



GRADUATE PROGRAM  
IN COUNSELING

**GRADUATE PROGRAM IN COUNSELING**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

*(Updated 6/16/2021)*

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE GRADUATE COUNSELING PROGRAM

The Graduate Program in Counseling 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 University 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 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 Graduate Program in Counseling Handbook are not considered to be an irrevocable contract between the student and Messiah University. The University 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 University.

The University 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 University.

## **Mission and Educational Goals of the Graduate Program in Counseling**

### **Mission:**

Our mission, as a Christ-centered program, is to educate invested and caring individuals who will serve in a variety of settings as counselors characterized by integrity, humility, skillfulness, and understanding. We desire that these professionals will be leaders who facilitate healing, growth, reconciliation and spiritual well-being for diverse peoples.

### **Program objectives for the graduate counseling program**

1. To provide students with 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).
2. To prepare students to understand, evaluate and engage in scholarship related to the field of counseling.
3. 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 an elementary and secondary school counselor.
4. To provide the knowledge and skills that enables students to incorporate faith, religion, and spirituality into counseling, and understand how Christian faith connects with the counseling profession.
5. To guide students toward an ethical practice of counseling that is grounded in professional and spiritual values.
6. To help a diverse student body become self-reflective leaders who understand and address how issues of discrimination, privilege and oppression impact the practice and policies of counseling in a multicultural society.

### **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 (6) those who wish to be academically prepared to pursue a license or certification in counseling fields.

## 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 University. 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). CACREP is the national accrediting agency for graduate-level degree programs in counselor education that demonstrate prescribed levels of academic and professional excellence.

## Expectations and Policies

### Evaluation of Critical Competencies

The Messiah University Graduate 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 **important** 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 Counseling Program 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.

## Requirements for Counseling Skill Development

The development of counseling skills is a cornerstone of the learning objectives for the Graduate Program in Counseling. The program has designated key assignments throughout the program through which students must demonstrate a baseline competence to move forward. The courses in which these assignments reside are intentionally sequenced and should not be taken out of order. As much as possible advisors will help students space out these courses so that skills can be developed over time and there is time for remediation in between when needed. If a student fails to meet the required target in an academic course this will be indicated on the Critical Competency Evaluation and the advisor will be notified immediately by the department administrative assistant. If the required target is not met in a field experience course the faculty supervisor who assigns the grade will notify the track coordinator who will notify the advisor.

### *Clinical Course Sequence:*

**COUN 501: Professional Ethics and Issues for Counselors:** Students are introduced to and practice foundational counseling skills using the microskills model. This is an on campus intensive course.

**COUN 520: Counseling Theories:** Students are introduced to foundational counseling theories and practice the application of those theories in mock counseling sessions. This is an online 8-week course. (Prerequisite: 501)

**COUN 540: Counseling Techniques:** Students develop their conceptualization and documentation skills while continuing to practice the application of theory and microskills. This is an on campus intensive course. (Prerequisite: 501 and 520)

**Practicum and Internships:** Students demonstrate counseling skills at a counseling site appropriate to their track. (Prerequisites (selected): 501, 520, and 540; Practicum may be taken prior to 540 if student is on a two year plan).

### *Skill Development Sequence:*

**COUN 501: Key Assignment:** Recorded Microskills Video Session and Reflection  
Requirement: B or better on assignment (at least 83%)  
Procedure if level not met: Remediation plan with re-doing of assignment.

**COUN 520: Key Assignment:** Final Video Session Recording  
Requirement: B or better on assignment  
Procedure if level not met: Remediation plan with re-doing of assignment.

**COUN 540: Key Assignment:** Final Video Session Recording  
Requirement: B or better on assignment  
Procedure if level not met: If this is third key clinical assignment on which student has received below a B student may be removed from the program. If it is not the third, a remediation plan will be put in place. Remediation plan may include re-taking the course or participating in a directed study.

**Practicum:** Target: Final class grade

Student must receive a B or better in Practicum. If they do not they will have a remediation plan and may be required to re-do practicum or participate in a directed study.

**Internship I:** Target: Final class grade must be a B or better

Videos turned in for internship will be weighted in the grading.

Procedure if not achieved: Student may be asked to leave the program, depending on previous experiences with remediation or nature of concerns. If not asked to leave the program a remediation plan will be put in place which may include re-doing the course or participating in a directed study.

**Internship II:** Target: Final class grade must be a B or better.

Videos turned in for internship will be weighted in the grading.

Procedure if not achieved: Student may be asked to leave the program, depending on previous experiences with remediation or nature of concerns. If not asked to leave the program a remediation plan will be put in place which may include re-doing the course or participating in a directed study.

Track specifiers: If a school counseling student is remediated for clinical skills at any point other than in 501, the student may be prohibited from doing Elementary and Secondary internships simultaneously.

### **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 rates students on the critical competencies. 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 Counseling Program meet three times per year (January, May and August) to review student grades, critical competencies and faculty and site supervisor field experience evaluations. If there is an urgent need for intervention (e.g. the student has failed a class or exhibited unethical conduct with a client) the instructor or advisor may bring the issue to a weekly faculty meeting to determine next steps. If the concern is not urgent, it will be discussed in the next student review meeting to address the issue. 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 resources; 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 University

For the MA in Counseling the following courses must be completed at Messiah University 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. Practicum and Internships

### Academic Advisors

Students who are granted admission to the Graduate 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 Graduate Counseling Program for information on how to find a counselor.

### Registration

Students admitted to the University 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 all the orientation materials 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 University 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.

# 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) OR COUN 548 Advanced  
Techniques: Anger, Ostracism, Forgiveness, and Reconciliation (3) or COUN 542 Expressive  
Arts in Counseling or COUN 552 Trauma Counseling: Assessment and Intervention

### 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 students with an understanding of the historical development of school counseling as well as the professional roles and functions of the school counselor. Students will gain knowledge about professional issues affecting school counselors as well as develop an awareness of the ethical and legal issues specific to counseling in the school setting.

### **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.

Prerequisite: 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.

Prerequisite: 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 the strategies and techniques used by school counselors as they respond to the individual personal/social needs of all students. Students will learn to evaluate assessment information to identify needs, set goals, and develop services to promote the success of students. A multidisciplinary focus will be taken and family, social, and cultural contexts will be considered. Students will receive a brief overview of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental disorders-5 as well as an overview of crisis prevention and intervention..

### **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 NM. A special focus will be given to the academic achievement and college and career readiness of 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, meta-frameworks, 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. Through experiential learning, students conceptualize client development using a variety of spiritual formation models and understand how diverse orientations may relate to his or her own spiritual faith journey and identity. Students also have the opportunity to develop a counseling framework that works through the identification of universal themes and respect for alternative faith traditions with a particular emphasis on the Christian perspective.

### **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 542 Expressive Arts in Counseling**

The purpose of this course is to enhance competence of effective application of expressive arts in counseling with diverse clients. Students will learn how to administer and process therapeutic activities in a way that leads to positive change, increased self-awareness, and improved mental health. The course instructor will demonstrate several expressive arts interventions including activities utilizing creative writing, visual arts, and sand tray therapy. Students will practice in dyads, reflect on their learning by integrating a review of relevant literature, and submit recorded mock sessions to the instructor for feedback. Students will also integrate the skills learned in this class into their evolving theoretical orientation and create a treatment plan that reflects conceptualization skills and multicultural competence. *In addition to textbooks, students are required to purchase a sand tray therapy set for this course.*

Prerequisite: COUN 520

### **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 548 Advanced Techniques: Anger, Ostracism, Forgiveness and Reconciliation (3)**

This course is designed to help students learn how anger, ostracism, forgiveness, and reconciliation can be addressed with appropriate case conceptualization and research-based therapeutic interventions in counseling. Students will learn strategies and techniques for: effective anger processing, communication and negotiation, and conflict resolution that can lead to forgiveness and reconciliation. Factors that relate to the context of the client's multicultural perspective will be explored as a part of this process.

### **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 student eligibility for special education, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 service plans, gifted education and services for English Language Learners. 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 diverse learners with exceptionalities and without will also be explored. With this foundation, students will be able to analyze and apply best practices and sound professional strategies to support exceptional and diverse learners in educational environments. Cross-listed with EDME 551.

### **COUN 552 Trauma Counseling: Assessment and Intervention (3)**

This course examines the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of traumatic stress. It considers the impact of both acute and chronic trauma exposure among diverse individuals and families. Special attention is given to the long-term detrimental effects of trauma on human growth and development. Various evidence-based approaches to child/adolescent and adult trauma counseling are reviewed. Professional and ethical and spiritual issues related to trauma

counseling will also be considered, including the potential for secondary traumatization and the necessity for counselor self-care.

### **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 required 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 university 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 required 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 credits, 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 university 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 credits, 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 provides the opportunity for students to 1) investigate and explore a particular area of study outside the graduate curriculum, or 2) complete coursework to meet state competency standards where previous academic preparation evidence deficiency. Available only to transfer students and students enrolled in the Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) program. Approval of the Director of the Graduate Program in Counseling required..

## **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.

### **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 University 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 University 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 University policies for graduation
7. Attendance at one professional conference related to counseling while enrolled as a student at Messiah University (applies to students starting January 2012 and after).

## **Exams**

Graduation from the Counseling Program requires that all degree-seeking students must complete and pass a comprehensive exam. The program uses the Counselor Preparation

Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) published by NBCC as its comprehensive exam. Students may also have the opportunity to take the Praxis II, National Counseling Exam (NCE) or National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam (NCMHCE) while in the program. If the student takes one of these exams, the CPCE requirement is waived. Students are responsible for any costs associated with the preparation for and taking of comprehensive 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.

### **National Counselor Exam**

The National Counselor Examination (NCE) is a 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.

Completing a CACREP accredited program and passing the NCE may allow one to become a National Certified Counselor (NCC). The NCE is also used as a licensure exam in many states

### **PRAXIS II Examination**

The PRAXIS II (Professional School Counseling Exam) measures whether entry-level school counselors have the standards-relevant knowledge, skills, and abilities believed necessary for competent professional practice.

Students must take and pass the PRAXIS II for certification in many states including Pennsylvania.

### **National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE)**

The National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE) consists of 10 clinical simulations designed to sample a broad area of competencies.

Completing a CACREP accredited program and passing this exam may allow one to become a Nationally Certified Counselor or Nationally Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor. It is also the required counseling licensure exam in some states.

For more information about comprehensive exams please check our website

[https://www.messiah.edu/info/21282/professional\\_and\\_educational\\_resources/2007/exams](https://www.messiah.edu/info/21282/professional_and_educational_resources/2007/exams)

Students may also find additional information with details about the process for registering for these exams in our Graduate Counseling Canvas course.

<https://messiah.instructure.com/courses/1272787/modules>

## **Licensing and Certification**

The Graduate Program in Counseling cannot guarantee any student will obtain a counseling license or certification, nor can the program staff be expected to be knowledgeable of related laws or changes to laws in all 50 states. Faculty and advisors will make a good faith effort to work with each student to align their plan of study with professional goals they have for the geographic area they anticipate living in.

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). In Pennsylvania and in many other states it will also meet the educational requirements for becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor.

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 School Counseling curriculum meets the educational requirements for school counseling certification in many states.

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). In Pennsylvania and in many other states it will also meet the educational requirements for becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor. This track is aligned with the counseling profession, not the marriage and family therapy profession or its accrediting body (COAMFTE). However, it does meet the educational requirements in Pennsylvania for pursuing the Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist credential and alumni of the program have taken and passed the Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist exam.

## GENERAL POLICIES

**Please Note:** Many other graduate student policies are found in the [Graduate Catalog](#)

### 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.

## **Counseling Honor Society**

Chi Sigma Iota is the international honor society of professional counseling, which was founded in 1985. Mu Chi Alpha, the Chi Sigma Iota chapter at Messiah University, was established in 2012. Our chapter's mission is to promote excellence in the profession of counseling.

Eligible students are invited to join Mu Chi Alpha during the spring semester. Membership requirements include good academic standing, a minimum GPA of 3.5, no current probation status, and 24 completed credits. New members are initiated through both formal on-campus events, and supplemental online meetings. Mu Chi Alpha members include current students, alumni, and faculty members.

Active members are appointed or elected for the following leadership positions: president, treasurer/secretary, newsletter committee chair, web presence committee chair, community engagement committee chair, professional advocacy committee chair, and social events committee chair. Two full-time faculty members serve as chapter faculty advisors.

## **Confidentiality and Privacy**

Students in this program will be privileged to private information about classmates, volunteer "clients", and clients or students they will have contact with at practicum and internship sites. Students will be expected to be aware of any policies and procedures that protect the confidentiality of information shared by these groups and uphold the highest level of privacy possible.

Accordingly, students may be asked to share information about themselves in program and class activities and assignments. Students should share only to a level that is comfortable to them and be aware that privacy or confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

## **Academic Integrity**

Personal integrity is a behavioral expectation for all members of the Messiah community: administration, faculty, staff, and students. Violations of academic integrity are not consistent with the community standards of Messiah University. These violations include:

1. Plagiarism: Submitting as one's own work part or all of any assignment (oral or written)

which is copied, paraphrased, or purchased from another source, including on-line sources, without the proper acknowledgment of that source. Examples: failing to cite a reference, failing to use quotation marks where appropriate, misrepresenting another's work as your own, etc.

2. Self-Plagiarism: The reuse of significant, identical, or nearly identical portions of one's own work without acknowledging that one is doing so or citing the original work. Examples: Reusing portions of a previously written text, paper, or article (published or unpublished text), republishing or reusing the same paper that is published elsewhere without notifying the reader nor publisher of the journal, etc.
3. Cheating: Attempting to use or using unauthorized material or study aids for personal assistance in examinations or other academic work. Examples: using a cheat sheet, altering a graded exam, looking at a peer's exam, having someone else take the exam for you, using any kind of electronic mobile or storage devices (such as cell phones, PDAs, Blackberry, iPods, iPhones, Flash drives, DVDs, CDs), communicating via email, IM, or text messaging during an exam, using the internet, sniffers, spyware or other software to retrieve information or other students' answers, purposely disconnecting from the internet to cause a lock on an online exam, etc.
4. Fabrication: Submitting altered or contrived information in any academic exercise. Examples: falsifying sources and/or data, etc.
5. Misrepresentation of Academic Records: Tampering with any portion of a student's record. Example: forging a signature on a registration form or change of grade form on paper or via electronic means.
6. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Helping another individual violate this policy. Examples: working together on an assignment where collaboration is not allowed, doing work for another student, allowing one's own work to be copied.
7. Computer Offenses: Altering or damaging computer programs without permission. Examples: software piracy, constructing viruses, introducing viruses into a system, copying copyrighted programs, etc.
8. Unfair Advantage: Attempting to gain advantage over fellow students in an academic exercise. Examples: lying about the need for an extension on a paper, destroying or removing library materials, having someone else participate in your place, etc.

### Education Regarding Academic Integrity Policy

Messiah University is responsible to clearly articulate the Academic Integrity Policy to students by publishing it in the graduate student catalog and student handbooks. Faculty should reference the policy in their course syllabi. However, primary responsibility for knowledge of and compliance with this policy rests with the student.

### Records of Violations of Academic Integrity

As the custodian for student education records, the registrar's office maintains records of academic integrity violations for all students in accordance with the University's Schedule for Records Retention.

### **Procedures for Perceived Violations of Academic Integrity**

1. If a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is suspected, the faculty member should discuss the incident with the student (s) and determine to the faculty member's satisfaction whether or not a violation has occurred.
2. If the faculty member determines that it is more likely than not that the student is innocent, the student should be informed of this determination in writing. No report of the incident or of the faculty/student meeting should be filed with the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies.
3. If the faculty member determines that it is more likely than not that a violation has occurred, he/she should send a formal report to the student and copy the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and his/her Program Director. The formal report should include a complete description of the incident, including date of the violation, the nature or type of the violation, and the nature and type of evidence. The formal report should also include appropriate sanctions. The Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will send copies of the faculty member's report to the student's advisor(s). In the event a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is suspected by the Director who also serves as the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the Provost will serve in the Assistant Provost's role as described in the Academic Integrity violation and appeal policy.
4. The faculty member should keep originals of tests and papers that provide evidence of the violation.
5. With issues related to computer offenses or misrepresentation of academic records, the case may be referred to the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies for processing.
6. If a staff member or an administrator discovers violations of the Academic Integrity Policy, he/she should contact the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, who will contact the student.
7. The student may appeal in writing to the graduate program in which the course is offered. A student's intent to appeal a faculty member's response to a violation must be communicated to the Program Director in writing within one week of the receipt of the written notification from the faculty member dealing with the incident. The faculty member filing the initial report of a violation should be recused from the program committee handling the appeal. The program committee should be comprised of faculty members from its own graduate program and include at least three individuals. In the event a program has fewer than three faculty members, directors of other graduate programs will supplement the existing group in order to reach a minimum of at least three committee members hearing a student appeal.
8. The student may appeal the decision of the graduate program in writing to the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, whose decision will be final. In the event the graduate program processing an appeal is also a graduate program that is directed by the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the student may appeal the decision in writing to the Provost.

### **Procedures for Multiple or Egregious Violations of Academic Integrity**

1. If the student has committed two or more violations of academic integrity, or if the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies determines that the violation is egregious, the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will meet with the student who has committed the violation. Unless the violation is egregious, this meeting will take place after the appeals process ends.
2. The Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will consult with the faculty member who first determined that a violation had occurred; with that faculty member's Program Director; and with the Director of the student's program of study, if other than the Director of the program in which the violation occurred. The Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will determine appropriate sanctions.
3. The Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will notify the student in writing of the sanctions determined, and send copies to the student's advisor(s), and to the Director of the student's program of study, if other than the Director of the program in which the violation occurred.
4. The student may appeal the decision of the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies in writing to the Provost, whose decision will be final. In the event the student's initial appeal was heard by the Provost due to the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies being recused from the process, the student may appeal the Provost's decision in writing to the President.

### **Penalties for Violation of the Academic Integrity Policy**

1. In all instances of violations of the Academic Integrity Policy, the faculty member will assign sanctions within the context of the course. If the violation is a second offense, or is determined to be an egregious offense, the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will assign appropriate sanctions that go beyond the course. In the case of an egregious offense, the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies may temporarily suspend the student before and during any appeal process.
2. For a non-egregious first offense, a faculty member may exercise broad discretion when responding to violations of the Academic Integrity Policy. The range of responses may include failure of the course to a grade reduction of the given assignment. The typical consequence for violations will be failure of the assignment. Some examples of serious offenses which might necessitate the penalty of the failure of the course include cheating on an examination, plagiarism of a complete assignment, etc.
3. The policy of the University is to act, whenever possible, in redemptive rather than merely punitive ways. We believe that simply to ignore an offense is to be neither loving nor redemptive. Consequently, if a second report of a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy is received, or if the Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies determines the violation to be egregious, the range of possible responses includes suspension of the student, disciplinary probation, or other appropriate sanctions.

### **Time and Record-Keeping Considerations**

Academic integrity violations should be processed in a timely manner.

1. Faculty should report academic integrity violations within a week of their discovery.
2. Student appeals must be filed within a week of receiving the written report of an academic integrity violation.
3. The recipient of student appeals should acknowledge receipt of the appeal within one week.
4. Timing constraints only apply when school is in session, but processing of violations may continue during breaks.
5. When violations occur at the end of the semester or term, faculty may file a grade of incomplete until the investigation and possible appeals are complete.
6. Academic Integrity Violations will continue to be processed if the student withdraws from the course in which the violation occurred.
7. Academic Integrity Violations may be reported within one semester after the course if first discovered at that time.
8. The final results of all Academic Integrity investigations, including all appeals, should be filed with the registrar's office.
9. A record of academic integrity violations will be maintained by the registrar's office in accordance with the University's Schedule for Records Retention. However, undergraduate records will not count against students who return as graduate students.
10. The Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will notify the faculty member filing the report and the student's advisor(s) of the results of all appeals. In the case of multiple or egregious violations, Assistant Provost/Dean of the School of Graduate Studies will also notify the Director of the student's program of study, if other than the Director of the program in which the violation occurred, of the results of any appeal.
11. On-campus program areas conducting required background checks of students (for example, teacher certification, professional advisor) should submit the students' names and ID numbers to the registrar's office for clearance. The registrar's office will determine that an appropriate need to know exists under FERPA guidelines.
12. If a Director and the registrar's office have established that the Director has an on-going need to know about academic integrity violations, the registrar's office will automatically notify the Director of any violations by students in that program of study after all appeals are resolved.

## **Student Responsibilities for Updating Information**

Students are responsible for letting the university and counseling department know if they have moved. Students are also required to update the university and department if they change their legal name during their attendance. Prior to field placements, background checks are required. Students are responsible for letting the department know if they have had changes to the status reported in the background check.

## **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.

## 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.

## Finding a Counselor

*Note: Messiah University 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  
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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

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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