ethical and legal considerations in research, and the importance of research within the counseling profession will also be discussed. The course provides students with the skills which are necessary to evaluate the current research in the field of counseling. Prerequisite: Undergraduate statistic course recommended.

COUN 550 Crisis, Trauma, and Grief Counseling (3)

This course examines the dynamics and treatment of developmental and situational crises, trauma, and grief in a variety of settings. Students will apply crisis intervention theory and models of intervention to various problem areas, such as suicide, sexual assault, domestic violence, substance abuse, divorce, grief and loss, and disaster relief.

COUN 551 Effective Practices for Every Learner (3)

This course will enable students to investigate the legislation and landmark litigation that govern special education eligibility and service delivery. Students will also learn about the major areas of exceptionality including the characteristics, incidence, etiology and diagnostic criteria connected with those areas of exceptionality. Educational and therapeutic services available to school-age children and youth with exceptionalities will also be explored. With this foundation, students will be able to analyze and apply best practices and sound professional strategies to assist school-age students with disabilities.

COUN 570 Evidence Based Treatment of Psychopathology (3)

This course reviews evidence-based treatments of mental and emotional disorders for clients across the lifespan. Students learn to create and execute comprehensive treatment plans using theory based case conceptualization and counseling and psychotherapy outcome research
Prerequisite: COUN 523.

COUN 573 Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling Skills and Practice (3)

This course is designed to provide students with specific knowledge and skills to work with couples and families in counseling. Techniques, assessments, interventions, and strategies will be researched, discussed and practiced to develop preventive approaches as well as approaches to facilitate optimal functioning in the midst of various challenges in marriage, couple, and family life (e.g., step family issues, divorce/remarriage, extramarital affairs, etc.). A special emphasis will be placed on families and change, coping with stressful events and transitions in family life.

COUN 580 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Practicum (semester long) (3)

This is an initial field placement of 100 hours, 40 of which are direct service hours with individuals and groups. Students are also encouraged to work with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with clients with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA, COUN 501, COUN 507, and COUN 520. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 581 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship I (semester long) (3)

This course is a 300 clock hour experience, 120 of which are direct service hours with individuals and groups. Students are also encouraged to work with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with clients with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA, at least 39 COUN credits, COUN 523, COUN 532, COUN 540, and COUN 580. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 582 Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship II (semester long) (3)

This course is a 300 clock hour experience, 120 of which are direct service hours with individuals and groups. Students are also encouraged to work with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with clients with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA and COUN 581. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 583 School Counseling Practicum (semester long) (3)

This is an initial field placement of 100 hours in professional settings in which students will develop counseling skills with school-aged children. Students in the course are required to have 40 hours of direct service contact with K-12 students through individual or group counseling. Students are also highly encouraged to work with students with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and are required to work with students with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA or ASCA, COUN 501, COUN 508, and COUN 520. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 584 Elementary School Counseling Internship (semester long) (3)

This course is a 300 hour experience under the supervision of an approved site supervisor who

is a practicing elementary school counselor. As part of the 300 hours, interns are required to have a minimum of 120 clock hours of direct service to students and are to demonstrate master's-level performance in: the essential services of counseling, consulting, coordinating, and appraising; planning and implementation of classroom guidance activities; professional conduct in interactions with field and college supervisors, students, teachers, administrators, and community members; and such other activities defined as the responsibility of the school counselor at their elementary school placement. Students are also highly encouraged to work with students with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and are required to work with students with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA or ASCA, at least 30 COUN credits, proof of conference attendance prior to 2nd internship, COUN 532, COUN 540, and COUN 583. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 585 Secondary School Counseling Internship (semester long) (3)

This course is a 300 hour experience under the supervision of an approved site supervisor who is a practicing secondary school counselor. As part of the 300 hours, interns are required to have a minimum of 120 clock hours of direct service to students and are to demonstrate master's-level performance in: the essential services of counseling, consulting, coordinating, and appraising; planning and implementation of classroom guidance activities; professional conduct in interactions with field and college supervisors, students, teachers, administrators, and community members; and such other activities defined as the responsibility of the school counselor at their secondary school placement. Students are also required to work with students with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with students with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA or ASCA, at least 30 COUN credits, proof of conference attendance prior to 2nd internship, COUN 532, COUN 540 and COUN 583. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 587 Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling Practicum (semester long) (3)

This is an initial field placement of 100 hours, 50 of which are direct service hours with couples, families, or individuals with marital or family issues. Students are also encouraged to work with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with clients with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA or AAMFT, completion of COUN 501, COUN 509, and COUN 520. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 588 Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling Internship I (semester long) (3)

This course is a 300 hour experience under the supervision of an experienced master's level family clinician. It includes 125 direct service hours with couples, families, or individuals with marital or family issues. Students are also encouraged to work with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with clients with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA or AAMFT, at least 39 credits, COUN 523, COUN 532, COUN 540, and COUN 587. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 589 Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling Internship II (semester long) (3)

This course is a 300 hour experience under the supervision of an experienced master's level family clinician. It includes 125 direct service hours with couples, families, or individuals with marital or family issues. Students are also encouraged to work with clients with diverse cultural backgrounds (different from their own) for 10 hours (direct or indirect) and with clients with disabilities for 10 hours (direct or indirect). Prerequisites: appropriate clearances, proof of malpractice insurance, student membership in ACA or AAMFT, and COUN 588. (Any site supervision fees incurred are the responsibility of the student and will be assessed to the student's account).

COUN 591 Independent Study (1-3)

This course is used sparingly and on as needed basis for students who require it due to extenuating circumstances.

Course Sequencing

Each sequence is offered as one suggestion for completing the program in the given timeline. However, our flexible program allows students to complete their required courses in a variety of sequences.

[Marriage, Couple & Family Counseling Course Plans](#)

[Clinical Mental Health Counseling Course Plans](#)

[School Counseling Course Plans](#)

Declaring Your Track

All students must declare a specific track as they work toward their degree. The MA in Counseling offers a track in clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, and marriage, couple, and family counseling. If the student did not indicate the track he/she desires to pursue on the admission application, that student must work with the program director to select a track of study.

APA Citation Style

Students in the graduate counseling program are expected to know and use the APA citation style for all assignments, unless otherwise noted. Each student should purchase an APA manual (listed as a "required" text for most of our courses) and work through the APA tutorials provided in the orientation letter prior to beginning classes in this program.

Personal Counseling

Before the beginning of the Practicum experience, students will need to complete personal counseling. The intent of Messiah's Master of Arts in Counseling Program in requiring students to obtain personal counseling is primarily to give students the opportunity to work through their own issues and to experience the therapeutic relationship from the client's perspective.

Students must to complete 4-6 visits with a licensed counselor, therapist or psychologist (for example, an LPC, LMFT, or licensed psychologist). Students will need to have their counselor complete a verification form and forward it to the program's administrative assistant. Students will also need to write a 300-500 word essay describing what you have learned about yourself through the counseling sessions and how that will impact your work with clients or students and submit it to the practicum and internship coordinator.

Part of the process of becoming a counselor is an ongoing commitment to self-awareness. Students often have strong emotional reactions to the content of counseling courses or skill-development experiences. Students may also become aware of something about themselves that impacts their present or future work with clients. It is important to acknowledge these reactions and utilize the help of a professional counselor/therapist to process them. Suggestions for how to find a counselor can be found in the Personal Development and Self-Care section of this handbook.

Field Experiences

Practicum and Internships are planned field-based clinical/school experiences in which the student learns to develop basic counseling skills and integrate professional knowledge under the supervision of an experienced counselor.

The Messiah College Counseling program is a developmental model designed to train the novice counselor primarily through observation and co-facilitation. Since the practicum takes place relatively early in the student's master-level training, he/she will initially assist with intake and supportive services. With time, however, practicum students will ideally be able to move from observer to service provider (with supervision) as deemed appropriate within his/her respective field placement site. Typically, the opportunity to participate in the more advanced and complex counseling processes and procedures would take place during the student's internship experience(s), courses that students complete at or near the end of their program.

An internship is a supervised "capstone" clinical experience in which the student utilizes the knowledge gained during coursework taken and refines and enhances basic counseling skills through observation, instruction, and experience. Since the Messiah College counseling program is developmental, students will be given opportunities to counsel and perform the other duties of a counselor appropriate to their skill and knowledge base. During the internship, the student's status should gradually shift from that of a student to a pre-professional. By gaining opportunities to apply theories and techniques learned in academic settings, the student begins to contribute to the site by assisting its staff and carrying out many of the normal activities at the site.

Both the practicum and the internship have a prescribed set of prerequisites, hour requirements, course requirements, and student responsibilities. For more information on either of these experiences, refer to the course syllabi and/or the practicum/internship handbook for graduate students.

Completion of the Program

Student may complete any of the tracks in 2-4 years, but all students must complete their degree within six years from the time he/she began the program. Students are expected to be continuously enrolled from the time they begin their program.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation from the Counseling Program requires:

1. An overall minimum GPA of 3.0
2. Successful completion of all of the course work for the chosen track
3. Successful completion of the practicum and internship(s) experiences for the chosen track
4. Successful completion of any personal remediation plan(s), and the recommendation of Remediation Committee and/or the Counseling Department
5. Completion of the an approved exam for chosen track (NCE, Praxis II, and/or CPCE)
6. Compliance with all other Messiah College policies for graduation
7. Attendance at one professional conference related to counseling while enrolled as a student at Messiah College (*applies to students starting January 2012 and after*).

Exams

National Counselor Exam

In order to graduate, all students must sit for the National Counselor Examination (NCE). This multiple choice exam focuses on human growth and development, social and cultural foundations, helping relationships, group work, career and lifestyle development, appraisal, research and program evaluation, and professional orientation and ethics. More information about this exam can be found on our website by clicking “exams” on the curriculum tab. http://www.messiah.edu/info/21282/professional_and_educational_resources/2007/exams. Students are responsible for any costs associated with the preparation for and taking of this examination.

An added benefit of sitting for the NCE is that passing this exam is one of the requirements for a National Certified Counselor (NCC) certification. This certification is offered by the National Board of Certified Counselors through their Graduate Student Application (GSA-NCC) program for students who apply in their last year of courses or shortly after graduation. Once students have passed the NCE and graduated, they typically begin accumulating post-graduate experience and supervision hours. If they have passed the NCE they may call themselves *Board Eligible NCCs* while accumulating the required post-graduation hours.

PRAXIS II Examination

In order to graduate, students in the School Counseling track must sit for the PRAXIS II School Guidance and Counseling (test code 0421 and 5421) exam. To become a counselor within Pennsylvania’s public schools, the School Guidance and Counseling exam is required and students cannot be certified until they have passed this exam. The PRAXIS II exam is administered by ETS. More information about this exam can be found on our website by clicking “exams” on the curriculum tab. http://www.messiah.edu/info/21282/professional_and_educational_resources/2007/exams.

Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) tests students on coursework covering the eight CACREP core areas. Students selecting this exam option, must pass the exam in order to graduate.

Licensing and Certification

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling track is designed to meet the standards for accreditation under the Council of Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and will prepare students to take the exam to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

The School Counseling track is designed according to the regulations set forth in the Pennsylvania Code as well as the standards for accreditation under the Council of Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The program prepares students to take the required Praxis exam and become a certified school counselor by the Pennsylvania Department of Education in elementary and secondary school counseling.

The Marriage and Family Counseling track is designed to meet the standards for accreditation under the Council of Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) and upon completion of all of the required clinical hours will prepare students to take the exam to become a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

GENERAL POLICIES

Professional Ethics and Standards

Students in the Graduate Counseling program are expected to know and abide by the ethical standards that govern the practice of counseling in general as well as those that are specific to their chosen track. The ACA code is introduced in the ethics course and discipline-specific codes such as ASCA, AAMFT, AACC and the Pennsylvania Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators, are introduced in the track-specific foundations courses.

Student Memberships

Students are required to become student members of one of the following professional organizations: American Counseling Association (ACA), American School Counselor Association (ASCA), or American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Memberships must be in effect prior to taking part in a practicum or internship experience, but students are encouraged to apply for membership upon entry into the Counseling Program.

Liability insurance is required for students participating in practicum and internship courses. Insurance is included in student membership in the ACA, ASCA, and AAMFT. The insurance provided is typically for student members enrolled and engaged in a master's degree counseling curriculum at a post-secondary institution. Coverage is solely while performing counseling services (e.g. practicum and internship) related to such curriculum.

Student membership in local chapters of national associations is also suggested, as student membership is relatively inexpensive but provides many of the same opportunities as a professional membership would.

Personal Development and Self-Care

Part of the process of becoming a counselor is an ongoing commitment to self-awareness. Students often have strong emotional reactions to the content of counseling courses or skill-development experiences. Students may also become aware of something about themselves that impacts their present or future work with clients. It is important to acknowledge these reactions and in some cases utilize the help of a professional counselor/therapist to process them. Below are some suggestions for how to find a counselor. Students are also encouraged to consult with their instructors or advisor in deciding how and when to seek outside support.

Finding a Counselor

Note: Messiah College or its employees cannot affirm the quality of the professional services obtained based on these recommendations. Any arrangement for service exists only between the provider and the client/student.

Most people consider three issues when seeking a counselor: personal fit, location, and payment options.

Fit: It is a good idea to meet or talk on the phone with a counselor to get a “feel” for that person. You might also ask some of the following questions:

- What license/education do you have?
- What is your theoretical orientation and do you counsel from a religious or spiritual standpoint?
- May I see your professional disclosure statement or informed consent paperwork?
- Do you have experience working with counselors or counselors-in-training as clients?
- How much experience do you have working with _____ issue? (insert your concern)

Location: Some ways to identify professional helpers near you-

- Ask for recommendations from friends, family, clergy, or family physician
- Your health insurance network (preferred provider look-up etc.)
- Many larger employers have Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) which provide free confidential counseling to employees and their families
- Websites: American Counseling Association; American Association of Christian Counselors; American Psychological Association; American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

Payment Options:

- If you found the counselor through your insurance company you should verify he or she is taking new clients with your insurance and confirm the co-pay
- Some counselors don't take insurance and are pay-as-you go
- Community agencies or counselor/psychologist training facilities (like in universities) will often see clients on a sliding scale that bases your fee on your income

Endorsements

Faculty members of the graduate program in counseling will provide endorsements only for the program for which the student or graduate has been prepared. Students must have successfully completed all requirements in order to be endorsed.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Graduate Counseling Program

Dr. Heather Barto, Director of the Graduate Program in Counseling

hbarto@messiah.edu

(717) 796-1800, ext. 2112

Ms. Holly Myers, Administrative Assistant to the Graduate Program in Counseling

hmyers@messiah.edu

(717) 766-2511, ext. 2027