



# STUDENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026





STUDENT HANDBOOK  
EFFECTIVE FALL TERM 2025

**DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING  
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIVERSITY  
ANNETTE CALDWELL SIMMONS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN  
DEVELOPMENT**

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Welcome to the M.S. in Counseling Program in the Department of Counseling at Southern Methodist University. We intend for your graduate education at SMU to be academically stimulating and professionally rewarding.

The SMU Master of Science in Counseling program offers three Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)-accredited Specialty Areas (i.e., programs of study): Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMH); Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling (MCF); and School Counseling (SC). The Core Curriculum for all three Specialty Areas meet the academic requirements for licensure as Professional Counselors (LPC) and Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDC) in the state of Texas. Preparation for other licensures and certifications can be obtained through students' choice of Specialty Area and elective concentrations (e.g., Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Certified School Counselor, and Registered Play Therapist).

Additionally, counseling students receive both on-site and off-site supervised training with clients (Practicum and Internships I/II) allowing for the application of course content. Direct client interaction enables students to maximize their learning as well as establish professional contacts through post-Practicum, off-site Internships.

This handbook provides a reference for general information, answers to frequently asked questions, and guidelines for academic policies and procedures. The Student Handbook governs academic guidelines applicable to students' degree requirements for the academic year in which they entered the Counseling program. These academic guidelines remain in effect until students graduate. Program policies and procedures are governed by the Student Handbook for the current academic year and are subject to change. Please reference the current Student Handbook located on the Department Website for current policies and procedures.





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## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Counseling offers a Master of Science in Counseling program at SMU with a structured curriculum of course work, practicum, and internship, allowing students to earn a Master of Science in Counseling degree at a full or part-time pace. The Department is accredited and offers three CACREP accredited specialties: Clinical Mental Health Counseling; Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling, and School Counseling. Successful graduates may pursue state licensure to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), or a Certified School Counselor. Based on successful completion of additional elective coursework, graduates may also prepare for licensure or credentialing as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC), or Registered Play Therapist (RPT).

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## FACULTY AND STAFF

Chair, Department of Counseling – *Greta Davis, Ph.D.*, Clinical Associate Professor

Program Director, Faculty Affairs – *Mario De La Garza, Ph.D.*, Clinical Assistant Professor

Program Direct, Student Affairs – *Farnoosh Nouri, Ph.D.*, Clinical Assistant Professor

Director, Center for Family Counseling – *Tara Godhwani, Ph.D.*, Clinical Assistant Professor

Visiting Assistant Director, Center for Family Counseling – *Rakima Parson, Ph.D.*, Visiting Clinical Assistant Professor

Assistant Director (Faculty Support), Center for Family Counseling – *Edita Ruzgyte, Ph.D.* Clinical Professor

Internship Director – *Brandy Schumann, Ph.D.*, Clinical Professor

Clinical Professors – *Misty Solt, Ph.D.*, *Brandy Schumann, Ph.D.*, and *Edita Ruzgyte, Ph.D.*

Clinical Associate Professors – *Greta Davis, Ph.D.*, *LaKaavia Taylor-Holman, Ph.D.*, *Terra Wagner, Ph.D.*, and *Tiffany Bordonada, Ph.D.*

Clinical Assistant Professors – *Mario De La Garza, Ph.D.*, *Farnoosh Nouri, Ph.D.*, *Denise Walker, Ph.D.*, *Cindy Anderton, Ph.D.*, *Tara Godhwani, Ph.D.*, and *Lisa Beijan, Ph.D.*

Visiting Clinical Assistant Professor – *Rakima Parson, Ph.D.*



Senior Program Specialist – Katherine Silva

Administrative Coordinator – Marisol Espinoza

To see a complete listing of full-time faculty licensure, credentialing, professional, and educational information visit <http://www.smu.edu/Simmons/AboutUs/Directory> (scroll down to Counseling Graduate Studies). Counseling Program Faculty offices are located in Expressway Tower, Suite 300 & 313, on the East Dallas Campus:

6116 N. Central Expressway, Suite 300  
Dallas, TX 75206

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#### ADJUNCT FACULTY

SMU's Counseling program utilizes scholars and professionals who offer specialized perspectives on counseling, including educational specialists, therapists, psychologists, social workers, and legal counselors. Additionally, nationally and internationally recognized experts offer classes during each academic year. See <https://www.smu.edu/simmons/Academics/Counseling/OurFacultyStaff> for a current listing of adjunct faculty.

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

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#### THE DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING

##### MISSION STATEMENT AND DEPARTMENTAL PHILOSOPHY

The mission of the Department of Counseling is to equip students with clinical knowledge and skills to serve and advocate for their clients and communities. The department encourages critical thinking by cultivating a learning environment that promotes personal growth and honors the uniqueness of each person within their social and cultural context.

The Counseling degree provides the educational elements necessary for certification, licensure, and counseling practice. Students acquire knowledge in the disciplines underlying counseling – including education, psychology, human development, learning theory, and social change. They develop skills in counseling and assessment and become familiar with legal and clinical considerations confronting practitioners by taking in-person classes. Most courses have experiential components, and repeated practice and role-playing with feedback and strategic modification that are critical to mastery of the skills and are, consequently, an essential part of the program.

The Department of Counseling engages in ongoing and annual assessment to ensure compliance with University accreditation standards and CACREP standards. The Department faculty recommend and implement program modifications to continually improve the program. The program evaluation process

includes assessment of Program Objectives, Student Learning Outcomes with associated Key Performance Indicators, and Professional Dispositions. Annual assessment reports are available on the department website.

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#### PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Program Objectives
PO.1. Prepare and equip graduates with the knowledge base and skill set necessary to pass the National Counselor Examination (NCE).
PO.2. Maintain or increase the number of prospective student applications each year, with the aim of recruiting and enrolling well-qualified applicants.
PO.3. Cultivate a cohesive, programmatic counselor identity among faculty through any of the following: professional organization involvement, professional service, publications, presentations, and/or outreach.

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#### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND RELATED KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Student Learning Outcomes	Related KPI
SLO. 1. Knowledgeably apply professional ethical and legal standards in practice, and exercise ethical and responsible conduct in their profession.	3.A.10. (2.F.1.i.) ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling across service delivery modalities and specialized practice areas
SLO.2. Integrate multicultural competence in counseling practice.	3.B.1. (2.F.2.c.) theories and models of multicultural counseling, social justice, and advocacy
SLO.3. Promote resilience, optimal development, and wellness for their clients across the lifespan.	3.C.7. (2.F.3.i.) models of resilience, optimal development, and wellness in individuals and families across the lifespan
SLO.4. Recognize and skillfully navigate the intersections between mental well-being,	3.D.2. (2.F.4. b.) approaches for conceptualizing the interrelationships among and between work, socioeconomic standing, wellness, disability,

work, relationships, and other life roles and factors.	trauma, relationships, and other life roles and factors
SLO.5. Possess a broad knowledge of counseling theories, and capably apply theory to practice.	3.E.1. (2.F.5.a.) theories and models of counseling, including relevance to clients from diverse cultural backgrounds  3.E.8. (2.F.5.f.) counselor characteristics, behaviors, and strategies that facilitate effective
SLO.6. Achieve competence in clinical skills, including interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization, in a variety of individual and group modalities.	3.F.2. (2.F.6.b.) dynamics associated with group process and development
SLO.7. Demonstrate the ability to use assessments relevant to academic/ educational, career, personal, and social development	3.G.8. (2.F.7.i.) use of assessments relevant to academic/educational, career, personal, and social development
SLO.8. Comprehend research findings and their implications for practice.	3.H.3. (2.F.8.f.) qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods
SLO.9. Achieve and maintain a strong counselor identity through affiliation and engagement with professional organizations and professional service.	3.A.6 Professional counseling organizations, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, current issues

Student Learning Outcomes	Related KPI
<b>School Counseling Specialty Area</b>	
SLO.10. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge in designing and evaluating school counseling programs.	5.H.5. (5.G.3.b.) design and evaluation of school counseling curriculum, lesson plan development, diverse classroom management
<b>Marriage, Couple and Family Counseling Specialty Area</b>	
SLO.11. Possess a broad knowledge of marriage, couple and family counseling theories.	5.F.7. (5.F.1.c.) theories and models of marriage, couple, and family counseling
<b>Clinical Mental Health Counseling Area</b>	
SLO.12. Integrate multicultural competence in clinical mental health	3.B.1. (2.F.2.c.) theories and models of multicultural counseling, social justice, and advocacy

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## PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Professional Dispositions
PD.1. Personal motivation/enthusiasm
PD.2. Ability to communicate (written)
PD.3. Ability to communicate (verbal)
PD.4. Attitude towards peers
PD.5. Concern for others (empathy, compassion, etc.)
PD.6. Overall rating of student
PD.7. Attitude towards instructor/staff
PD.8. Ability to self-regulate

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## TERMS OF GRADUATE STUDENT AND PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

Counseling graduate students will adhere to the guidelines within the Master of Science in Counseling Student Handbook, the SMU Student Code of Conduct (within the SMU Student Handbook), and those outlined in the annual Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development Graduate Programs Bulletin. Failure to comply with these collective policies may result in dismissal from the Counseling program and SMU. Additionally, admitted counseling students will sign an informed consent document outlining the academic, interpersonal, and professional expectations of the Counseling program.

Program policies and procedures are governed by the Student Handbook for the current academic year and are subject to change. Students are required to consult the current Student Handbook for up-to-date information regarding the Counseling program's policies and procedures.

**Prior to initial registration:** As outlined in the SMU Student Code of Conduct, graduate students in the Master of Science in Counseling program, “having voluntarily enrolled as students at Southern Methodist University and assumed a place in the University community” are thereby, “presumed to be knowledgeable of, and to have agreed to abide by, the rules and regulations set forth in this Student Code of Conduct, both on and off campus” (SMU Student Handbook, online at <http://smu.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/>). Additionally, a student’s signed offer of acceptance to the Counseling program asserts an agreement to follow the policies and procedures outlined in the Annette Caldwell Simmons Graduate Programs Bulletin (online at <https://catalog.smu.edu/>.)

**Within the first term:** Counseling students must submit a signed SMU Counseling Program Statement of Informed Consent (provided to all students at the Group Advising session and available in the Counseling office or online by logging onto the Canvas *Program in Counseling* site) confirming that they have read, understood, and will adhere to the policies set forth within the University and the Master of Science in Counseling Student Handbook.

## THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COUNSELING PROGRAM

Students should be aware that the Student Handbook governs academic guidelines applicable to their degree requirements for the academic year in which they entered the Counseling program and remain in effect until their degree conferral. Program policies and procedures are governed by the Student Handbook for the current academic year and are subject to change.

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### PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND OVERVIEW

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#### ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education
- Official undergraduate and graduate transcripts from all institutions of higher education previously attended
- A completed application form and non-refundable application fee (submitted online)
- Three completed and signed recommendation forms (submitted online)
- An essay (two pages, double-spaced) explaining why the applicant wants to study counseling, including career aspirations (submitted online)
- Résumé
- A minimum undergraduate 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale (or equivalent ranking)
  - A GPA lower than 3.0 requires the applicant to submit GRE math and verbal scores. (The cut-off score for admission consideration is designated by the admissions committee and based on the most current scale)
- A Criminal History Background Check through the Counseling program's designated vendor must be completed and paid for by each applicant. Applicants with items of concern indicated on their criminal history background check are required to meet with the Program Director to review their history and may be required to provide additional documentation regarding the disposition of any case. Depending on the concern, applicants may want to seek licensing board review to confirm whether they would be eligible for licensure post-graduation. Additionally, a criminal history item of concern that would prohibit students from enrolling in the applied training curriculum would also preclude their degree completion.
- Students applying to the Counseling program, who pass the initial committee review of all application materials, must attend a group interview and orientation session.
- **English Proficiency Requirements.** If English is not one's native language, the applicant must demonstrate English proficiency through examination. Students must receive acceptable scores on the TOEFL or IELTS.



- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). SMU's Counseling program requires a minimum score of 100 on the internet-based test with the following minimum section scores: Listening (26), Reading (26), Writing (24), and Speaking (24).
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) ([www.ielts.org](http://www.ielts.org)). SMU's Master's in Counseling program requires a minimum overall band score of 7.0 with a minimum of 7.0 in Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking skills. The score report is uploaded as a PDF by the applicant in the admissions application system.

See admission link for related forms and additional admission information:

<https://www.smu.edu/simmons/academics/counseling/ms-counseling/admission-financial-information>

International student admissions information can be accessed at <https://www.smu.edu/international/iss>.

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### **AUTOMATIC PROBATION**

Upon admission to the program, all students begin an automatic probationary period for the equivalent of two terms of full-time enrollment (18 hours) in which they are required to demonstrate appropriate academic, professional, and personal functioning. Should a student fail to make adequate academic progress as evidenced by a course grade of C+ or below or demonstrate documented concerns in academic, professional, or personal functioning during the probationary period, the student's status in the Counseling program will come under Administrative Review. The Administrative Review process includes a review of any documented concerns and is conducted by the Program Director, Student Affairs, and full-time faculty. Possible outcomes of an Administrative Review may include an administrative withdraw from the Counseling program (with an opportunity to reapply after a year) or dismissal (no opportunity to reapply or return to the Counseling program).

The student may appeal the Administrative Review decision in writing to the Department Chair within five (5) business days of the decision notification. If a student fails to contact the Department Chair within five business days with notice to appeal, the administrative review decision is final. The student may appeal the Department Chair's Administrative Review decision in writing to the Dean within five (5) business days of the decision notification. The Dean's decision regarding the Administrative Review decision is the final determination.

Students who have completed more than 18 hours and who are no longer on automatic probation are under continued evaluation. Students are assessed each semester for academic proficiency, essential counselor characteristics/professional dispositions, and clinical knowledge and skills (See Student Competence & Progress).

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### **CONDITIONAL ADMISSION**

Students conditionally admitted to the program are admitted with concern. Conditionally admitted students are required to address deficits identified in the admission process and meet academic, professional, and personal functioning requirements for incoming students. Students who are conditionally admitted to the

program and whose performance within the first two terms or 18 credit hours of coursework results in a competency concern, are subject to Administrative Review. The Conditional Admission Administrative Review process includes a review of conditional admission criteria, growth and development in the areas of documented concern at admission, and any additional documented concerns by the Program Director, Student Affairs, and full-time faculty. Review outcomes may include extension of the initial probationary period, administrative withdrawal from the Counseling program (with an opportunity to reapply after a year), or dismissal (no opportunity to reapply or return to the Counseling program).

The student may appeal the Administrative Review decision in writing to the Department Chair within five (5) business days of the decision notification. If a student fails to contact the Department Chair within five business days with notice to appeal, the administrative review decision is final. The student may appeal the Department Chair's administrative review decision in writing to the Dean within five (5) business days of the decision notification. The Dean's decision regarding the administrative review decision is the final determination.

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## ACADEMIC INSTRUCTION

Course instruction varies by topic but typically includes lecture, discussion, and applied components such as mock counseling, role-playing, self-exploration, assessment administration, and intake interviewing. The nature of the Counseling Program is an applied, skills-based training program; therefore, regular, in class attendance is essential to meet the learning outcomes for each course. All courses integrate online assignments through Canvas in addition to providing access to learning materials (i.e. syllabus posting, announcements, and discussion boards). Faculty members outline textbook requirements, ancillary materials for instruction, grading standards, grading rubrics, and classroom student conduct for each course. Required and elective courses are offered during Fall and Spring semesters in day and evening sections to accommodate student schedules. Summer courses are offered in two five-week terms (Summer I and Summer II) as well as a 10-week term (Summer III). Summer courses include a mix of required and elective courses. In addition to these course formats, courses are offered on weekends during the long semesters and in the summer, and in weeklong (M – F) formats in Jan and May terms. Multiple course formats allow students additional scheduling flexibility.

Courses are held in Annette Caldwell Simmons Hall and Harold Simmons Hall in addition to other campus buildings. Class locations depend on course enrollment and consideration of efficient use of classroom space across campus, departments, and schools.

Students are strongly advised to retrieve and archive their own syllabi. Syllabi are provided electronically and only at the time the student takes the course. Requests for syllabi post-graduation will not be honored.

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## COVID POST PANDEMIC CLARIFICATIONS

**In-person Learning.** All classes are held in person on campus. Remote instruction is not an approved learning modality for in-person learning. The University does not require masks on campus or in classrooms. However, any student, faculty, or staff person can wear a mask.

**COVID Illness.** If you have COVID-like symptoms and test positive, please communicate directly with your instructor to make arrangements to miss class just like you would have prior to the pandemic as needed. Be prepared to provide documentation to your instructor. If appropriate, the instructor can permit the ill student to attend the class remotely via Zoom to “listen in” to the class for academic continuity. However, joining the class remotely DOES NOT count as attendance. It is an effort to facilitate academic continuity. Faculty are not required to record classes; however, they may do so at their own discretion and release recordings to the students who are ill OR the entire class. This is at the faculty member’s discretion, and students should not have the expectation to “listen in” or receive a class recording.

## CORE CURRICULUM

The Master of Science in Counseling degree requires the completion of 63 credit hours. Students must complete all course requirements within six years of the beginning term of their degree program. All students must declare their specialties and concentrations (if applicable) no later than the completion of 15 credit hours and must inform their assigned faculty advisor and the Senior Program Specialist.

Fifteen courses (45 credit hours) comprise the core curriculum for the Master of Science in Counseling. These courses represent a skills foundation in providing counseling, interpreting assessments, understanding legal scope, and considering clinical issues confronting practitioners.

Students may take up to nine credit hours in their first term. All entering students must complete HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Method for Individuals, Couples, and Families during their first term. If they can take two courses their first term, the second course must be HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development.

Students can enroll in an inter-term course following successful completion of their first term. Student enrollments will be evaluated after first-term grades are posted, and students may be required to withdraw from inter-term courses if they have not made satisfactory academic progress.

PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS Required before entry into Practicum	CREDIT HOURS
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)	3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)	3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling	3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities	3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)	3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment	3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)	3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)	3

HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)	3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult	3
HDCN 6340: Assessment	3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)	3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>	
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development	3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent	3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions	3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>45</b>

## SPECIALTY AND CONCENTRATIONS OF STUDY

Students may utilize electives to complete a specialty or concentration within a specialty. A concentration indicates a student focused their elective work on a specific area of interest. A concentration can be highlighted on one's personal portfolio. The Master of Science in Counseling program has three Specialty Areas: Clinical Mental Health Counseling; Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; and School Counseling. The core curriculum for all three specialties prepares students for credentialing as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and as a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) in the state of Texas; students are also eligible for other licenses and certifications.

All students must declare their specialties no later than the completion of 15 credit hours and must inform their assigned faculty advisor and the Senior Program Specialist. Once a student has applied for Practicum, they may no longer change their chosen specialty.

The Clinical Mental Health (CMH) Counseling Specialty includes the core curriculum and offers concentrated or elective study options. Students can select a concentration of study in Addiction Counseling, Child and Adolescent Counseling, LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy, or Art and Science of Trauma Counseling. Students choosing the elective option can take a combination of courses from the above concentrations or the other specialties (e.g., Marriage, Couple, and Family).

The Marriage, Couple, and Family (MCF) Counseling Specialty includes the core curriculum and three additional MCF courses. Students who choose this specialty will be qualified to work with individuals, couples, and families using a systemic orientation. This program of study can lead to licensure as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in the state of Texas in addition to the LPC license.

The School Counseling (SC) Specialty includes the core curriculum, two required school counseling courses, and one elective. The SC program of study prepares students to pursue elementary or secondary School Counselor certification.

Students may complete coursework for more than one specialty. However, the declared specialty dictates internship requirements. For example, students who choose the Marriage, Couple, and Family (MCF) specialty must have an internship consistent in role and function with MCF. Additionally, students who choose the School Counseling specialty must complete an internship in an appropriate school and role.

Elective courses are offered based on instructor availability.

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### **SCHOOL COUNSELING SPECIALTY DECLARATION**

Effective Spring 2024, the teaching requirement for School Counselor Certification admission will no longer apply due to legislative change in 2023. Students can declare the School Counseling Specialty two times a year on August 15 and January 15 by sending an email to the Senior Program Specialist and School Counseling Specialty Coordinator with the subject line: School Counseling Specialty Declaration. Specific actions must be taken by the department to establish students as school counselor candidates in the Texas Education Agency's Educator Certification Online System; therefore, declarations of Specialty or Specialty change are limited to these two times per year.

Students who are teaching in private schools are advised their current private school might only be considered as an approved internship site for the School Counseling Specialty if the school has a comprehensive developmental school counseling program in place. Additionally, the school must have an eligible field site supervisor on campus defined as a person with a master's degree and who holds certification as a Certified School Counselor in Texas with three years school counseling experience.

It is also strongly advised to begin in internship the fall term. Starting in the fall maximizes your learning experience, aligns with program pacing, and helps ensure continuity with your site and supervision. Whenever possible, students should avoid beginning their internship in the summer term.



<b>Specialty</b>	<b>Available Coursework</b>	<b>Supported Credential</b>
<b><i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Open Elective</i></b>	3 electives of student's choice	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
<b><i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Addiction Counseling</i></b>	HDCN 6353 Treatment of Addiction: Counseling Methods and Psychopharmacology 2 electives of student's choice	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC)
<b><i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Child and Adolescent Counseling</i></b>	HDCN 6343 Child Counseling: Play Therapy HDCN 6323 Pre-Adol/Adolescent Counseling: Play Therapy HDCN 6325 Therapeutic Parenting: Family Play and Child/Adolescent Parent Relationship Therapy  (HDCN 6343 is recommended before HDCN 6325)	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) Registered Play Therapist (RPT)  Courses may provide education credit toward RPT certification
<b><i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Art and Science of Trauma Counseling</i></b>	HDCN 6344 The Art of Trauma Treatment: Expressive, Somatic & Experiential Methods HDCN 6338 The Science of Interpersonal Neurobiology & Trauma Counseling 1 elective of the student's choice	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
<b><i>Clinical Mental Health Counseling: LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy</i></b>	HDCN 6355 Affirmative Therapy with LGBTQ+ Individuals: Advocacy Across the Lifespan HDCN 6356 Affirmative Therapy with Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Clients HDCN 6317 Affirmative Theories and Practices in Couple and Family Counseling	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
<b><i>Marriage, Couple, &amp; Family Counseling</i></b>	HDCN 6311 Couples Therapy: Theories and Treatment HDCN 6314 Sexual Counseling/Therapy HDCN 6317 Affirmative Theories and Practices in Couple and Family Counseling	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)
<b><i>School Counseling</i></b>	HDCN 6308/6309 Counseling in the Elementary/Secondary School (select one) HDCN 6342 Cognitive, Career, and Educational Assessment 1 elective of the student's choice	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) School Counselor Certification (Texas)

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## **COURSES OF INDEPENDENT STUDY**

When faculty availability and research projects permit, students may submit to the Program Director, Faculty Affairs a formal request to complete up to two non-core courses (six credit hours) as independent study. Only submissions outlining a specific study plan, formal assessments, and guided research/instruction with a designated/agreed instructor will be considered. Students must submit their written request to the Program Director, Faculty Affairs with the signature of their supervising instructor at least one full term in advance of the requested start date. Independent study opportunities are not guaranteed and are offered only if there are faculty who volunteer to participate.

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## **TRANSFER HOURS**

Accepted students may transfer up to six credit hours of graduate coursework from a CACREP accredited program or from course content that is determined to be equivalent with formal approval. Only courses with grades of A or B may be transferred, and all are subject to the approval of the academic department. No clinical classes will be considered for transfer. For consideration, students will supply a written request and official syllabus/syllabi to the Counseling office for course content review and comparison. If approved, the Program Director, Student Affairs will recommend to the Dean of the Simmons School of Education and Human Development for final approval. If transfer hours are denied, the Counseling office will notify students. Students cannot submit hours earned toward a previously completed degree for transfer consideration.

Note: Course hours completed at other universities and approved for credit toward the SMU Master of Science in Counseling degree may or may not fulfill various licensure requirements (by state). The student is responsible for confirming course applicability toward a specific license.

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## **NON-DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS**

Non-degree seeking students can apply to take elective specialty courses and core courses with the exception of clinical courses (i.e., Individual Methods/Basic Counseling Skills, Group Counseling, Advanced Clinical Methods/Pre-Practicum, Practicum, and Internship I & II). Students who wish to complete clinical courses must formally apply to the Counseling Program.

Non-degree seeking students who hold a master's degree in counseling or a related mental health degree must provide transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, have a minimum of 3.0 GPA in their graduate coursework, complete the application for enrollment, sign an informed consent and confidentiality agreement, and pay an application fee.

Non-degree seeking students who have completed bachelor's degrees and are currently enrolled in a graduate counseling program or related mental health field at another college or university may also be permitted to apply. However, in addition to the aforementioned requirements, they must include a letter from their academic department on official letterhead stating they are in good academic and professional standing within the program and are authorized to take the course(s).

Non-degree seeking students must apply online and submit all required documents three weeks before

registration for each term. Non-degree seeking students must also provide proof of liability insurance coverage, complete a background check, and complete the Protection of Minors training prior to enrollment.

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#### **SMU COUNSELING PROGRAM GRADUATES RETURNING AS NON-DEGREE SEEKING STUDENTS**

Returning SMU Counseling Program graduates may take coursework toward the completion of certification or state licensure requirements. This allows SMU Counseling Program graduates to complete coursework toward an additional license or certification. Returning graduates are responsible for investigating any time limitations on course completion for the license or certification of interest. Students with non-degree seeking status do not qualify for federal financial aid.

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#### **NON-CLINICAL DEGREE NOT AVAILABLE**

There is not an option for a non-clinical degree in our M.S. in Counseling program. Faculty acknowledges that, in rare instances, some students may not successfully complete program requirements despite intensive remediation, mentoring, and additional time and support. These circumstances may result from academic struggles, personal life situations, absence of a career fit, clinical difficulties, or other factors. In such cases, faculty hopes the coursework and experience, like all education, provides valuable learning and insight for future goals. Students may also consider applying to and transferring a portion of completed credits to the SMU Master of Liberal Studies degree with the Department of Human Centered Interdisciplinary Studies (HCIS) in keeping with their policies and procedures.

## UNIFIED CURRICULUM, LICENSURE, AND CACREP-ACCREDITED SPECIALTY AREAS

### CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SPECIALTY: ELECTIVE OPTION

#### (63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialty: Elective Option is comprised of the standard core curriculum and clinical training sequence for the M.S. in Counseling degree, which is taken by all students. Beyond the standard curriculum, students are permitted any combination of three elective courses. This program of study prepares students to seek licensure as Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) in the State of Texas. Students who wish to pursue additional professional licensures or credentials are encouraged to explore some of the Program's other specialty areas: Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; School Counseling; or the Clinical Mental Health Specialty with elective concentrations in Child and Adolescent Counseling, Addiction Counseling, LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy, or Art and Science of Trauma Counseling.

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> Required before entry into Practicum	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)	3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)	3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling	3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities	3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)	3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment	3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)	3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)	3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)	3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult	3
HDCN 6340: Assessment	3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)	3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II	
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development	3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent	3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions	3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>OPEN ELECTIVES (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b> May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II	
Open elective (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)	3
Open elective (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)	3
Open elective (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)	3

**CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I & INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)**

***Students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.*** In addition, students must pass the MOCCE Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.

HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>



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CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING SPECIALTY: ADDICTION COUNSELING ELECTIVE  
CONCENTRATION

**(63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)**

The Addiction Counseling Elective Concentration fulfills the academic requirements for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) as well as the Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) credential and prepares counselors to work with populations affected by substance abuse. This specialty is for students whose interests and careers go beyond the scope of the Psychology of Addictions course, which is required for all students.

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> Required before entry into Practicum		<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)		3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)		3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling		3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities		3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)		3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment		3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)		3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)		3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)		3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult		3
HDCN 6340: Assessment		3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)		3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>		<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II		
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development		3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent		3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions		3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>45</b>
<b>REQUIRED COURSEWORK FOR ADDICTION ELECTIVE CONCENTRATION (2 COURSES = 6 CREDITS)</b> May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II*		
HDCN 6353: Treatment of Addiction: Counseling Methods and Psychopharmacology		3
<b>ADDITIONAL ELECTIVE (1 COURSE = 3 CREDIT HOURS)</b>		
<b>Open elective</b> (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)		3
<b>Open elective</b> (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)		3
<b>CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I &amp; INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>		

**Students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.** In addition, students must pass the MOCCE Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.

HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>

### LCDC LICENSURE PROCESS:

It is strongly advised that students visit/contact <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/business/licensing-credentialing-regulation/professional-licensing-certification-compliance/licensed-chemical-dependency-counselor-program/lcdc-new-license-registration> for specific licensure guidelines. In general, according to the current LCDC guidelines, a student interested in becoming LCDC first needs to apply as an LCDC-intern (this can occur while in a master's program). After the LCDC-intern status is granted, a state licensure examination must be passed. After passing the exam, the 4,000 clinical hours can be waived upon the completion of a masters degree in counseling (i.e., submission of the final transcript). If a student would like to become fully licensed as an LCDC while in program, the 4,000 clinical hours will need to be completed in a Certified Training Institute (CTI). For more information, please contact Addictions Specialization Coordinator, Dr. Misty Solt at [msolt@smu.edu](mailto:msolt@smu.edu).

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTY: CHILD & ADOLESCENT COUNSELING ELECTIVE  
CONCENTRATION

**(63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)**

The Child and Adolescent Counseling Elective Concentration prepares students who intend to focus their work on children and adolescents through modalities such as play and activity therapy. This program of study prepares all students to seek licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Texas. The Child and Adolescent electives may be applied toward the academic requirements for the Registered Play Therapist (RPT) credential.

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> Required before entry into Practicum		<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)		3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)		3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling		3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities		3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)		3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment		3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)		3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)		3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)		3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult		3
HDCN 6340: Assessment		3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)		3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>		<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II		
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development		3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent		3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions		3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>45</b>
<b>COURSEWORK FOR CHILD &amp; ADOLESCENT COUNSELING ELECTIVE CONCENTRATION</b> (9 Credit Hours- 3 of the courses listed below) May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II		
HDCN 6323: Pre-Adolescent/Adolescent Counseling: Play Therapy		3
HDCN 6325: Therapeutic Parenting: Family Play and Child/Adolescent Parent Relationship Therapy		3
HDCN 6343: Child Counseling: Play Therapy		3
*These courses have been pre-approved by the Association for Play Therapy as meeting, in part, the educational requirement for the RPT certification. Students should be aware that HDCN 6343 is required to be eligible to conduct play therapy or working with young children (age 8 yrs. or younger) in Practicum.		

**CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I & INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)**

***Students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.*** In addition, students must pass the MOCCE Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.

HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>

## CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTY: LGBTQ+ AFFIRMATIVE THERAPY ELECTIVE CONCENTRATION

### (63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)

The LGBTQ+ Affirmative Therapy Elective Concentration trains student wishing to work with the LGBTQ+ population. This program of study prepares all students to seek licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Texas.

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> <b>Required before entry into Practicum</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)	3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)	3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling	3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities	3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)	3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment	3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)	3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)	3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)	3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult	3
HDCN 6340: Assessment	3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)	3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b>	
<b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>	
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development	3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent	3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions	3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>COURSEWORK FOR LGBTQ+ AFFIRMATIVE THERAPY ELECTIVE CONCENTRATION</b> <b>(3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>	
<b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>	
HDCN 6317: Affirmative Theories and Practices in Couple and Family Counseling	3
HDCN 6355: Affirmative Therapy with LGBTQ+ Individuals: Advocacy Across the Lifespan	3
HDCN 6356: Affirmative Therapy with Transgender and GN-C Clients	3
<b>CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I &amp; INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>	
<b>Students must complete a <u>minimum</u> of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.</b> In addition, students must pass the MOCe Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.	
HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALTY: ART & SCIENCE OF TRAUMA COUNSELING CONCENTRATION

**(63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)**

The Art & Science of Trauma Counseling Concentration trains students to use expressive, somatic, and other experiential methods in counseling with an understanding of the interpersonal neurobiology in trauma treatment. This program of study prepares all students to seek licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in the State of Texas.

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> <b>Required before entry into Practicum</b>		<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)		3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)		3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling		3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities		3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)		3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment		3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)		3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)		3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)		3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult		3
HDCN 6340: Assessment		3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)		3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>		<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>		
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development		3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent		3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions		3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>45</b>
<b>ART &amp; SCIENCE of TRAUMA COUNSELING ELECTIVE CONCENTRATION COURSEWORK</b> <b>(3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>		
HDCN 6344: The Art of Trauma Treatment: Expressive, Somatic & Experiential Methods		3
HDCN 6338: The Science of Interpersonal Neurobiology & Trauma Counseling		3
<b>OPEN ELECTIVE (1 COURSE = 3 CREDIT HOURS)</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>		
Open elective (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)		3
<b>CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I &amp; INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>		

**Students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.** In addition, students must pass the MOCCE Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.

HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>

## MARRIAGE, COUPLE, & FAMILY COUNSELING SPECIALTY

### (63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)

The Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling Specialty fulfills the academic requirements for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT) in the state of Texas. Counselors who choose this Specialty are qualified to work with individuals, couples, and families from a systemic orientation.

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> <b>Required before entry into Practicum</b>	<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)	3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)	3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling	3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities	3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)	3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment	3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)	3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)	3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)	3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult	3
HDCN 6340: Assessment	3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)	3
<b>MINIMUM CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED BEFORE ENTRY INTO CLINICAL SEQUENCE</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>	
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development	3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent	3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions	3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>REQUIRED SPECIALTY COURSEWORK AND FOR LMFT LICENSURE (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b> <b>Choose 3 of the following in addition to the HDCN 6316 Family Therapy I course required for all students</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>	
HDCN 6311: Couples Therapy: Theories and Treatment	3
HDCN 6314: Sexual Counseling/Therapy	3
HDCN 6317: Affirmative Theories and Practices in Couple and Family Counseling	3
<b>CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I &amp; INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>	
<b>Students must complete a <u>minimum</u> of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.</b> In addition, students must pass the MOCCE Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.	
HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>



## SCHOOL COUNSELING SPECIALTY

### (63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)

The School Counseling Specialty prepares students to pursue certification as elementary or secondary school counselors. The School Counseling Specialty also fulfills the academic requirements for licensure as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC).

<b>PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS</b> <b>Required before entry into Practicum</b>		<b>CREDIT HOURS</b>
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (take within first or second semester in the program)		3
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (must take in first semester of enrollment)		3
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling		3
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities		3
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families (pre-requisites: Basic, Theories, Family Therapy I, Group, & Ethics 1)		3
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment		3
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation (pre-requisite for 6319 Ethics II)		3
HDCN 6319: Ethics II and Mental Health (take as close to Practicum as possible)		3
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development: Individual and Family (take in first or second semester of enrollment, if only taking one class per semester)		3
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult		3
HDCN 6340: Assessment		3
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics (pre-requisite for 6340 Assessment; it is recommended to take 6349 in first year of enrollment)		3
<b>REQUIRED SCHOOL COUNSELING SPECIALTY COURSEWORK (2 COURSES = 6 CREDIT HOURS)</b> <b>May NOT be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>		
HDCN 6308/6309: Counseling in the Elementary/Secondary School (select one)		3
HDCN 6342: Cognitive, Career, and Educational Assessment		3
<b>TOTAL CORE CREDIT HOURS</b>		<b>45</b>
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE REQUIREMENTS:</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>		
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development		3
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent		3
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions		3
<b>Note that School Counseling Specialty students MUST complete the specialty courses listed above and the pre-clinical core, with a minimum of 42 credit hours completed prior to beginning the clinical sequence.</b>		
<i>After completing HDCN 6308/09, candidates for School Counselor certification will schedule a practice exam with the designated faculty advisor for school counseling and score a minimum of 85% to be approved to register for the TEXes certification exam. There is no fee for the practice exam. Allow two hours for completion.</i>		
<b>OPEN ELECTIVE (1 COURSE = 3 CREDIT HOURS)</b> <b>May be taken concurrently with Practicum, Internship I, or Internship II</b>		
Open elective (may take concurrently with Clinical Sequence to satisfy enrollment requirements)		3

## CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I & INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)

**School Counseling Specialty students must complete a minimum of 42 credit hours of the required core and specialty classes listed above before starting the Clinical Sequence.** In addition, students must pass the MOCe Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.

HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum	3
HDCN 6398: Internship I	3
HDCN 6399: Internship II	3
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>	<b>63</b>

The university must recommend the student at TWO points.

1. To register for the TExES exam after students have scored 85% or higher on the school counselor certification practice test

AND

2. For FINAL approval for SC certification, when students have finished all requirements (conferral, passing TExES exam, internship requirements, online payment to TEA/SBOE, etc.). TExES exam results are NOT sent to the SMU Program in Counseling. Students must notify the faculty contact when final recommendation for counselor certification is needed.

School counseling students will be given three chances to score an 85% or higher on the certification practice test. If a student does not obtain the required score in three attempts, the student must retake a school counseling course and provide documentation of completion or provide evidence of completion of a certification exam study course that has been approved by the student's advisor before being allowed to take the practice exam again.

If a student fails to score 85% or higher on the certification practice test on two more attempts, the student will not be recommended to take the TExES school counseling certification examination.

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## DEGREE PLANNING AND COURSE SEQUENCE

In order to build essential concepts for counseling, students must complete certain courses in a specific order and other courses in a recommended sequence.

### Required first semester courses:

\*HDCN 6302 Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families  
HDCN 6320 Life Span Human Development

### Courses strongly recommended to be taken within the first three semesters

HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories: Individual and Systemic Perspectives (can be taken in first semester)  
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I: Intergenerational Theories and Treatment  
HDCN 6318: Ethics I and Professional Orientation  
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics  
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling

\*If a student is completing one course per term, HDCN 6320 Basic Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, and Families is required for the student's first term followed by HDCN 6320 Life Span Human Development the following term.

Some courses have prerequisite courses, and certain classes are designated to be taken before or with Practicum and Internships I/II. Students are urged to consult their advisor **early and often** to formulate a planned sequence of study. A full list of classes to pair with Practicum and Internships I/II can be found in this handbook.

### Recommended to be paired with HDCN 6305 Advanced Clinical Methods and as close to practicum as possible:

HDCN 6319: Ethics and Mental Health II

### **Combining Additional Coursework with Practicum & Internship (Also see Examples below this table)\***

Students should plan ahead regarding the possible need to take additional credit hours concurrent with Practicum and/or Internship. Students who rely on financial aid (which requires a minimum of 6 credit hours/semester) or who need to maintain full-time enrollment (minimum of 9 credit hours/semester) should plan to take electives and/or additional core requirement courses (listed above) concurrent with the Clinical Sequence. Depending on the course load a student intends to take during the Clinical Sequence, students must complete between 36 (minimum) to 54 hours prior to entry into Practicum. Courses taken concurrently with the Clinical Sequence may include electives and/or the following three required courses: Child Psychopathology, Lifestyle & Career, and Psychology of Addictions. **All students must complete the 36 credit-hour pre-clinical required coursework prior to entry into the Clinical Sequence.**

**\*\*Students should also be aware of certain electives that may qualify them to work with populations of interest during Practicum (e.g., child/play/activity) and take those electives *prior to entry* into Practicum. See “Pre-Practicum Elective Considerations” below.**

Students must complete a minimum of 300 clinical hours in practicum/internship. Details regarding clinical hour requirements are available in the Counseling Program Student Handbook and the Clinical Experience Handbook.

### **\*EXAMPLES: COMBINING ACADEMIC COURSES WITH THE CLINICAL SEQUENCE**

All students must complete a **minimum of 36 credit hours (required pre-clinical core coursework)** prior to beginning the clinical sequence. Some students should plan on completing **more** than the 36 core credit hours prior to the clinical sequence, as shown in the examples below:

**Example 1:** Students **may** begin the clinical sequence with the minimum of **36 credit hours ONLY** if they plan to be enrolled **full-time** during the clinical sequence (9 credit hours per semester):

- ▶ Practicum + two more courses
- ▶ Internship I + two more courses
- ▶ Internship II + two more courses

**Example 2:** Students should complete **45 credit hours** prior to beginning the clinical sequence if they plan to be enrolled part-time (6 credit hours per semester) during the clinical sequence:

- ▶ Practicum + one additional course
- ▶ Internship I + one additional course
- ▶ Internship II + one additional course

**Example 3:** Students who **only** enroll in their clinical sequence courses (3 credit hours per semester) should complete **54 credit hours** (all core and electives) prior to the beginning of the clinical sequence:

- ▶ Practicum only
- ▶ Internship I only
- ▶ Internship II only

**Note that Students enrolling in only 3 credit hours per semester will not qualify for financial aid.**

\* Note that students are not guaranteed enrollment in the specific courses needed during the clinical sequence. Students can increase their chances of optimal enrollment with advanced planning, early registration, and maximum flexibility to take courses when they are offered.

Students may pair a course with Practicum and/or Internship classes yet still be required to complete that course's content in full before working with certain populations of clients. For example, before a student is permitted to work with children in supervised training, the student must take a minimum of one child-focused counseling class such as HDCN 6343 Child Counseling: Play Therapy for dealing with children 2-8 years of age or HDCN 6323 Pre-Adolescent/Adolescent Counseling: Play Therapy for clients older than 8 years. The same is true before working with individuals with addictions, parenting groups, or working with families. Additional details follow:

**\*\*PRE-PRACTICUM ELECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS:**

**Please Note:** Courses designated as “required” must be completed in full before students will be permitted to work with the corresponding populations during practicum. If course is taken concurrently with Practicum, the course professor must grant approval prior to servicing the designated population. Courses designated as “recommended” are suggested *in addition to* the stated required course.

<b>POPULATION</b>	<b>COURSES</b>
<b>Children ages 2 – 8</b> (indiv. play)	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6343 – Child Counseling: Play Therapy
<b>Children ages 8 – 9</b> (indiv. play)	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6343 – Child Counseling: Play Therapy <b>or</b> HDCN 6323 - Adolescent Counseling
<b>Pre-Adolescents ages 10 – 12</b> (indiv.)	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6323 - Adolescent Counseling
<b>Adolescents ages 13 – 17</b> (indiv./group)	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6323 - Adolescent Counseling
<b>Couples</b>	<b>Recommended:</b> HDCN 6311 - Couples Counseling
<b>Families with Children ages 2 - 8</b>	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6325 - Therapeutic Parenting: Family Play and Child/Adolescent Parent Relationship Therapy <b>or</b> HDCN 6343 – Child Counseling: Play Therapy
<b>Families with Children ages 8 - 18</b>	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6325 - Therapeutic Parenting: Family Play and Child/Adolescent Parent Relationship Therapy <b>or</b> HDCN 6323 - Adolescent Counseling
<b>Group Parent Training and CPRT</b>	<b>Required:</b> HDCN 6325 - Therapeutic Parenting: Family Play and Child/Adolescent Parent Relationship Therapy
<b>One-to-One Parent Training</b>	<b>Recommended:</b> HDCN 6325 - Therapeutic Parenting: Family Play and Child/Adolescent Parent Relationship Therapy

Students can complete the program in three calendar years (this includes summer offerings). However, depending on student availability to take courses and course offerings per term, students may not complete the 63-hour curriculum in the minimum suggested three calendar-year period. Students who wish to complete the degree in three years are encouraged to maximize course enrollment during the first two years, prior to the Clinical Sequence. Students are responsible for the accuracy of their degree plan and should monitor their progress based on course availability and program requirements in cooperation with their assigned faculty advisor.

Finally, students must coordinate and monitor their course sequence/plan with their faculty advisor if interested in adding concentrations within or in addition to their 63-hour degree program.

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**ADVISING**

Faculty advisors provide guidance to SMU Counseling graduate students throughout their academic program. All students must take responsibility to contact their advisor for advising appointments. Students are encouraged to utilize their advisor as a resource for academic assistance and self-monitoring. Faculty advisors may help students address problems or concerns regarding their progress in the program, negotiate a student conflict, or any other program-related issue.

Additionally, all Counseling students are required to attend a Group Advising session. Group Advising is scheduled the week prior to the first week of each admitting term. If for any reason a student cannot attend

the designated session, they must schedule a meeting with the Senior Program Specialist to make up the session within the first month of the term. Students who do not attend the required group advising *and* do not schedule a meeting to make it up within the first month of the semester, will have a hold placed on their account, restricting them from enrolling in future classes and/or continuing coursework without Program Director, Student Affairs approval.

#### SMU Counseling Advisor Etiquette:

Expectations: Please address your advisor by title (“Dr.”) and last name. Faculty advisors are a supportive resource and schedule consultant for students but not term-by-term “schedulers.” It is the student’s responsibility to create a schedule of classes that works for them personally each term. It is recommended (and in some instances, required) for students to meet with their advisor to review their course progress and program performance.

Making Appointments: Advising appointments get booked quickly and are usually scheduled two to three weeks in advance. Students should not email their advisor the week before registration and expect an immediate appointment. When scheduling, students should include the following in their email to their advisor: goals for the advising appointment, current specialty declaration, preferred contact method, and multiple available times to meet.

If an advisor does not respond to an email within 48 hours, students may send a friendly “follow-up” reminder email. Professors are busy; they do not intentionally disregard emails, but they can inadvertently overlook one.

Please be mindful that most faculty are employed on a 10-month contract and are off duty in the summer. They are not expected to attend to advising or other administrative tasks over the summer. Students should make every effort to take care of advising questions during the regular academic year.

What to Bring to an Advising Meeting: Student handbook and a “rough draft” of the student’s planned schedule.

Evaluating Advising Experience: Students anonymously evaluate their advising experience each time they complete the Pre-Registration Survey, which is distributed two times per academic year. Students may also evaluate their experience and provide feedback at any time during their program of study by contacting the Program Director, Student Affairs.

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#### ADVISOR ASSIGNMENT AND PROGRAM PROGRESS ASSESSMENT

Admitted students are assigned a faculty advisor. Students initiate contact with their advisor for registration information and help with organizing course selections. Prior to completion of their first five courses (15 credit hours), students should meet with their faculty advisor to discuss progress and declare a curriculum specialty, if not declared at Group Advising. Upon completing eleven to fifteen courses (33-45 credit hours), students are **required** to meet with their advisor and complete the Practicum and Conferral Eligibility Verification Form to be eligible to begin the Pre-Practicum process and apply to Practicum. Students will once again meet with their advisor to verify their conferral eligibility.

Although each meeting with the advisor provides an opportunity to assess individual progress and provide feedback, formal evaluation, assessment and documentation occurs prior to Practicum and prior to conferral. It is during these meetings that faculty advisors discuss the student's individual assessment of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions; degree progress; and eligibility for Practicum or Conferral.

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#### CHANGING ADVISOR

Students are encouraged to remain with their assigned faculty advisor throughout their program. Under rare circumstances, a student may want or need to change advisors. This request should be made in person to the Program Director, Student Affairs and may or may not be permitted depending on the situation.

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#### COUNSELING EXPERIENCE

Counseling students participate in role-playing and various other mock-counseling exercises as part of the embedded curriculum within multiple courses. As part of the Life Span Development course, students are, at minimum, required to engage in a developmental counseling experience simulation. Each Life Span student completes a Personal Growth Plan to be used as a basis for session discussions and personal and/or professional progress during the term and should not deviate from this plan. In this experience, students come to understand the experience of being a client through participation in five to seven sessions or by seeking services from a mental health provider off campus. Additionally, students take part in self-evaluative processes designed to encourage discovery and growth.

To maintain a safe and supportive learning environment, student discussions regarding sensitive course material must occur only in class or privately with other current class members. Respect and integrity for all individuals frame course endeavors, particularly regarding issues of a delicate and/or controversial nature. All Counseling students will demonstrate behavior consistent with the ethical standards forwarded by the listed bodies. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the Counseling program.

- ACA: online at <https://www.counseling.org/resources/ethics>
- AAMFT: online at [https://www.aamft.org/Legal\\_Ethics/Code\\_of\\_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8e8c9bd6-0b71-4cd1-a5ab-013b5f855b01](https://www.aamft.org/Legal_Ethics/Code_of_Ethics.aspx?WebsiteKey=8e8c9bd6-0b71-4cd1-a5ab-013b5f855b01)
- TCA: online at <https://txca.org/resources/ethics> (follows the Ethical Code forwarded by the ACA)
- Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors: <https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html>
- Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage & Family Therapists: <https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-marriage-and-family-therapists/index.html>



- Texas State Board for Educator Certification: <http://tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=2147501244>

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## PRE-PRACTICUM PROCESS

*This information will be initially discussed in Group Advising and further questions about the process can be addressed with your faculty advisor as needed.*

The Pre-Practicum application process begins by submitting the completed and signed Practicum and Conferral Eligibility and Verification form to the Senior Program Specialist by the deadline stated in the email sent to eligible students.

The total practicum class size is capped each semester to ensure students are able to meet their direct and indirect hour requirement. The Pre-Practicum application process is to be used by all students who wish to be considered for enrollment in Practicum the following term. Students are required to pay strict attention to the process and assigned deadlines. Each step requires successful completion by the term's assigned deadlines for an opportunity to enroll in Practicum the following term.

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## PROCEDURE DEFINITIONS

**Pre-Practicum:** the semester directly before Practicum enrollment.

**Pre-Practicum Process:** the application process to be used by all students who wish to be considered for enrollment in Practicum the next semester. Students are required to pay strict attention to this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and the included deadlines. **To be enrolled in Practicum, you must complete each step in the Pre-Practicum Process by the identified deadlines.** After successful completion of the Pre-Practicum process, students are required to complete the steps outlined in the Practicum Preparation section of this document. If you fail to meet any deadline specified in this SOP, you will be ineligible to move forward in the Pre-Practicum Process and ineligible to be enrolled in Practicum the following semester.

**Clinical Sequence:** the terms ranging from the beginning of Practicum to the completion of Internship.

**MoCCe (“Master of Core Competencies exam”):** a timed 140 minute, 80-question multiple choice exam, which reflects the NCE's ratio of questions and time provided. The exam is based on the program's core curriculum of Life Span Development, Counseling Theory, Counseling Diverse Communities, Psychopathology, Research Design and Statistics, Assessment, Ethics and Mental Health, and Counseling Methods: Group.

The MoCCe measures a student's level of didactic readiness for practica. The MoCCe does not demonstrate clinical readiness for practica. Therefore, the Advanced Clinical Methods for Individuals, Couples, & Families course, Clinical Progress Assessment in the Advanced Clinical Methods course, and MoCCe must be passed to enter Practicum. The MoCCe is completed using Respondus Lockdown Browser, Qualtrics, and Canvas and will be proctored in person. The MoCCe may be administered on main campus or in the



clinic depending on spacing options. Students who do not take the MoCCe during their confirmed testing session will not be permitted to enter Practicum the following semester. The Clinic Director, Internship Director, and student will receive the student's MoCCe score upon completion.

Should all other Pre-Practicum requirements be met by the assigned deadlines, students who perform highest on the MoCCe will achieve the right to enroll in practicum, if they receive a passing score of **55% or higher**. The number of openings varies by semester and will be confirmed in the mandatory Pre-Practicum meeting. Students may study for the MoCCe by reviewing the learning objectives from each syllabus of the core classes, reviewing textbooks and materials from those core classes, and reviewing study guides for the NCE.

**PPM:** SMU Center for Family Counseling Policy and Procedure Manual.

**PPe (Policy and Procedure Exam):** a multiple-choice exam based on the SMU Center for Family Counseling Policy and Procedure Manual, available to students in the Pre-Practicum Canvas shell.

**Disclaimer:** Speed and accuracy in the Pre-Practicum process are key elements to earning one of the openings available for Practicum. No reminders about deadlines for the Pre-Practicum process should be expected. If a deadline is missed, application for enrollment in Practicum for the semester will be denied.

All students must pass the Advanced Clinical Methods course and meet the standards for clinical competency. Clinical competency is documented by a passing score on the Clinical Progress Assessment. All students will have ongoing evaluations by faculty and staff to determine readiness for Practicum based on clinical skills and professional disposition.

The number of available Practicum slots is determined each semester and specified in the mandatory Pre-Practicum Meeting. High scores on the MoCCe may be a determining factor in securing limited spots for enrollment. Students who achieve the highest scores, received a passing score of at least 55%, and who have completed the above steps appropriately, will be registered in the Practicum course. Registered students must complete remaining requirements, meet all deadlines, and display no dispositional concerns to successfully start Practicum.

Should additional practicum positions become available, students, who pass the MoCCe, but fall outside of the top scores, may be admitted. Students who pass the MoCCe, but fall outside of the top scores, will be eligible to begin the Pre-Practicum Process the following semester. They will have priority standing above new applicants who are eligible to begin the process for the following semester. Students will not need to retake the MoCCe and will work with the Clinic Director to ensure all Pre-Practicum process requirements are met.

Students who do not pass the MoCCe must restart the Pre-Practicum Process and complete all requirement by the identified deadlines for the following semester, with no priority standing above new applicants. Students may take the MoCCe exam three times. If it is not passed the third time, the student will be placed on a Student Support Plan.

**A general outline of the pre-practicum process is presented here for informational purposes only. Term specific processes may include changes to the procedure and will be provided to qualified students at the point of pre-practicum application.**

#### WEEK 1

- The Senior Program Specialist will email all eligible students a SAVE THE DATE email, notifying them of the date and time of the mandatory Pre-Practicum Meeting, held virtually. Students must attend this meeting if they wish to be considered for enrollment in Practicum the following semester.

#### WEEK 2

- The Clinic Director or their designee will email all eligible students the Pre-Practicum SOP and the Pre-Practicum Informed Consent.

#### WEEK 3

- Attend the mandatory Pre-Practicum Meeting. The meeting will be held virtually via Zoom.
- All students who wish to be considered for enrollment in Practicum the following semester will be required to contact the Assistant Clinic Director via email to return a signed and initialed copy of the Practicum Readiness Agreement in the respective email. Attending the mandatory meeting AND submitting a signed and initialed copy of the Practicum Readiness Agreement to the Assistant Clinic Director serves as the application for the Pre-Practicum process.

#### WEEK 4

- The Assistant Clinic Director will add all Pre-Practicum applicants to the Pre-Practicum Canvas course to provide them access to materials to complete the remaining Pre-Practicum requirements. All Pre-Practicum applicants shall use the invitation to be included in the Pre-Practicum Canvas course as their notification that they are included in the Pre-Practicum application process.

*Items to be completed Weeks 4-6:*

- Liability Insurance: Submit proof of current liability insurance by emailing copy to the Senior Program Specialist. Liability Insurance must be current and not be at risk of expiration prior or during the Clinical Sequence.
- Protection of Minors Training: Access to this training is provided by the Senior Program Specialist via email and is the same training required when beginning the program. Regardless of expiration date, the Protection of Minors training must be completed again during this Pre-Practicum process. The correct training is titled "Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse." Students must submit newly completed Protection of Minors training certificate by emailing a copy to Senior Program Specialist.

Please note: Your certificate MUST indicate "Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse - TEXAS Edition - Updated 2018" to confirm you completed the entire course. Certificates indicating with "SJC - Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse - Full Course" will not meet the requirement.

#### WEEK 5

- The Assistant Clinic Director will provide students with instructions and access to complete and submit their Availability Survey for Practicum. Changes to availability may only be made if there is a class update that impacts a student's availability.

Students may submit their information and availability as early as this week. Students must submit their Availability Survey no later than the time specified in the Pre-Practicum meeting.

- The Assistant Clinic Director will notify students of the options to take the proctored MoCCe.

Students must notify the Assistant Clinic Director via email of their requested MoCCe testing date.

#### WEEK 6

- Proof of Liability Insurance and Certificate of Completion of Protection of Minors training must be emailed to the Senior Program Specialist.

#### WEEK 7

- During the set proctored exam times, students will be required to use their personal technology device to individually take the MoCCe.

#### WEEK 8

- Students must initiate their Background Check through the third-party.
- The Assistant Clinic Director will email continuing Pre-Practicum applicants with their triadic and group supervision schedule.
- The Senior Program Specialist will notify qualified Pre-Practicum applicants of their Practicum course enrollment via email.

#### WEEK 9

- Eligible students are permitted to take the PPe remotely as early as this week. There are no limits to the number of times the PPe may be taken, but it must be passed with a score of 90% or higher to be eligible to retain Practicum enrollment. Scores are not rounded up.

#### PRACTICUM PREPARATION

- Students are required to complete the Student Telehealth Agreement, a telehealth practice video, Practicum Orientation Paperwork, and update their Professional Disclosure Statement.
- Students are required to attend an in-person Practicum orientation prior to the semester starting.

### PRACTICUM BACKGROUND CHECK INFORMATION

Please note: It can take 7-10 days for a completed background check to be processed and returned to the Counseling department. It is essential that students complete the criminal background check within this time frame to avoid a delay in their Clinical Sequence and allow the Center for Family Counseling planning time to schedule clients based on the actual number of incoming students.

Students with items of concern indicated on their criminal history background check are required to meet with the Program Director, Student Affairs to review their history. Depending on the concern, students may want to seek licensing board review to confirm whether they would be eligible for licensure post-graduation. Additionally, a criminal history item of concern that would prohibit students from enrolling in the applied training curriculum would also preclude their degree completion.

Any admitted student (regardless of enrolled status) must notify the Program Director in writing within 48 hours if any of the following events occur:

- Any arrest of the student, not including a Class C misdemeanor traffic offense
- Any criminal case filed against the student
- Any criminal conviction, not including a Class C misdemeanor traffic offense
- Any disciplinary action from another licensing board by which the student is currently licensed or from a professional organization of which the student is a member (including another state)

Failure to notify the Program Director, Student Affairs of any situation described above, within the 48-hour time period may result in disciplinary action by the Program in Counseling, which could include removal from the Program.

### COUNSELING PRACTICUM AND INTERSHIPS

All Counseling students enroll in one course of Practicum and two courses of Supervised Internship. Any required direct or indirect hours not completed in one term of Internship I/II carry over to the next term of the same course, with approval from the university supervisor. Students are required to complete any term in full for which they begin hours of client contact (including carryover hours) and assist with the transition of clients to new student counselors if necessary.

Students may begin Practicum with advisor/Department Chair approval upon completion of a minimum of 36 course credit hours (i.e., for students who plan to enroll in 9 hours during the clinical sequence), 45 course credit hours (i.e., for students who plan to enroll in 6 credit hours during the clinical sequence), or 54 course credit hours (i.e., for students who plan to complete all elective and core requirements prior to the clinical sequence) and submission of the completed Practicum and Conferral Eligibility and Verification

Form. Students may choose to start Practicum later in their program; many students opt to complete all course work before beginning Practicum and Internships. Doing so ensures a student's increased qualification to service a wider array of client populations. Certain courses have been designated as prerequisites to servicing specific populations during practicum (See Degree Planning and Course Sequencing).

A minimum of three terms of active hour accumulation is required to complete all practica and internship requirements. There is a standard tuition charge for each of the three clinical courses: Practicum, Internship I and Internship II. Students who have not completed all required counseling contact hours within one-year (3 terms) of beginning Practicum may be required to pay tuition for each additional term beginning with the fourth term. Students petitioning for an extension due to unavoidable circumstances may make a written request to the Program Director, Student Affairs.

During all three courses, the assigned university supervisor and/or the Practicum and Internship Directors evaluate student progress on a case-by-case basis in conjunction with faculty feedback. A supervisor may require a student to complete more direct hours of contact (above the designated 40 direct hour minimum required of practicum and the 240 direct hour minimum required of internship) or reduce a student's client load if the student is deemed skill deficient, requires additional mentoring, exhibits behavior of questionable professional integrity, or if the wellness of the student-in-training is of concern.

The clinical faculty and staff work to honor equitable dissemination of client cases to students for training purposes. Because of numerous factors beyond the control of faculty and staff such as inclement weather, client cancellations, student availability, and even student proficiency, student progress varies. In each term, student progress as a group may differ overall from previous and subsequent terms. Students are encouraged to monitor their own progress and understand other students will progress at their own pace.

Upon beginning practica and continuing through internships, counseling students will no longer follow the SMU academic schedule but will assume the professional daily/weekly/holiday model of the professional world. **While in practicum, students will follow the SMU Center for Family Counseling schedule and then the schedule of their chosen field site during internships for holidays and vacation. *IN ADDITION, STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO PROGRESS THROUGH COURSES HDCN6395, 6398, AND 6399 SEQUENTIALLY, CONTINUOUSLY, AND WITHOUT INTERRUPTION. THE ONLY EXCEPTION IS FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE SET TO BEGIN THEIR INTERNSHIP IN THE SUMMER; THEY MAY POSTPONE AND BEGIN IN THE FALL.***

**Note:** A student's internship site must be located in the DFW area.

**Note:** Be advised that students who wish to pursue school counseling certification will need to plan carefully, research information, and confirm availability of both a **supervisor** to serve as an onsite supervisor who is a certified school counselor with the necessary years of experience **AND** the implementation of a comprehensive developmental school counseling program when contracting a field site for Internship. We highly recommend students pursuing school counseling certification enroll in Internship 1 in a fall semester and Internship 2 in a spring semester.

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#### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENT GUIDANCE**

International students are responsible for understanding the requirements of their student visa status including whether they need to apply for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) prior to starting Internship. International students are encouraged to contact the [International Student & Scholar Services \(ISSS\) Office](#) to receive guidance on this process. In general, students who are required to apply for CPT must identify

an internship site, have a letter of employment, and must complete the CPT application to include their advisor's signature. A CPT application must be completed for each term of Internship. Prompt attention to all the requirements and advance planning will be necessary so as not to interrupt the clinical sequence.

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## **PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP COURSE PAIRINGS**

Core classes that may be completed concurrently with Practicum and Internship:

HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development

HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent

HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions

Note, not all courses are offered every term in both day and evening formats. Students who have schedule restrictions may need to take extra courses (in addition to the designated 63 hours) to fulfill their financial aid requirements or may only be able to take one course during a specific term. For this reason, and based on individual circumstance, not all students will complete the Program within three calendar years. Additionally, student degree completion is based on skill level and supervisor/faculty recommendation.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Program policies and procedures are governed by the Student Handbook for the current academic year and are subject to change. Students are advised to consult the current Student Handbook for up-to-date information about Counseling Program policies and procedures.

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## **INSTRUCTIONAL POLICIES**

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### **CHILDREN AND GUESTS IN CLASS**

For the benefit of all students, no children are allowed to accompany Counseling students to class. Course content is geared for adult learners and may not be suitable for children. Additionally, students may not have unattended children in the building while in class.

The confidential nature of classroom instruction necessitates that adult guests not attend classroom instruction hours without advanced consent from the professor.

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### **CHILDCARE**

Full-time childcare is available at SMU Preschool and Child Care Center, a small NAEYC accredited service for SMU students, faculty, and staff. There is normally an 8- to 12-month waiting list, so get on the list early. Call 214-768-2278 for more information or visit <https://www.smu.edu/businessfinance/campuservices/childcare>. Many students have found alternative

affordable childcare by shopping around. Call Child Care Answers at 214-631-CARE (2273) for additional information on childcare in the Metro area.

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### **AUDIO-VISUAL AND ELECTRONIC RECORDING IN CLASS**

Audiovisual and electronic recording of classroom lectures is strictly prohibited without the written consent of the course professor.

Each professor will approve the appropriate classroom use of laptops and other designated technology resources. A violation of classroom technology expectations may result in the loss of earnable points, impact a student's overall grade, or possibly warrant failing the course and require a student to retake the class.

The Counseling program does not have a formal policy restricting internet or social media use by enrolled students. However, any student who engages in behavior that violates the safety or confidentiality of another student (or violates ethical guidelines) may be sanctioned by the Program, School, or larger University, including separation from the University.

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### **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES**

In the helping professions, individuals are expected to exhibit a high degree of interpersonal effectiveness, emotional maturity, and good judgment. Because of the ease with which clients, prospective clients, colleagues, and current or prospective employers can access information from professional and personal information published on the world wide web, professionals should take care to present themselves appropriately online. It is expected that students will recognize the SMU Student Handbook's Code of Conduct application to the use of social media specifically section 2.09, "Students will, at all times and in all activities, respect the rights of others, maintain responsible behavior conducive to the teaching and learning environment, and uphold the integrity of the University both on and off campus." SMU's Department of Counseling encourages civil discussion of issues pertinent to the program and related events. Inappropriate remarks on social media venues such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snap Chat and X, etc., may result in disciplinary action. In addition, Counseling program students are required to adhere to the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics, Section H (Distance Counseling, Technology, and Social Media).

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### **GENERAL POLICIES**

The policies and procedures described herein serve as a quick-reference guide for Counseling Program graduate students and do not represent a complete list. All Counseling Program graduate students remain responsible for understanding and upholding the policies and procedures outlined, in full, within the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development Graduate Student Graduate Programs Bulletin online at <http://smu.edu/catalogs>.

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### **PAYMENT**

Students are responsible for adhering to the payment schedules set by the University and published online at [www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Bursar/DueDates](http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Bursar/DueDates). Accordingly, students bear the responsibility for understanding and following the University's refund schedules for full-length courses and seminars and loan disbursement deadlines.

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## FINANCIAL AID

Master of Science in Counseling students may qualify for Federal Financial Aid assistance (student loans). To apply for Federal Financial Aid, students complete (at no charge) the FAFSA form online at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. The SMU Office of Financial Services recommends completing this form a minimum of three months prior to your expected start date. However, students may complete the form closer to registration and pay for courses out-of-pocket until the disbursement of funds. Qualifying students receive financial disbursements to their [my.SMU](#) account through SMU to pay for classes. Any extra funds are disbursed directly to students by check.

In order to qualify for Federal funds, students must enroll and remain in two courses per term (a minimum of six credit hours) for every term funds are requested (including Summer term). If students drop below the minimum required credit hours per term, they may jeopardize their financial award. Because summer term moves quickly (five - ten weeks), the program recommends that students utilize extra funds disbursed for other terms to cover summer tuition. In this case, students can take just one course in the five - ten weeks.

For more information, visit the Financial Aid link at:  
<http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/FinancialAid/>

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## REFUNDS

A student who officially cancels their enrollment or withdraws from the University is charged only a portion of tuition and fees based on the effective date of the cancellation or withdrawal. Please refer to the Tuition and General Student Fees Schedule for Regular Withdrawals/Cancellation tabs for the refund schedule, located on the Bursar's website (<https://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/bursar/CostofAttendance/WithdrawalCancellationInfo>). Please note, students who utilize SMU employee tuition benefits do not receive funds to retake a previously withdrawn course.

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## OFFICIAL NAME CHANGE

Should a student legally change their name, one of the following steps must be followed to update the SMU system.

1. Bring social security card or the receipt provided by the SSN office in person to the Laura Lee Blanton Student Services Building.



2. Email a notarized copy of either document listed above to [jeanp@smu.edu](mailto:jeanp@smu.edu) (primary contact). If she is out of the office, then email [registrar@smu.edu](mailto:registrar@smu.edu) or [eneel@smu.edu](mailto:eneel@smu.edu).
3. Fax a notarized copy of either document listed above to (214) 768-2507.

Once a name change request has been made, notify the Counseling Program of the change.

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## **SMOKE FREE CAMPUS POLICY**

Southern Methodist University is committed to providing students, faculty, staff, and visitors with a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. Smoking, vaping, and the use of all tobacco products, the use of smokeless tobacco products, and the use of unregulated nicotine products (e.g., "e-cigarettes and vapes") are prohibited anywhere on campus, which includes all interior buildings, outdoor areas, sidewalks, parking lots, and residential housing areas. Violations of this policy by students, faculty, and staff may result in university disciplinary action. Campus visitors will be asked to comply with the policy or leave campus. A smoke/tobacco-free environment is an essential element to creating and maintaining a culture of health and safety at the university.

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## **PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMUNITY CONDUCT**

Students of the Counseling program have made the decision to join an exceptional educational community. As members of this community, students have the responsibility to encourage their own personal and professional growth. This includes conducting themselves in a manner that contributes to the personal and professional growth of others and the development of the community. Expectations of conduct are provided to guide professional behavior. Students are expected to:

1. Respect the rights of others, maintain responsible behavior conducive to the teaching and learning environment, and uphold the integrity of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development (ACSSEHD) both on and off campus.
2. Report any activity of possible academic dishonesty, harassment, abuse, or other infraction by any ACSSEHD student, faculty, or staff member to the appropriate ACSSEHD official.
3. Conduct all activities by electronic media (laptops, desktop computers, cell phones, etc.) in a professional manner at all times by:
  - Never sending inappropriate content via e-mail.
  - Never surfing the Internet or engaging in instant messaging, or similar activities, during class time.
  - Never interrupting or disrupting your fellow classmates, the professor, or a guest speaker by inappropriate use of your laptop computer.
  - Always turning off or silencing cell phones during class time and other ACSSEHD events and activities.
4. Reach out and always communicate in an open and respectful manner with all members of the

ACSSEHD community. Diversity is applauded, and differences are embraced, at ACSSEHD. Harassment of any nature is not tolerated.

5. Attend Counseling program sponsored events. Regularly attending events hosted by the Counseling Program promotes dialogue, enhances the Counseling Program's educational experience, and builds a professional network. Speaker series, guest lectures, club events, seminars, and other events should be a priority within the Counseling Program's educational experience.
6. Consider leadership roles within the Counseling Program. Leadership comes in all forms including, but not limited to, club activities, orientation, and various other academic venues.
7. Participate in class discussions and fully prepare for all class assignments and meetings. Involvement is critical to the overall success of the Counseling Program's education.
8. Dress appropriately at all Counseling program events, including dressing appropriately for class, (i.e., business casual) to create the best impression with speakers, clients, and guests.
9. Behave in a professional manner at all times by:
  - a. Writing thank you notes to guest speakers, mock interviewers, etc.
  - b. RSVP'ing to events and showing up.
  - c. Keeping commitments and accepting accountability for actions.
  - d. Treating faculty and staff respectfully and appropriately.
  - e. Arriving to class and events a few minutes early.

And finally, we are part of the solution. If there is an issue of concern, please bring the issue and the potential solutions to the appropriate person or group. Fostering a strong community is an integral part of the educational experience. Faithful adherence to basic ethical norms such as truth, honesty, and integrity, and the highest standards of personal behavior are vital to a successful educational experience.

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## ETHICAL/LEGAL AWARENESS

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### STATEMENT OF LIABILITY AWARENESS

Students will adhere to and uphold all relevant and applicable ethical codes, statutes, federal and/or state laws governing mental health, including the American Counseling Association (ACA), American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT), and the Texas Educator Codes of Ethics, (RULE §247.2). In the event of a conflict, students will adhere to the highest standard endorsed by any code or statute.

Refer to the Counseling Experience section of this handbook for a list of websites where the ethical standards for each organization can be reviewed.

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## INSURANCE REQUIREMENT

Liability Insurance is a professional expectation. Every student admitted and enrolled in SMU's Master of Science in Counseling program must carry student liability insurance (also called Professional Liability Insurance) with minimum \$1,000,000 incident/\$3,000,000 aggregate covering on- and off-campus training. Students bear responsibility for securing, paying for, and maintaining liability coverage throughout the degree program. Southern Methodist University, the Counseling program, and the State of Texas do NOT provide legal protection to students-in-training.

Students are to provide the Counseling office with documentation indicating proof of coverage, including dates of coverage, within the first term to be retained in their academic file. Enrollment in future terms is blocked for students who have not provided proof that they have current Professional Liability Insurance. Additionally, students must present proof of coverage to every instructor/course in which counseling practice occurs and keep this coverage current. It is the student's responsibility to provide the Counseling office and appropriate instructors with proof that the coverage has been renewed each year.

Students who let their professional liability insurance expire may attend class but **may not participate** in any activity where they counsel or practice counseling/communication skills (role-plays, providing direct services to clients, engaging in process discussions with other students, mini-practicums, group processing in class, leading groups, etc.). At the discretion of the instructor, restricted participation status may impact a student's class participation grade and require remediation.

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## NON-DISCRIMINATORY STATEMENT

Southern Methodist University will not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status. SMU's commitment to equal opportunity includes nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

The above represents the officially drafted statement of nondiscrimination for Southern Methodist University. For more information, students may contact the Office of Institutional Access and Equity at 214-768-3601 or online at <http://smu.edu/aao/>.

Right to know and other legal disclosures can be found online at <http://www.smu.edu/ola>.

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## DISCRIMINATION OR VIOLATION OF RIGHTS

Petitions or complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status; petitions or complaints alleging harassment, intimidation, or reprisal; or petitions or complaints alleging improper or discriminatory action that abridges the person's

rights or contravenes the applicable policies and practices of Southern Methodist University or of any federal or state law are handled by the Office of Institutional Access and Equity at 214-768-3601 or online at <https://www.smu.edu/iae>.

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## DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can request and initiate accommodations online at <https://www.smu.edu/dass>. Once approved and registered, students will submit a DASS Accommodation Letter to faculty through the electronic portal DASS LINK and then communicate directly with each instructor to make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Students who need tests proctored in different environments or with extended time should make individual arrangements with their instructors.

Flexible Attendance is an accommodation that requires a separate agreement between the student and the instructor to accommodate illnesses or conditions that are episodic in nature and may require missing multiple classes. Class attendance is necessary to achieve learning outcomes in the Counseling program due to the experiential and clinical nature of the professional training program. Students who have Flexible Attendance as part of their accommodations should present their accommodations to their instructor who should then, in turn, consult with the Content Area Coordinator or Program Director, Student Affairs. Most Counseling Program courses will not be able to accommodate more than two absences during the term, according to departmental procedures and syllabi.

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## ENDORSEMENT POLICY

Students should make application for employment or internships related to the specialty, and, if applicable, concentration of study that reflects their proficiency. The Counseling Program's faculty and staff endorse students verbally, orally, or in writing only to the extent that the student proves prepared and trained. Verification of course performance, academic standing, supervisor feedback, and graduation date will be checked thoroughly prior to endorsement.

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## PROTECTION OF MINORS

Each year, many children come to SMU for camps, classes, and sporting events. Students share the responsibility to ensure their protection and to prevent child abuse. It is also Texas state law—Senate Bill 1414.

Prior to any program-required contact with minors or clinical public service, students are required to complete an online training to ensure students are cognizant of their ethical and legal obligations. The online training course will require approximately one hour to complete and is valid for **two years**.

Students will receive an electronic invitation to complete the training. It is the student's responsibility to provide a current copy of the completion certificate of Protection of Minors training to the Senior Program Specialist. Students are strongly advised to save an electronic copy of their completion certificate to access when needed.

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## **MANDATORY TITLE IX REPORTING BY UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES**

**If you need help:** Anyone in our community who experiences sexual misconduct is urged to seek help as soon as possible. SMU resources include SMU Police, the SMU Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Coordinators, the Office of Violence Prevention and Support Services, confidential counselors at SMU Counseling Services, and confidential pastoral support at the SMU Chaplain's office. They will provide support and information about campus and community resources, including options to pursue criminal charges and SMU's internal grievance process. More information about [resources for students](#) and [faculty and staff](#), including the Employee Assistance Program, is online.

When faculty or staff members receive reports of sexual misconduct from students, other employees or campus visitors, please remember they are mandatory reporters and [must notify the SMU Title IX Coordinator](#). Under Texas law (Senate Bill 212), failure to make a report may result in criminal penalties and termination of employment. This procedure applies to all employees including confidential counselors in Counseling Services and the Chaplain's Office, although these employees may only report the type of incident and may not include any information that would violate a student's expectation of privacy. Please consult Section 6 of the Title IX Harassment Policy for more information.

*For additional clarification, the following paragraphs are excerpts from the SMU University Policy Manual:*

“The University encourages students subjected to sexual violence to promptly seek medical assistance and counseling and to report the incident to the SMU Police Department and the Title IX Coordinator as soon as possible.”

“Any University employee who becomes aware of a potential violation of University policy that prohibits any form of sexual misconduct including sexual assault and sexual violence is obligated to promptly report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Institutional Access and Equity. This reporting obligation extends beyond violations involving students and can include, but is not limited to, violations that involve faculty, staff, and campus visitors.”

“Per Chapter 51 of the Texas Education Code.... The report must include all information concerning the incident known to the reporting person that is relevant to the investigation and, if applicable, redress of the incident, including whether an alleged victim has expressed a desire for confidentiality in reporting the incident.”

“An employee designated by the University as a person with whom students may speak confidentially concerning sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking (Counseling Services and the Chaplain's Office) or who receives information regarding such an incident under circumstances that render the employee's communications confidential or privileged under other law (licensed physicians,

psychologists, and pastoral counselors) shall, in making a report, state only the type of incident reported and may not include any information that would violate a student's expectation of privacy. This reporting requirement does not affect the employee's duty to report an incident under any other law.'

*For additional information regarding Title IX and reporting, please refer to the University Policy Manual at <https://www.smu.edu/SexualHarassment/Learn-More/SMU-Title-IX-Sexual-Harassment-Policy> and the SMU Office of Institutional Access and Equity at <https://www.smu.edu/iae>. Emergency assistance and reporting information is provided at <https://www.smu.edu/SexualMisconduct>.*

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## ACADEMIC POLICIES

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### ENROLLMENT

The Master of Science in Counseling program offers two semesters (Fall, Spring), plus two one-week concentrated terms (Jan and May Terms) and three summer terms (S1, S2, S3), which last from five weeks (S1 and S2) to ten weeks (S3). Some courses may also be offered on weekends during the long semesters and during the summer terms. Students may enroll in a maximum of three courses (9 credit hours) per long semester. This is considered full-time enrollment. Students seeking an exception to take 12 credit hours in a long semester must have a program GPA of 3.2 or higher and request approval from the Senior Program Specialist at least **one week prior** to registration. Students may take up to two courses over the summer, in any of the summer terms. Thus, a student enrolled full-time in every semester may accumulate up to 24 credit hours per academic year. This is an optimal possibility that presumes full-time enrollment, a flexible schedule, and availability of course offerings. Students enroll in courses through the online registration system at [my.SMU](https://my.smu.edu). Students who enroll in inter-term courses and are using financial aid should contact the financial aid office in advance of registration to coordinate disbursement of aid.

Course offerings are posted online prior to each enrollment period at <https://www.smu.edu/simmons/Academics/Counseling/MSCounseling/CourseSchedule>. Students who have completed 36 hours or more are eligible to enroll on the first day of registration each term. Students with less than 36 hours are eligible to enroll beginning the second day of registration. Students enrolled in a course that is cancelled due to low enrollment or instructor conflict will be notified by the Senior Program Specialist before the enrollment period closes.

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### DROPPING/WITHDRAWING

Counseling students must observe drop and withdraw deadlines regarding grades and refunds. Students may view the add/drop/withdrawal deadlines for each term on the Program Calendar listed on the Counseling website. Visit the Bursar's website <https://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/bursar/CostofAttendance/WithdrawalCancellationInfo> to see policy concerning refunds for Add/Drops and Withdrawals. Students cannot drop themselves below one credit hour in [my.SMU](https://my.smu.edu). To drop all courses for the term, students must email their request to the Senior Program Specialist. Students must notify the Counseling office and process withdrawal paperwork for all courses in the term. Medical withdrawals are allowed.

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## STUDENT COMPETENCE AND PROGRESS

Student competence in a counselor education program involves more than course grades. By necessity, competence must also be evaluated throughout the program of study to assess each student's capacity and readiness to function as a counselor with community clients and to eventually enter the workforce as a mental health professional. This ongoing evaluation is a requirement placed upon counselor education programs by accrediting bodies, licensing regulations, and ethical codes that govern the occupations for which SMU Counseling students are trained. Beyond that, such evaluation constitutes an obligation to protect the well-being of clients and even the well-being of students who plan to enter the demanding arena of mental health professions. The term *student competency evaluation* referred to in this section describes any evaluation, formal or informal, of academic, clinical, or dispositional competencies routinely employed within the Counseling program as part of the Administrative Review process.

The purpose of ongoing competence evaluation beyond the automatic probation period is threefold: (1) To support students in the program of study and facilitate their success, (2) To identify issues that impair a student's ability to engage in clinical work, and (3) to provide corrective learning/training experiences or interventions to ensure the well-being of clients, a process known as gatekeeping.

Counseling students are assessed for academic proficiency, professional dispositions, and clinical knowledge and skills in an Administrative Review process. It is necessary for ongoing evaluation to occur and be documented so students who have difficulty in the program can receive support as early as possible. Such documentation is also a requirement of the Counseling program's accreditation body, CACREP. The Counseling faculty endeavor to make the student evaluation process fair, supportive in nature, and transparent. Students may be apprehensive about being evaluated, and that is understandable. Because this is a clinical program that prepares students to work with vulnerable mental health consumers and to work under supervision and under licensure regulations and state laws as mental health professionals, the standards and expectations may differ from non-clinical, purely academic graduate programs. Students are welcome and encouraged to ask questions about how they are evaluated and their standing in the program by meeting with their academic advisors.

Student competence within the SMU Counseling program consists of academic performance, clinical knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions recognized as essential for effective, ethical, and responsible functioning in the Counseling profession (e.g., professionalism, maturity, self-awareness, receptivity to learning and feedback, open-mindedness, communication skills, integrity, honesty, respect, classroom demeanor, attention to detailed instructions, and other characteristics required in a clinical or professional environment). Faculty formally evaluate student competencies each academic semester/term in an Administrative Review process. Faculty concerns regarding student competence are typically addressed through a support process designed to strengthen competencies and promote student success in the Counseling program. Whereas support of student progress is the priority, in rare instances where students do not achieve competency expectations despite support measures or where competency or disciplinary issues exceed the scope of the Counseling program to address, student suspension or expulsion from the Counseling Program and SMU may occur. In those instances where suspension or expulsion must



be considered, students should be aware they have the right of appeal and the Counseling program will follow established university policy and procedures.

An issue that can be, but is not always, related to student competence is *student progress*. Clearly, struggles with academic, clinical, or dispositional competencies can hinder a student's progress through the Counseling program. Yet other factors, such as personal setbacks or stressors, may cause a student to struggle. Students should demonstrate the maturity and self-awareness needed to continually evaluate their life circumstances to determine if their graduate schoolwork load is manageable and reach out to their faculty advisor for guidance and support should their challenges become overwhelming.

Each student's faculty advisor is responsible for the oversight of their advisee's progress across the program of study. In terms of student evaluations, the student's advisor will manage any reports about an advisee's progress in the program. This provides each student with a "go to" person from whom to seek support, mentoring, information, and guidance, as well as someone who will assist them if they are having difficulty.

The following section will address the specific ways in which students are evaluated in the Counseling program besides routine course grades.

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#### END-OF-TERM STUDENT EVALUATIONS

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Just as students evaluate their professors at the end of each course, instructors also complete evaluations on student academic performance and professional dispositions for every course at the end of each academic term beyond the letter grade assigned for the course. An example of this End-of-Term Student Evaluation can be found in Appendix C. On the form, the instructor can indicate whether they have any concerns about a particular student, and if so, whether the concern is considered "minor," "moderate," or "major." If an instructor indicates they have a concern about any student, the instructor then completes a Student Update form, which communicates the concern to the student's advisor.

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#### OTHER STUDENT EVALUATIONS

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Students encounter three other main forms of evaluation besides course grades in the Counseling program: the Master of Core Competencies Exam (MoCCe), the Clinical Progress Assessment (CPA), and the Policies and Procedures Exam (PPE). Each of these is explained in greater detail elsewhere in this Handbook. A brief description of each is provided below.

Master of Core Competencies Exam (MoCCe): The MoCCe is a timed, 80-question multiple-choice exam that is based on core curriculum (Life Span Development, Psychopathology, Research Design and Statistics, Assessment, Counseling Diverse Communities, Ethics and Mental Health, Counseling Methods: Group, and Counseling Theory) that assesses a student's level of academic readiness for entry into Practicum. The test follows the same ratio of questions and time offered for the National Counselor Exam (NCE). Students take the MoCCe as part of the pre-practicum process.

Clinical Progress Assessment (CPA): The CPA is a 20-category measure of clinical competencies measured at four points across the program of study: Basic Clinical Skills, Advanced Clinical Skills, Practicum (mid-



term and end-of-term), and Internship (mid-term and end-of-term). Competencies at the Basic and Advanced levels on the CPA must be demonstrated for entry into the clinical sequence (i.e., Practicum).

Policy and Procedure Exam (PPE): The PPE is a multiple-choice exam based on the “SMU Center for Family Counseling Policy and Procedure Manual” and the “Clinical Experience Handbook,” both of which are available to students in the Practicum Canvas Course shell. Students take the PPE as part of the pre-practicum process.

Additional information can be found in the “Pre-Practicum Process” section of this Handbook.

Faculty submit Student Updates for students who do not demonstrate appropriate performance on these additional student evaluations as needed. The review process of these updates will occur as follows:

#### Automatic Probation (0 – 18 hours)

All students are placed on automatic probation upon admission for the equivalent of two terms of full-time enrollment (18 hours) in which they are required to demonstrate appropriate academic, professional, and personal functioning. Please refer to the Automatic Probation section of this handbook for more information on the review process.

#### Continued Evaluation (19 – 63+ hours)

Students who have completed more than 18 hours and who are no longer on automatic probation are under continued evaluation. Students are assessed each semester for academic proficiency, essential counselor characteristics/professional dispositions, and clinical knowledge and skills (See Student Competence & Progress). Please refer to the Student Competence & Progress section of this handbook for more information on the review process.

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## STUDENT UPDATES

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Student Update forms are a way for each student’s faculty advisor to provide oversight and support across the student’s entire program of study. Instructors and staff members may submit update forms at the end of the term, as described in the previous section, or during the term. The primary purpose of Student Updates is to help advisors keep up with their advisees’ progress through the program so that appropriate support or guidance can be provided if and when it is needed. As part of our individual student assessment procedure, faculty meet two times per semester to review student progress.

Besides “minor,” “moderate,” and “major concern,” two other types of Student Updates can be submitted: “FYI” and “disciplinary.” The “FYI” Update is a memo from an instructor or staff member to an advisor making the advisor aware of a circumstance that could potentially affect a student’s progress in the program, but which likely is an isolated incident warranting encouragement or assistance. Examples include events or issues such as a student being absent or late quite a bit due to caring for a sick family member. Discretion must be used by faculty to respect student privacy and not share information without student permission. Therefore, FYI Updates are structured to allow for limited information so that personal details are not included. The online Update form is included in Appendix A.

The disciplinary Update is a category created specifically to underscore that other Student Update categories are not considered disciplinary in nature. The disciplinary Update is reserved for those incidents in which violations of conduct, academic integrity, and ethical codes or guidelines of the University and/or the Counseling profession have occurred. When a disciplinary Update is issued (at a minor, moderate, or major concern level), the response will vary in a similar manner as with other Updates. The first and preferred response is to support the continued progress and success of the student in the program if possible. Only when that option appears unfeasible is the option of dismissal considered.

Instructors are *always strongly encouraged* to discuss their concerns with students before they indicate a concern on an end-of-term Student Evaluation or before filling out a Student Update. If they do not, they must state their reason for not doing so on the Update form. If the instructor has not discussed the matter with the student, the advisor will reach out to the student upon receipt of the Update so the student will be aware of it and so the student has the opportunity to discuss the matter with the advisor and provide any additional context or comments. Students may also inquire about Updates during regular advising appointments. The submission of Student Updates is intended to be a transparent process and should come after communication between the instructor and the student unless there is a valid reason why this is not possible.

Student Updates and student progress are reviewed at least twice annually by the full-time Counseling faculty to determine whether appropriate support and/or gatekeeping measures are being implemented and to identify any patterns that reveal areas for modification or improvement in program curriculum, advising, or policies.

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#### STUDENT UPDATES AND STUDENT SUPPORT PLANS

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Typically, when a pattern of difficulty in a student's performance becomes evident through multiple Student Update forms (which could be minor or moderate), or even a single incident documented in an Update as a major concern, an advisor will contact the advisee to create a *Student Support Plan* ("Support Plan" for short). The Support Plan is a structured process for helping a student who is struggling with particular academic, clinical, and/or dispositional competencies. An example of a Support Plan is provided in Appendix B. The purpose of a Support Plan is to identify the specific competency areas in which the student needs improvement and to design learning opportunities or tasks that will help the student develop and demonstrate those competencies so the student can continue their progress and move toward successful completion of their program of study. In many cases, the student will be given the opportunity to collaborate on the Support Plan with their advisor, so the Plan reflects the student's voice and values. A Support Plan's purpose is not punitive, although sometimes a Plan may include conditions or limits deemed in the best interest of the student's training or the well-being of clients. If a student objects to a Support Plan, the student has the right to appeal or refuse the Plan. Support Plan response options are described later in this section. The Support Plan is not a mark against a student's academic record, and a student who is on a Support Plan is considered to be in good academic standing as long as they meet other criteria for good academic standing (e.g., GPA of 3.0 or above).

Each competency area addressed on a Student Support Plan will be defined by a demonstrable outcome and a method by which competency may be evaluated.

Below is a description of the process that could lead to the development of a Student Support Plan. The process described below outlines the program's general procedures.

1. Instructor (or other faculty or staff) completes a Student Update form that details the specific concern(s) including the degree of concern (FYI, minor, moderate, major, disciplinary) as well as recommendations for competency learning, if applicable. A sample copy of the Student Update form is provided in Appendix A. The Student Update form may be completed by a course instructor at the end of an academic term/semester or by a faculty member (adjunct and full-time) or authorized staff member any time a concern comes to light in the context of classroom performance and/or in conduct outside of class. The term *instructor* is used throughout this section to refer to the originator of the Student Update form.
2. The student's advisor receives the Update and checks to see if the instructor has discussed the issue with the student (this should be indicated on the form). Regardless of the level of concern described in the Update, if the concern has not been discussed with the student, the advisor will contact the student to make the student aware that an Update was submitted. If the Update describes a minor-level concern, no further action is necessary. If the Update describes a minor-level concern and indicates that the instructor did discuss it with the student, advisors may use their discretion whether to contact the student, depending on the perceived need for support or follow-up.
3. If an advisor receives an Update at a moderate level of concern or two Updates at a minor level of concern about the same or similar issues, the advisor will contact the student to review the concerns and discuss recommendations. This meeting may take place in person, by phone, or virtually. The advisor should document this meeting and any recommendations made in their advising notes. (Note: If the advisor makes three or more unsuccessful attempts to schedule a meeting with the student, the advisor should document the attempts in their advising notes and provide their recommendations to the student via email.)
4. If a student receives three or more Updates at a minor or moderate level of concern that reveal a pattern of struggle in a competency area or multiple areas, or one Update at a major level of concern, the advisor will work with the student to create a Student Support Plan (Support Plan). Note the advisor has some discretion, in that the advisor may receive Student Updates (particularly at the minor concern level) about unrelated, apparently isolated incidents that do not reveal a pattern of difficulty warranting a Support Plan (see #4, below). The advisor may also consult as needed with relevant instructors, supervisors, or program leadership for guidance. If the advisor receives more than one Update at a major concern level in a single academic term, a Disciplinary Update at the major concern level, or a report of particularly egregious or risky behavior, the advisor should consult with the Program Director, Student Affairs and/or the Department Chair regarding potential academic suspension or dismissal.
5. If the advisor receives three or more Updates at a minor or moderate level and is unsure if they reveal a pattern of difficulty that warrants a Support Plan, the advisor should consult with the student to determine if some level of support is needed and should discuss the matter at the next Student Review Meeting or faculty meeting or consult with program leadership. The advisor should also document any decisions or actions (e.g., Support Plan/no Support Plan) in their advising notes.

6. The faculty advisor assigned to the student is responsible for the formulation and monitoring of a Student Support Plan and may (but is not required to) collaborate with the student on its development. Upon development of the Support Plan, the advisor will meet with the student in person, if possible, to discuss the plan's requirements/stipulations and criteria for success. If the student agrees with the Support Plan, the student may sign the plan in the meeting with the advisor to indicate the student's agreement with and acceptance of the Support Plan or may take the Plan home for consideration. If an in-person meeting is not possible, the plan may be sent by SMU email (deliver/read receipt recommended) or registered mail to the student for consideration and response. The student's response (see response options below) must be provided to the advisor and the Program Director, Student Affairs within three (3) business days after the student has received the Support Plan.

It is important to note that the student's signature on the Support Plan indicates acceptance of the Plan. If the student has questions about the Plan, intends to appeal or refuse the Plan, or wishes to modify the Plan with their advisor, the student not sign the Plan. It is acceptable to collaborate on Support Plan content so that it has value and meaning to the student. Such collaboration should take place before the Plan is finalized and signed.

7. The student must provide a response to the Support Plan within three (3) business days of receipt of the Plan. "Receipt of the Support Plan" is the *earliest* of the following time points: (a) At the in-person meeting with the advisor; (b) via email from the advisor; or (c) via registered mail. The date by which the student must respond is based on the *earliest date* of receipt of the plan, as evidenced by the advisor meeting date, email read receipt or send date, or registered mail receipt.

Please note in all instances below where a potential dual role may be perceived to exist (e.g., a Program Director or the Department Chair is the student's advisor), alternate arrangements will be made to maintain an appropriate separation of roles. All references below to notifications "in writing" include electronic notifications via email as acceptable.

8. The student may select one of four responses to the expressed faculty concern(s) and resulting Support Plan:
  - a. *Accept the Plan.* If the student agrees with the requirements/stipulations of the Support Plan, the student must sign and date the plan and return it to the advisor within three (3) business days of receipt of the Plan. The student should also notify the Program Director, Student Affairs of the student's acceptance of the Plan within this three-day timeframe (in person or email preferred). If a student does not accept the Plan by signing and returning it within the three business-day timeframe, the Plan is considered to be refused. Refusal of the Support Plan without a timely notice of appeal (see below) will result in dismissal. Failure to meet the three-day deadline for such reasons as forgetting to check one's e-mail or not checking phone messages are not acceptable. University faculty/staff will make reasonable efforts (e.g., emails, phone calls) to ensure the student is aware the Support Plan has been sent (i.e., by email and by registered mail), the manner in which it has been sent, and the date and time by which it must be returned.

- b. *Request Modification of the Support Plan.* If a Support Plan is presented to the student as final and ready for signature and the student sees value in a Support Plan but wishes to re-negotiate the terms of the Plan, the student may request modification of the Support Plan prior to acceptance. This is not considered an appeal or a refusal of the Plan. The student may request further collaboration with the advisor to adjust or modify the Plan and/or may request the participation of an additional full-time Counseling faculty member to collaborate on the Support Plan until both advisor and student are satisfied with the Plan and the Program Director, Student Affairs approves. A Request for Modification must be made in writing to the students' advisor within three (3) business days of receipt of the Plan.
- c. *Appeal the Support Plan.* The student may appeal the Support Plan in writing to the Program Director, Student Affairs within three (3) business days of the initial advisor-student meeting, or receipt of the plan in person, via email, or via registered mail (postmarked within three business days of receipt of the plan), whichever comes first. If a student fails to contact the Program Director, Student Affairs within three business days with notice to appeal, it will be taken as refusal of the plan without appeal and dismissal procedures will be implemented. In the case of appeal of a Support Plan, the Program Director, Student Affairs will mediate a decision between the advisor and the student regarding the concerns and the Plan specifications. The Program Director, Student Affairs will render a decision based on all available information within ten (10) business days of receipt of the written appeal. Additional details of the appeal procedure can be found in Appendix B.
- d. *Refuse the Support Plan and Exit the Counseling Program.* The student may announce intention to exit voluntarily from the program within three (3) business days of receipt of the Support Plan as described above. This announcement should be delivered via email to the attention of the academic advisor; the Program Director, Student Affairs; and the Department Chair. Note that failure to respond to the Support Plan within three (3) business days also constitutes refusal and will result in dismissal from the Counseling program.

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## PROBATION, SUSPENSION, AND DISMISSAL

Academic probation is a serious warning that the student is not making satisfactory academic progress. A student on academic probation is still eligible to enroll and is considered in good standing for enrolling in classes and for certification purposes. Academic probation is not noted on the permanent academic record; however, a student on academic probation may be subject to certain conditions during the period of probation and will be subject to academic suspension if they do not clear academic probation. Graduate students at SMU must maintain a 3.0 GPA or higher in order to remain in good academic standing. Additionally, in the Counseling program, a student who earns a failing grade (C+ or below) in any class is automatically placed on academic probation in the program regardless of the overall GPA. However, if the failing grade occurred during the automatic probation period, the administrative review procedures apply. Furthermore, a student who earns two failing grades (C+ or below) may be dismissed from the program upon review of academic performance and review of behavioral and dispositional considerations as noted in existing Student Update Forms. A student will be notified regarding probation and/or dismissal in writing by the Program Director, Student Affairs.

A student who is dismissed from the Counseling Program may appeal within five (5) days to the Department Chair. The Department Chair may uphold dismissal, reverse dismissal, or recommend remediation. If the Department Chair upholds the dismissal decision, the student may appeal the dismissal decision within five (5) days to the Dean of the Annette Caldwell School of Education and Human Development.

**Reporting Criminal Offenses:** An admitted student (regardless of enrollment status) must notify the Program Director, Student Affairs in writing within 48 hours if any of the following events occur:

- Any arrest of the student, not including a Class C misdemeanor traffic offense
- Any criminal case filed against the student
- Any criminal conviction, not including a Class C misdemeanor traffic offense
- Any disciplinary action from another licensing board under which the student is currently licensed or from a professional organization of which the student is a member (including another state)

Failure to notify the Program Director, Student Affairs of any situation described above within the 48-hour time period may result in disciplinary action by the Counseling Program, which may include removal from the Program.

Failure to meet established minimum acceptable standards of academic or disciplinary performance can result in probation, suspension, or dismissal. Additionally, in the Counseling Program, failure to demonstrate personal dispositions such as personal awareness, interpersonal skills, ethical judgment, and integrity may require intervention (e.g., remediation, requirement to repeat designated coursework) or dismissal from the program. Dispositional concerns may be addressed with remediation or other intervention (e.g., required leave of absence) regardless of a student's GPA or course grade. Students on a leave of absence or suspension for one year or more must reapply to the Counseling program.

Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00. If in any term the student falls below this GPA, the student will be placed on probation for one term. If at the end of the term of probation the cumulative GPA is not up to 3.00, the student may be removed from the program at the discretion of the Program Director, Student Affairs; Department Chair; and/or Dean.

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## **COURSE EVALUATIONS AND STUDENT CONCERNS ABOUT FACULTY**

Students complete course evaluations at the end of each term. Evaluation responses remain anonymous unless student's provide identifying information in their responses. Instructors view comments and ratings only after assignment of final course grades.

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### **STUDENT CONCERNS ABOUT FACULTY**

Students have multiple options for resolving concerns about faculty, depending on the nature of the concern, the urgency to address the matter, the student's level of comfort in addressing it, and the appropriate avenue for doing so. In instances where a minor incident, such as a misunderstanding or minor annoyance has occurred and the student feels comfortable addressing the matter directly with the instructor, the student is encouraged to do so in a respectful and constructive manner. If the matter is not time-sensitive, the student may also wait until the end-of-term course evaluation and describe the incident anonymously in the

instructor feedback. Course evaluations are not accessible to instructors until after final grades are submitted and are completely anonymous. In addition, Counseling program leadership (i.e., the Department Chair and/or the Program Director, Faculty Affairs) review course evaluations after every academic term, identify any areas of concern, and follow up with instructors to provide additional feedback and to take other appropriate actions as needed.

If a student does not feel comfortable speaking directly to the professor and does not wish to wait for the end-of-term course evaluation, the next option would be for the student to consult with their faculty advisor or the Program Director, Student Affairs. In cases where the student's instructor is also the student's advisor, the student may consult with the Program Director, Student Affairs instead. Sometimes, the student's instructor may also be their advisor *and* the Program Director, Student Affairs. In such a case, the student should follow the "chain of command" and consult the Program Director, Faculty Affairs or Department Chair. Be assured that all student concerns are taken seriously and followed up on. The outcome of such follow-up may not be shared with the student, as human resource matters are generally not communicated to students. However, the follow-up is documented by program administration and plays a role in feedback, training, and performance evaluations.

When a student communicates a concern about an instructor to their advisor, the advisor will then communicate the concern to program administration (i.e., the Program Director, Faculty Affairs and/or the Department Chair), who oversee personnel issues. The student's identity may be disclosed to program administration for follow-up purposes as needed to address the concern. The only way to provide feedback anonymously is through the use of Course Evaluations. A program administrator will follow up with the instructor to communicate that a report of a concern has been made. The administrator will endeavor to understand the context of the concern from both the student's and instructor's points of view and will offer guidance and feedback to the instructor. If necessary, additional steps may be taken, such as examination of course texts and materials, mentoring, trainings, and/or classroom observation, to ensure that the student's concern is resolved and quality expectations are being met.

If the problem that prompted the student's initial report persists, the student may immediately inform Counseling program administration (i.e., Program Director, Student Affairs or Department Chair) or may provide feedback on the end-of-term course evaluation, depending upon the urgency and severity of the concern for the student. The "Student Appeals and Complaints" section of the [SMU Student Handbook](#) also provides several links for reporting various types of concerns/complaints.

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## **COURSE ATTENDANCE**

Instructors utilize their own grading criteria concerning absences and tardiness, but all courses are subject to the following attendance policies:

- Failure to attend the first class may negatively impact your final grade for the course. Grade reductions are at the discretion of the instructor and are explained in the course syllabus.
- Students should give instructors 24 hours notice of any absence whenever possible.
- If a student must miss one class, it is the student's responsibility to acquire all material and assignments covered during their absence.
- A student's final grade will be impacted if two absences occur.



- A student missing more than two classes may, at the instructor’s discretion:
  - receive a grade of Incomplete if the requirements to do so have been met (see the policy on Grades of Incomplete contained in the course syllabus)
  - receive a failing grade for the course
  - drop or withdraw from the course (This option may have a financial and/or financial aid impact. Student should refer to the Add/Drop Policy and the Withdrawal Policy for the Counseling program which can be found online in the [Program Calendar](#) on the Counseling website then consult with the Senior Program Specialist if they believe this option is a possibility.)

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## LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND REAPPLICATION

From time-to-time students may not attend for a term. Students are expected to communicate to their advisor and the Senior Program Specialist their intention to discontinue taking courses for more than one term. A “Leave of Absence Request Form” must be submitted should a student need to take an extended leave from the program. Students should contact the Senior Program Specialist to properly inform the Counseling Program of the intended leave of absence.

Students who do not enroll in classes for more than one full year must reapply to the Counseling Program and adhere to the most up-to-date curricular requirements. This reapplication will include completing a new application online, submitting an updated resume and essay, and completing an updated background check. Students may not need to resubmit recommendation letters. Students will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis regarding whether or not they must attend PONI day again, and that determination will be made after faculty review of the application. If it is determined that a student does not need to attend PONI day, the previous PONI day score will be used in the final calculation of the review score. Students reapplying for admission will not have to resubmit transcripts unless they attended another university during the leave of absence.

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## GRADING

Students view official grades online through [my.SMU](#) after the end of the term (including seminar courses). Although most assignments are submitted and graded through Canvas, some instructors leave graded assignments for pick-up in the student pick-up cabinet in the Counseling office.

Students may view grading expectations and grading scales on their course syllabus. All courses use an A, A-, B+, B, B-, C +, etc. scale. Any course grade below a B- is considered failure, and the course must be retaken. Students who earn two Cs or lower may be dismissed from the program.

The Master of Science in Counseling program upholds the following grading standard across all courses:

Grade	Performance Description	Range	GPA	Points
A	Exceptional	93 – 100	4.0	12.0



A-	High Pass	90 – 92	3.7	11.1
B+		87 – 89	3.3	9.9
B	Pass	83 – 86	3.0	9.0
B-		80 – 82	2.7	8.1
C+	Failure, any C or below	77 – 79	2.3	6.9
C		73 – 76	2.0	6.0
C-		70 – 72	1.7	5.1
D+		67 – 69	1.3	3.9
D		63 – 66	1.0	3.0
D-		60 – 62	0.7	2.1
F		59≥	0.0	0.0

## APA GUIDELINES

Students are expected to have a high degree of familiarity with the current APA manual and its requirements. Students are required to complete an on-line APA Training during their first term in the program offered within the new student Canvas shell. The Canvas shell is only available the first term, and the online training must be completed during the first term. Students who do not complete the APA Training will not be allowed to register and/or continue coursework without Program Director, Faculty Affairs approval.

## HONOR CODE

Admission into the Program in Counseling binds students to the SMU Student Code of Conduct (“Honor Code”) and students are required to demonstrate an understanding of and to uphold the Honor Code. The Honor Code can be accessed online at [www.smu.edu/studentlife](http://www.smu.edu/studentlife), “SMU Student Handbook.” As indicated in Article 1, Jurisdiction, Ratification, and Amendments, the Honor Council does not automatically oversee the academic conduct of graduate students in Education; conduct violations and academic dishonesty are reviewed and addressed at the Department level in keeping with the Student Competence Evaluation procedures.

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating, academic sabotage, facilitating academic dishonesty and fabrication. Plagiarism is prohibited in all papers, projects, take-home exams or any other assignments. Cheating is defined as intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise. Academic sabotage is defined as intentionally taking any action that negatively affects the academic work of another student. Facilitating academic dishonesty is defined as intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of the Honor Code. Fabrication is defined as intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

Suspected cases of academic dishonesty are typically handled administratively by the appropriate faculty member in whose class the alleged infraction occurred in cooperation with the Program Director, Faculty Affairs, and a Student Update Form will be completed. The instructor may assign academic penalties as appropriate, and the Department may assign additional educational or punitive sanctions in keeping with our Student Competence Evaluation procedures.

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## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are reminded of the SMU Honor Code as referenced in the Student Handbook. Intellectual integrity and academic honesty are foundational for this program. Please reference and review the university policies regarding the responsibility, policies, and penalties regarding academic honesty found at: <http://www.smu.edu/StudentAffairs/StudentLife/StudentHandbook/HonorCode>.

Cheating and plagiarism are types of academic misconduct and will not be accepted.

The term “plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. Plagiarism is plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional. To avoid plagiarism, follow guidelines in the current edition of the APA Publication Manual. APA-style writing is always required for every submitted document or assignment, unless specified otherwise by an instructor. Students should be prepared to submit papers and other written work electronically so the instructor can use anti-plagiarism software to validate the originality of the student’s work. Students also have access to these plagiarism-prevention tools and are strongly encouraged to utilize these resources.

The term “cheating” includes, but is not limited to, (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources specifically prohibited by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments; (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; (4) dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); (5) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

If cheating or plagiarism is discovered, a faculty member will assign penalties. Penalties can include reducing or changing a grade or issuing a failing grade for an assignment/test or for the entire course. The faculty member will report the infraction on a Student Update Form. The instructor may assign academic penalties as appropriate, and the Program may assign additional educational or punitive sanctions in keeping with our Student Competence Evaluation procedures. In addition, a student who has cheated or plagiarized may be dismissed from the academic program and the university.

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## INCOMPLETES

**Excerpt reprinted from the online Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development Graduate Programs Bulletin.**

A student may temporarily receive a grade of Incomplete (*I*) if a substantial portion of the course requirements have been completed with passing grades, but for some justifiable reason acceptable to the instructor, the student has been unable to complete the full requirements of the course.

The grade of *I* is normally changed to a final grade within one year but no later than the time of graduation.

At the time a grade of *I* is given, the instructor must stipulate in writing to the student and to the University Registrar's Office the requirements and completion date that are to be met and the final grade that will be given if the requirements are not met by the completion date.

The maximum period of time allowed to clear the Incomplete is 12 months. If the Incomplete grade is not cleared by the date set by the instructor or by the end of the 12-month deadline, the grade of *I* will be changed to the grade provided by the instructor at the time the Incomplete was assigned or to a grade of *F* if no alternate grade was provided.

The grade of *I* is not given in lieu of a grade of *F* or *W*, or other grade, each of which is prescribed for other specific circumstances.

The grade of *I* in a course does not authorize a student to attend the course during a later term. Graduation candidates must clear all Incompletes prior to the deadline in the Official University Calendar. Failure to do so can result in removal from the degree candidacy list and/or conversion of the grade of *I* to the grade indicated by the instructor at the time the grade of *I* was given.

A maximum of two (2) concurrently held Incomplete grades (six hours) in courses is allowed. If this maximum is reached, the student will be allowed to take only one three-hour course per term until the Incomplete grade total is reduced. Students who accumulate a total of three Incomplete grades in courses will be put on probation and not allowed to enroll further until the total is reduced.

Any student who has a pending Incomplete(s) may be subject to Administrative Review by the faculty. If a student is administratively withdrawn or dismissed pursuant to the Administrative Review process (See Automatic Probation and Student Competence & Progress sections of this handbook), and the student has a pending Incomplete(s), the student may be allowed to finish the pending Incomplete course(s) upon approval by the instructor of the course and Department Chair.

Any student who is on a leave of absence for one year or more must reapply to the Counseling program. Students who do not enroll in classes for more than one full year must reapply to the Counseling Program and adhere to the most up-to-date curricular requirements (See Leave of Absence and Reapplication section of this handbook).

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## CHANGES OF GRADES

**Excerpt reprinted from the online Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development Graduate Programs Bulletin.**

Changes of grades, including change of the grade of *I*, are initiated by the course instructor and authorized by the academic chair and by the academic dean of the school in which the course was offered. If a student

requests a grade change, the instructor may ask the student to provide the request as a written petition, which may become an official part of any further process at the instructor's discretion. Changes of grades may be made only for the following authorized reasons: to clear a grade of *I*, to correct a processing error or to reflect a re-evaluation of the student's original work. A change of grade will not be based on additional work options beyond those originally made available to the entire class.

Changes of grades of *I* should be processed within a calendar year of the original grade assignment. Other changes of grades must be processed by the end of the next regular term. No grade will be changed after 12 months or after a student's graduation, except in cases where a grade is successfully appealed – provided that written notice of appeal is given within six months following graduation – and in extenuating circumstances authorized by the academic dean and approved by the registrar.

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### **GRADES FOR REPEATED COURSES**

**Excerpt reprinted from the online Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development Graduate Programs Bulletin.**

Both the initial and the second grades will be recorded on the student's permanent academic record. Both grades will be included in the calculation of the GPA and in the determination of academic probation, suspension, dismissal, honors, and graduation. Only the repeated course and not the initial credit hours count toward the number of hours needed for graduation but both courses are included in the overall grade point average.

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### **GRIEVANCE AND GRADE APPEAL**

A student who thinks an assigned grade is other than the grade earned must first initiate contact with the instructor within seven business days of the grade being posted and meet to discuss the matter with the course instructor to determine if the discrepancy is caused by error or misunderstanding by the end of the second week of the following term. At the time of the initial discussion, the student may be asked to provide a written petition requesting the change of grade.

A student who is not satisfied by the instructor's denial of a request for a grade change, and who maintains that the original grade was capriciously or unfairly determined, may appeal the grade within 5 days to the Program Director, Faculty Affairs of the department in which the course was offered (or, in the case of a non-departmental course, to a faculty agent designated by the dean for the course). After discussing the matter with the student and bearing in mind that the final authority in matters of academic judgment in the determination of a grade rests with the course instructor, the Program Director, Faculty Affairs (or faculty agent) will consult with the course instructor and subsequently report to the student the disposition of the appeal.

A student who is not satisfied by the disposition of the appeal by the Program Director, Faculty Affairs may appeal the decision within 5 days to the Department Chair for a second Departmental review, who will subsequently report to the student the disposition of the appeal.

A student who is not satisfied by the disposition of the appeal may appeal the decision to the dean of the school offering the course within 5 days. The Dean will take action as they deem appropriate. A student may appeal the dean's decision to the provost. In their actions, the Dean and the Provost must respect the principle that the determination of a grade rests with the course instructor.

## GRADUATION

### GRADUATION OVERVIEW

Once a student begins Practicum, they must meet with their faculty advisor to verify eligibility of completion of their degree. It is the responsibility of the student to understand procedures and adhere to the published deadlines for their conferral and graduation. Students missing the conferral deadline for a term must defer their conferral date to a future term.

Students must complete the Practicum and Conferral Eligibility and Verification form and submit it to the Senior Program Specialist in order to be eligible to complete the Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG). Students will need to meet with their advisor in a timely manner, have the form signed by their advisor to verify completion of required classes and confirm conferral eligibility, and email their completed and signed form to the Senior Program Specialist, Kathy Silva, at [ksilva@smu.edu](mailto:ksilva@smu.edu) by the due dates listed below. Students should email their completed forms to their advisor prior to their meeting.

Fall Pre-Practicum or Conferral – Aug 1\*\*

Spring Pre-Practicum or Conferral – December 1

Summer Pre-Practicum or Conferral – May 1

\*\* Please note, most faculty are not on contract during the summer months so please keep this in mind when scheduling your advising appointment. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate with their advisor and have the form signed prior to the August 1st deadline in order to be included in the Fall pre-practicum process or have access to their Fall Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG). Students notify the Senior Program Specialist they want to apply for graduation.

Once the student has been notified they are eligible to graduate, they will submit an online Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG) form in [my.SMU](https://my.smu.edu) well in advance of completing their final course work for a designated conferral term. If the various deadlines for the conferral term are missed, a new ACG must be filed for a future conferral term.

Graduation ceremonies occur twice per year: May and December; however, graduates may confer their degree in one of three terms (Fall, Spring, or Summer).

A fee for regalia (cap, gown, and hood) and diploma must be paid in advance. Filing the form and paying related fees when added to a student's account are the responsibility of the student.

### GRADUATION TERMINOLOGY

- “Conferred” means a student has completed the requirements to earn their degree so the degree has been conferred (awarded) and the student has officially graduated on paper. This happens once a student has earned all the credit hours needed in order to be awarded the degree (63 credit hours for the Master of Science in Counseling degree) and all of the student’s grades have been posted on their transcript - in other words, no grades of Incomplete appear on the transcript.
- To receive a grade in Internship I and Internship II, a student must complete all direct and indirect contact hours required by the State of Texas. The Internship Director and/or the other Internship supervisors track each student’s contact hours and, therefore, know when individual students have completed them. At the end of the term in which a student completes their contact hours, the supervisor will assign the final grade in [my.SMU](#). If a student has previously received a grade of Incomplete, they will process the final grade with a Request for Change of Grade Form through the Counseling office.
- Graduating and attending a graduation (commencement) ceremony are two different events. Attending a graduation ceremony does not mean that a student has formally graduated (see conferred, above). At SMU, students are allowed to “walk” in a graduation ceremony before their degrees have been conferred.
- Counseling students can graduate in one of 3 terms (Fall, Spring, or Summer Terms). The conferral date on a student’s degree will be the last day of the term in which all courses required were completed.
- Students who graduate in the Fall should participate in the December graduation ceremony. Students who graduate in the Spring should participate in the May ceremony. Students graduating in the Summer can elect to ‘walk early’ in the May ceremony by completing a Walk Early Form or participate in the December ceremony.

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## PREPARING TO GRADUATE

As students accrue their contact hours in Internship, they should calculate in which term they will be able to meet the deadlines and complete an ACG (Application for Candidacy to Graduate) in [my.SMU](#). If the student is unable to complete their hours in the term for which they completed their ACG, they should request the Senior Program Specialist defer their graduation. A new ACG for the following term must be completed. There is no charge to file an ACG.

Once a student has filed an ACG, and the date for the graduation ceremony approaches, the student will receive a letter at their home address and several emails from the Senior Program Specialist and the Registrar’s Office with the information needed regarding the graduation ceremony:

- The Graduation Fair (held on main campus with various vendors)
- How and when to order regalia

- How to order invitations
- Ticket information (for the May Term Simmons School ceremony)

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## DIPLOMAS

Sometime during the week following the end of the term, students will be notified their degrees have been conferred as of the last day of the term and will be given instructions as to how to obtain a copy of their final transcripts. Students can also refer to [www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Registrar/TranscriptRequests](http://www.smu.edu/EnrollmentServices/Registrar/TranscriptRequests). *Note: Final transcripts should not be requested before notification that the degree has been conferred; otherwise, it is not the final transcript since the conferral date may not appear on it.*

Diplomas are mailed to the student's mailing address listed in [my.SMU](#). If a student prefers their diploma be mailed to a different address than the listed mailing address, they can list a "diploma" address in [my.SMU](#).

## LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

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### STATEMENT REGARDING REQUIREMENTS

The Counseling program provides and administrates a curriculum for earning a Master of Science in Counseling degree. Within this degree program, there are elective course options that meet or exceed the minimum requirements for LPC, LMFT, and LCDC licensure and School Counseling certification in the state of Texas.

The Counseling program does not guarantee licensure, certification, or employment upon degree completion. It is the responsibility of each student to continue postgraduate work for the desired licensure or certification.

Students should check the state-maintained online site for each license and certification of interest to stay abreast of relevant updates or changes, including important testing dates.

**It is the responsibility of each student interested in potential licensure or certification outside of Texas to understand Texas rules of reciprocity as well as the guidelines for their state(s) of interest.**

Requests for paperwork for out-of-state licensure will initiate with the student's former faculty advisor for review and processing; if necessary, documents will be referred to the appropriate supervisor and/or administrator as needed. Applicants should complete all demographic and course designation information first and provide current addresses/contact information for themselves and the state licensing board. Applicants should anticipate a minimum processing time of 3 weeks (15 business days) for all requests. Students are to compile their own syllabi. Students receive course syllabi at the time the student takes a course. Should copies of any documentation be necessary, they will be provided at a cost of \$.25 per page payable by credit card or check to SMU, and paperwork will be processed within 15 business days. Additional postage charges may apply.



## STUDENT RESOURCES

### SMU IDENTIFICATION CARD

Every admitted Counseling student receives an SMU ID number. This SMU ID number allows students to access information online for enrollment, research, and parking and utilize other campus resources like the Canvas learning management system and the libraries. Students are required to secure an SMU photo ID by going to the main campus and visiting the Park N' Pony office located at the Hughes-Trigg Student Center or logging into [SMU ID Card Services](#). Students can also receive discounts throughout the DFW area using their SMU ID.

### TEXTBOOKS

#### BOOKSTORE

Required course textbooks are available through the SMU Barnes & Noble Bookstore near main campus on Mockingbird Lane. Students may purchase textbooks at any book retailer or online. SMU Barnes & Noble does price match for Amazon. Students can view textbook information for all the courses in a selected term within [my.SMU](#).

1. Login in to [my.SMU](#)
2. Click the Manage Classes tile
3. Click on Class Schedule and select appropriate term
4. Click on the View Textbooks link towards the top of the page.

A list of all Required, Recommended, and Supplemental materials will load for all the courses that one has have enrolled in for the selected term. In addition, students may browse textbook information for specific courses and sections for any other terms by clicking the “View Textbooks” button in the Class Search page. Please note that students may still go to the SMU Bookstore site and look up textbook information one course at a time.

#### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Students are encouraged to retain their course textbooks for building their professional resource library. Additionally, certain reference materials are recommended to help counseling students throughout their academic program: the current DSM, a pocket version DSM, and a current APA Publication Manual.

### MAIN CAMPUS SERVICES

#### PERSONAL COUNSELING SERVICES



Counseling Services is dedicated to supporting the mental health needs of SMU students. It's not a one size fits all approach. A variety of options are available whether it's meeting one of their staff counselors at the Health Center, accessing the network of mental health providers they offer online, or utilizing some of the resources they make available for self-help. Call [214-768-2277](tel:214-768-2277) to schedule your first visit with Counseling Services. All SMU students are eligible to receive free services at the counseling center, regardless of insurance. For more information visit <https://www.smu.edu/studentaffairs/health-center>

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#### FONDREN SCIENCE LIBRARY

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Counseling students may secure materials from the Fondren Library as well as all other campus libraries, with an SMU ID card. To access online resources at SMU Central University Libraries visit <https://www.smu.edu/libraries>.

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#### WEB RESOURCES

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##### CANVAS

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The Counseling program utilizes the SMU online learning management system (LMS), Canvas, to communicate with students through Announcements, Discussion Forums, and scheduled Live Chats. Additionally, all Counseling instructors use the Canvas system as an online teaching tool for course assignments. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the system upon admission, and to check their Canvas course shells before their classes begin in case there are readings or information, they need to be aware of prior to the first class day. Students can access Canvas at <https://www.smu.edu/OIT/Services/Canvas>. Students will need a personally owned device to access course materials and participate in class.

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##### MY.SMU.EDU

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Every student enrolled at SMU must use the online software system for enrollment, financial query, personal record maintenance, and grade viewing, as well as other official University business. Instructions for using the system can be found online at: <http://www.smu.edu/OIT/Services/mySMU/StudentEssentials>

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##### SMU EMAIL

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Admitted SMU students each receive an official SMU email account. **This email account should be used for all school-related correspondence.** Notifications from the Counseling Program office and instructors are delivered through the SMU email system. It is the responsibility of the student to view and maintain this email account on a regular basis. It is highly recommended that students use their SMU email account rather than their personal email accounts to contact SMU faculty and staff via email to ensure that the messages are delivered and not sent to spam or junk folders. SMU email accounts remain available to graduates permanently.

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#### CONFIGURING YOUR SMART PHONE OR TABLET TO RECEIVE SMU EMAIL

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The instructions for configuring your phone or tablet to retrieve your SMU email vary slightly depending on the phone model. Configuration instructions can be found online at: <https://www.smu.edu/oit/services/email/student-config>

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## **SMU MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COUNSELING PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONS**

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### **CHI SIGMA IOTA (CSI)**

Chi Sigma Iota Counseling Academic & Professional Honor Society International is the international honor society of professional counseling and for professional counselors. The mission of CSI is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. The SMU chapter (Sigma Mu) coordinates a mentoring program, workshops throughout the year focused on multiple facets of the counseling field, community service opportunities, newsletters highlighting members and important dates, and student networking and social events. CSI is a student-led organization.

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### **COUNSELORS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE (CSJ)**

Counselors for Social Justice at SMU (CSJ-SMU) is a student-led organization committed to promoting social justice through education, advocacy, and community engagement. Established in 2020, CSJ-SMU has hosted panel discussions, notable authors, and engaged in meaningful partnerships with advocacy resources on campus and in the greater Dallas community to raise awareness and promote action regarding social issues that impact the mental health field. Built on the premise that cultural humility and social justice advocacy are ongoing processes rather than final destinations, CSJ-SMU is guided by student feedback to identify evolving needs and learning opportunities for both students and faculty. The organization strives to foster dialogue and cultivate an inclusive and equitable counseling community.

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### **SMU IN THE GAP**

The SMU in the Gap is a group for current students and alums, hosted by a faculty member and current student. The group meets twice in the fall and twice in the spring to discuss current books, podcasts, and videos relevant to the counseling field.

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### **SMU PLAY THERAPY ASSOCIATION**

The SMU Play Therapy Association is a student support group in the SMU Counseling program where students interested in working with children using play therapy techniques can interface with experts in the play therapy field. Didactic credit toward becoming a Registered Play Therapy is given and CEU hours for LPC, LCSW, and LMFT licensed alumni.

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### **STUDENTS IN ADDICTIONS STUDIES**

Students in Addiction Studies (SAS) is a student-led group dedicated to hosting events and discussions on topics that pertain to both substance-use disorders and process/behavioral addictions. The goals of SAS are

to help gain more education, raise awareness, and facilitate an environment where students can explore the complexities of addiction while engaging in advocacy and prevention efforts.

## APPENDIX A: STUDENT UPDATE FORM

The Student Update Form is completed online through a Qualtrics Survey managed by the Counseling Senior Program Specialist. Please note if the instructor indicates they have not informed the student an Update Form has been submitted, the faculty advisor will inform the student. It is strongly recommended and ***should be standard practice*** that Student Updates be the result of conversations between instructors and students and students be aware when a Student Update is submitted. *Instances in which a student is not informed that a Student Update has been submitted should be rare and for good reason.* The following example form is fictitious.

\*This form must be completed if a minor, moderate, or major concern was indicated for a student on the End-of-Course Student Evaluation, or may be completed at any time by a faculty member or authorized staff member with a concern about a student's progress in the Counseling program. A Student Update may also be used to communicate a "FYI" concern to a student's advisor, which is simply an alert for a possible need for compassionate support.

Student First Name:

Student Last Name:

Student ID Number (available on Canvas, attendance sheet, or My.SMU)

Term:

Instructor / Faculty Member/ Staff Member:

Date


\*Level of Concern

- ☐ **FYI** - Alert to advisor that student is experiencing stressful circumstances that make graduate-level work more challenging for the short term. Student's permission has been obtained to share specific information with advisor. (No action required, although student may benefit from encouragement or support.)
- ☐ **Minor level of concern:** Demonstrable impact on student's current academic or clinical performance, but not to the level of academic failure or requiring action at the programmatic level. Behavior seems likely to be an ongoing concern with the potential to hinder the student's success in the program.
- ☐ **Moderate level of concern:** Significant and demonstrable impact on student's current academic or clinical performance, up to the level of academic failure if the course is an elective that does not have to be repeated. Behavior seems likely to be an ongoing concern with the potential to hinder the student's success in the program.
- ☐ **Major level of concern:** Significant and demonstrable impact on student's current academic or clinical performance, up to the level of academic failure in a required course. Behavior has the potential to jeopardize the student's success in the program if action is not taken and appears to warrant immediate follow-up from the advisor or the Counseling program. Grade of C or lower in any required course always constitutes a major concern.

Type of Update (you may check more than one category)

- ☐ Academic Progress
- ☐ Professional Dispositions
- ☐ Clinical Competency
- ☐ Disciplinary (includes Ethics & Integrity)
- ☐ None of the Above

Course Title:

Select one 

Next page >

\*What is the student's status in the course? Selected one of the choices below:

- ☐ The student **DID** complete the course with a passing grade (i.e., grade of B- or higher)
- ☐ The student **DID** complete the course but **DID NOT** make a passing grade (i.e., grade of C or below)
- ☐ The student **DID NOT** complete the course (i.e., withdrew)
- ☐ Student is currently enrolled in the course but NOT passing with a grade of B- or higher
- ☐ Student is currently enrolled in the course and is passing
- ☐ N/A - I am not submitting an Update about a student in a course I am teaching

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Next page >

\*Please explain your concern(s) in the space below.

Have you discussed your concern with the student already or notified the student that you are submitting a Student Update to their advisor?

- ☐ Yes, I have already discussed my concern with the student and they are aware that I am submitting an Update to their advisor
- ☐ I have discussed my concern with the student. They may not be aware that I'm submitting an Update to their advisor.
- ☐ I have not discussed my concern with the student or informed them that I'm submitting an Update to their advisor.

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Next page >

\*Preparation for Classes

		Frequently ill prepared				Always well prepared			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Click to write Statement 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Personal motivation / enthusiasm

		Indifferent				Enthusiastic			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Ability to communicate (written)

		Often unclear				Always clear			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Ability to communicate (verbal)

		Often unclear				Always clear			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Student's attitude toward peers

		Inconsiderate				Considerate			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Concern for others (empathy, compassion, etc.)

		Not appropriate				Appropriate			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Appropriate:Not appropriate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Overall rating for student

		Less than satisfactory				Excellent			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Attitude toward instructor / staff

		Less than satisfactory				Excellent			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

\*Ability to regulate self inside and outside of class

		Not appropriate				Appropriate			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Instructor or Advisor: Add student comments here if the student would like to add their own remarks.



What recommendations or suggestions can you offer that would help the student's advisor know how best to support the student's progress in relation to this concern?

Instructor's electronic signature (use computer mouse to sign in the space below)

Type

Sign

Type your name below to generate a signature.

## APPENDIX B: STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN EXAMPLE



**Student Name: Semester/Year: Fall 2024**

**Advisor:**

**Intended Support Plan Completion Date:**

**Date of Advisor-Student Meeting:**

☐ **Plan accepted (date):**

☐ **Reviewed by Program Director on (date)\*:**

*\*PD should review before the plan is presented to the student*

☐ **Plan appealed (date):**

### SMU M.S. in COUNSELING PROGRAM STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN

The Student Support Plan (SSP or “Support Plan” for short) is designed to support student progress in the SMU Counseling program and ensure a student’s mastery of the Counseling program’s Student Learning Objectives as well as CACREP competency standards. Students are routinely evaluated through academic grades, observed academic skills, clinical knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions in courses and across the program of study. Students and advisors should be aware that criteria exist for the successful completion of the Support Plan, that students have the right to appeal a Support Plan, and that procedures and consequences are in place in the event a Support Plan is refused or not fulfilled successfully. Students and advisors, please refer to the SMU Counseling Student Handbook, the SMU Counseling Instructor Handbook, and the Simmons Graduate Handbook for additional details regarding student progress reporting and the Student Support Plan.

Advisors possess the autonomy and authority to create Student Support Plans for their advisees. Such Support Plans may be made in collaboration with the advisee if such an approach is deemed beneficial by the advisor. The Support Plan should be reviewed and signed by the Counseling Program Director *prior* to presenting it to the student. If the Support Plan is revised following the advisor’s initial consultation with the student, the revised Support Plan should again be reviewed and signed by the Counseling Program Director.

#### Part I: Advisor Summary

***Briefly summarize the particular nature of the concern(s) regarding this student:***

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**Advisor, please check ☐ which Student Learning Objective(s), if any, constitute the focus of this Student Support Plan.** (Note: ☐ symbol can be copied here and pasted below)

### **Student Learning Objectives (SLO)**

*The Student Learning Objectives of the SMU M.S. in Counseling Program are to produce counselors who...*

- ☐ 1. Knowledgeably apply professional ethical and legal standards in practice, and who exercise ethical and responsible conduct in their profession.
- ☐ 2. Integrate multicultural competence in counseling practice.
- ☐ 3. Promote resilience, optimal development, and wellness for their clients across the lifespan.
- ☐ 4. Recognize and skillfully navigate the intersections between mental well-being, work, relationships, and other life roles and factors.
- ☐ 5. Possess a broad knowledge of counseling theories, and capably apply theory to practice.
- ☐ 6. Achieve competence in clinical skills, including interviewing, counseling, and case conceptualization, in a variety of individual and group modalities.
- ☐ 7. Demonstrate the ability to conduct assessments for diagnosis and intervention planning purposes.
- ☐ 8. Comprehend research findings and their implications for practice.
- ☐ 9. Achieve and maintain a strong counselor identity through affiliation and engagement with professional organizations and professional service.

### **Student Professional Dispositions (PD)**

Professional dispositions pertain to the conduct, demeanor, and character of students. Professional dispositions are evaluated at admissions, through end-of-term student evaluations, and through the Clinical Progress Assessment administered in Basic and Advanced Clinical Methods, Practicum, and Internship. Although not exhaustive, the following list includes most of the professional disposition areas formally evaluated within the Counseling program.

**Advisor, please indicate which Professional Dispositions(s), if any, that constitute the focus of this Support Plan.** (Note: ☐ symbol can be copied here and pasted below)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preparation for classes                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Openness to feedback                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal motivation/enthusiasm                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal, professional, and academic integrity   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to communicate (written)                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Appropriate communication with faculty and staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to communicate (verbal)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuality in attendance and deadlines          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student's attitude toward peers and/or clients          | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributions to class or group discussions      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Concern for others (empathy, compassion, respect, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attitude toward instructor/staff                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional and professional maturity              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ability to regulate self, inside and outside of class   | <input type="checkbox"/> Public demeanor                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professional demeanor and appearance                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical and legal conduct                        |



### **Clinical & Professional Competencies**

**Advisor, please indicate which Clinical & Professional Competencies, if any, constitute the focus of this Support Plan.** The Clinical & Professional Competencies may be referenced on the Clinical Progress Assessment (CPA) used in courses such as Basic Clinical Methods, Advanced Clinical Methods, Practicum, Internship I, and Internship II. However, clinical competency concerns may be identified at any time, not just in the courses mentioned, and not just through the CPA. The CPA competency categories (some of which are key performance indicators) represent skills that are in development across the entire program of study.

(Note: □ symbol can be copied here and pasted below)

- If significant CPA scores are available to be reported, please record them below.
- If CPA scores for a particular course are a concern, please provide the course number and name here: \_\_\_\_\_ and report the significant CPA scores below or file a copy of the CPA with this Support Plan.

**c Counselor Characteristics**

(KPI: 2.F.5.F. Counselor characteristics and behaviors that influence the counseling process)

**c Therapeutic Relationship**

**c Communication Skills**

**c Session Management**

**c Informal & Formal Assessment**

(KPI: 2.F.7.E. Use of assessments for diagnostic and intervention planning purposes)

**c Ethical & Legal Practice**

(KPI: 2.F.1.I. Ethical standards of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and applications of ethical and legal considerations in professional counseling.)

**c Theoretical Orientation**

(KPI: 2.F.5.A. Theories and models of counseling)

**c Cultural Competency**

(KPI: 2.F.2c. Multicultural counseling competencies)

**c Group Counseling**

(KPI: 2.F.6.B. Dynamics associated with group process and development)

**c Supervision & Professional Conduct**

(Disposition Measure)

***Please file all Student Update Forms together with this Support Plan***

## **Part 2: Student Support Plan Requirements**

**Deadline for completion of all requirements:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Schedule & format for interim assessment of progress, if any** (e.g., contact with advisor once a week/month/semester, reports from instructors, reports from other supporters such as personal counselors, documentation of achieved tasks, etc.):

\_\_\_\_Stephanie is to schedule monthly meetings with her advisor, discuss her plan with her instructors at the beginning of the semester and solicit feedback regarding progress with class attendance, meeting assignment deadlines, ask for assistance as needed when she needs clarity with instructions. Stephanie also discussed meeting with a personal counselor and seeking accommodations through DASS.\_\_\_\_

**Support Plan Requirements** (the table below may be copied and pasted as many times as needed to list all the requirements of the Plan)

<b>SLO/Disposition/Competency Area:</b>	
<b>Required Learning Experience or Task(s):</b>	
<b>Student Competency Evaluation Method(s):</b>	
<b>Demonstrable Competency Outcome:</b>	
<b>To be completed by (date):</b>	

<b>SLO/Disposition/Competency Area:</b>	
<b>Required Learning Experience or Task (s):</b>	
<b>Student Competency Evaluation Method(s):</b>	
<b>Demonstrable Competency Outcome:</b>	
<b>To be completed by (date):</b>	

**Any additional requirements to be included in this Support Plan:**

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### Part 3: Policies, Procedures, & Conditions for Success

*Advisor, please review this section with your advisee:*

**Supporting Your Progress:** The purpose of the Student Support Plan is to help students move forward in their studies and succeed in the SMU Counseling Program. The activities required by the Support Plan are intended to supply additional instruction and to provide opportunities to demonstrate competency so that the student may continue toward completion of the degree.

Students may be identified by full-time or adjunct faculty, supervisors, or staff as needing support at any point during their program of study. Issues that may warrant a Student Support Plan include academic progress or clinical competency concerns and issues with professional dispositions such as personal awareness, interpersonal skills, ethical judgment, and integrity. Concerns may also extend to behaviors that occur outside the classroom or clinical environments. For additional details, please refer to the Counseling program Student Handbook sections on “Student Evaluations” and “Student Competence.” Concerns regarding students’ progress in the Counseling Program are dealt with in a systematic manner and shared only with those faculty/staff whose awareness or input is required. Student privacy and dignity is important, and Counseling faculty and staff are committed to safeguarding students’ reputations in the Program.

**Succeeding on the Support Plan:** Although the goal of the Support Plan is to be helpful, it should be taken seriously. The tasks are designed to improve the student’s competency, and that improvement needs to be demonstrable. A successful Support Plan requires more than just completing the tasks. It requires demonstrating that the identified area(s) of concern have truly been addressed. For example, if a student is receiving support for their writing skills and their Support Plan calls for them to attend a writing workshop, just attending the workshop would not demonstrate that their writing skills have improved. The Support Plan would not be considered successful until the student demonstrated stronger writing skills, for example, through feedback on a paper. Your advisor will develop your Support Plan in a way that lets

you know how the success of the Support Plan will be determined. You should know that success is expected, but if that's not the case, you should also know that there are a range of options available if the Support Plan is not successful. Those options depend on each student's circumstances and may include additional time to complete tasks, additional support and/or learning opportunities, renewing the Support Plan, leave of absence, or dismissal from the Counseling Program. The criteria for success are described in more detail in the Support Plan *success criteria* subsection below. Your advisor may also collaborate with you in developing the Support Plan to ensure it best fits your needs and circumstances.

**Support Plan Success Criteria:** In order to be successful on the Student Support Plan, the student must (a) demonstrate competency in the identified areas of the Support Plan; (b) complete all tasks specified by the Support Plan; (c) follow all instructions and stipulations of the Support Plan, such as checking in with the advisor, obtaining reports from instructors, and so on; (d) make satisfactory academic progress (i.e., maintain 3.0 GPA); (e) receive no additional Student Update Forms regarding the area(s) identified in the Support Plan for the Plan's duration, and receive no moderate or major Student Update Forms regarding other concerns (i.e., maintain good academic standing); (f) meet quality expectations in the completion of tasks; (g) meet task deadlines and/or meeting appointments; (h) display qualities of maturity, self-awareness, responsibility, cooperation, and initiative; and (i) adhere to proper procedures for agreement with or appeal of the Support Plan as specified in the Counseling Program Student Handbook for the current academic year.

Students working with a Student Support Plan are held to the same minimum acceptable standards of academic and disciplinary performance as all other students enrolled in the SMU Counseling Program, and these standards of performance, including maintaining a GPA of 3.00 or higher, are considered required competencies of this Student Support Plan. Students on a Support Plan whose current GPA is below 3.0 will be expected to raise their GPA to 3.0 or above as part of their Support Plan success criteria.

At the end of the Student Support Plan, the student and advisor will meet, and the advisor will make a determination of whether the student has successfully demonstrated competency and met the requirements of the Support Plan (a through i above). The advisor will inform the student whether the Support Plan has been successfully fulfilled or whether additional options need to be considered.

**Student right of appeal for the Student Support Plan:** The Student Support Plan is typically supportive in nature and not punitive, but when a Support Plan is indicated for a student, it is required unless it is formally appealed or refused. For details regarding students' rights to appeal or refuse a Support Plan and how long the student has to respond, please consult the current SMU Counseling Program Student Handbook. In the case of appeal, the Program Director will mediate a decision between the instructor/advisor and the student regarding the concerns and Student Support Plan specifications. Students should be aware that refusal of a Support Plan will result in dismissal from the Counseling Program, and that failure to respond (accept, refuse, or appeal) in a timely way constitutes refusal, so please take care to follow the guidelines carefully. ***An appeal must occur prior to the student signing the Student Support Plan.***

**Important Note:** A Student Support Plan is not noted on your transcript. It is not part of any record that would "follow" you beyond the master's program or affect your future graduate studies or career plans. In addition, if you are not satisfied with your Support Plan, it is recommended that you collaborate with your advisor to make it more effective for you.

*Students are strongly recommended to read the SMU Counseling Program Student Handbook, the SMU Graduate Student Handbook, and the SMU Counseling Field Experience Manual (applicable for Practicum and Internship students), and to be aware of their rights and responsibilities. The SMU Counseling program has the right to establish its own remedial and disciplinary procedures as long as*

*they meet minimum standards established by the Simmons graduate catalog. **Advisors: Please allow students time to read the appeal and refusal options in the current SMU Counseling Student Handbook before they sign/accept this Support Plan either by allowing them to take the Support Plan home for consideration or by reviewing the Student Handbook during your consultation (or both).***

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND SIGNATURES

By signing below, both the student and the academic advisor acknowledge that they have met to discuss the concerns regarding the student's progress in the Counseling program, the requirements and timeline for this Student Support Plan, potential consequences for failure or non-compliance with the Plan, and the student's right to appeal.

In addition, the student's signature indicates understanding and acceptance of the Student Support Plan, its requirements, procedures, and timeline.

***The student may only appeal this Support Plan prior to signing.*** The appeal must be made in writing to the Program Director. If a student fails to contact the Director to appeal, the advisor specifications stand and the student must comply or withdrawal/expulsion procedures will begin.

The Counseling Program Director's signature indicates that the Support Plan has been reviewed to ensure it is aligned with program policies and procedures and accurately reflects program standards and competencies. The Student Support Plan is not considered final until the Program Director has reviewed it and signed below.

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Student signature (sign only if accepting the Plan)

date

---

Faculty/Academic Advisor signature

date

---

Program Director Signature

date



## Part 4: Progress Updates

- ☐ Student has accepted the Support Plan and is working toward completion of tasks
- ☐ Student has appealed the Support Plan within the timeframe specified by the current SMU Student Handbook, with the following results (*please save support documentation of appeals process with this document*):
  - ☐ Student has appealed the Support Plan, *but not within the timeframe specified by the current SMU Student Handbook*, with the following results (*please save support documentation of appeals process with this document*):
- ☐ Student has refused the Support Plan without appeal
- ☐ Student failed to respond to the Support Plan within the timeframe specified in the current Counseling Student Handbook, which constitutes refusal of the Plan.

**Advisor:** *Please document any advising conducted with the student concerning this Support Plan or related concerns, as well as any feedback from instructors, supervisors, or others whose comments would be pertinent to evaluation of the student's progress on the Support Plan. Also describe any revisions to the Plan or extensions granted. Do not alter the original, signed Support Plan – execute an addendum to this document for any revisions.*

### Progress Updates:

## Part 5: Support Plan Completion & Final Evaluation

**Date of Final Evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_ **By:** ☐ Advisor ☐ Program Director ☐ Dept. Chair

### Communication of Final Evaluation with Student:

- ☐ In-person    ☐ Phone    ☐ Email    ☐ Letter

**Advisor:** *Please check the appropriate response(s) below:*

- ☐ Student has successfully completed all portions of the Student Support Plan, as evidenced by demonstration of the specified outcomes, and has met all expectations for quality, timeliness, and professional conduct.
- ☐ Student has completed all portions of the Student Support Plan, as evidenced by demonstration of the specified outcomes, *with minor concerns* regarding quality, timeliness, and/or professional conduct.
- ☐ Student has completed all portions of the Student Support Plan, as evidenced by demonstration of the specified outcomes, *but with major concerns* regarding quality, timeliness, and/or professional conduct.
- ☐ Student has **not** successfully completed all portions of the Student Support Plan, as evidenced by demonstration of the specified outcomes. *Please describe any tasks or outcomes not accomplished:*

### Advisor Recommendation(s):

- ☐ **SUCCESS:** I am satisfied with this student's progress and believe that the student is performing adequately in the identified competency areas and meets all criteria for passing mentioned above. (Recommendation: No further action needed)

☐ **Not Successful\*:** I am not satisfied with this student's progress and believe that the student is not performing adequately in the identified competency areas, and/or I have serious concerns about this student's work quality, professionalism, or dispositions in the context of this Support Plan.

**\*Advisor: If a decision of "Not Successful" has been made, please describe your recommendation:**

- ☐ Extension of this Student Support Plan to (date): \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Modification of the Student Support Plan, as described below or as attached in separate document. New completion date: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Program dismissal
- ☐ Other recommendations (please describe):

***\*Please consult with the Program Director and the Department Chair if you are choosing to extend or modify a Student Support Plan deemed Not Successful. Students who fail to demonstrate competency may need to have advising regarding course selection or holds placed on enrollment in certain courses for which they are not prepared.***

**Faculty/Advisor:** By signing below, I verify that I have communicated the results of this Student Support Plan final evaluation with the student and communicated successful completion or recommendation for further action to the Counseling Program Director and/or the Department Chair.

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Faculty/Advisor signature

Date

### Part 6: SMU Counseling Program Final Determination

- ☐ Student may continue in the Counseling program with no further action necessary at this time.
- ☐ Student may continue in the Counseling program with additional action to be determined by the Academic Advisor/Counseling faculty.
- ☐ Voluntary student withdrawal from the Counseling program
- ☐ Dismissal from the Counseling program

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Signature, SMU Counseling Program Director or Department Chair

Date

**Additional Notes (e.g., basis for dismissal, documentation of appeals, etc.):**

## APPENDIX C: END-OF-TERM STUDENT EVALUATION SHEET EXAMPLE

## SMU Counseling Program End-of-Term Student Evaluation

3/1/2024

[illegible]

Please see reverse of this form for Student Update Reporting Rubric.

Instructor Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

8/1/2024

STUDENT UPDATE RUBRIC – FOR COMMUNICATING PROGRESS ISSUES TO ACADEMIC ADVISORS				
<b>Notes to Instructors:</b> (1) Students should not be surprised to find out that an Update has been sent to their advisor. A Student Update is intended to be the outcome of a conversation between instructor and student, in which the student has received feedback and is aware that the advisor is being updated regarding a possible need for mentoring or other support. (2) In addition, when submitting a Student Update, it is ideal for instructors to provide recommendations to help the student, beyond merely describing the concerning behavior. (3) Discretion is needed regarding disclosure of personal student details, regardless of good intentions. Instructors and advisors should not share information of a sensitive nature unnecessarily, should not share any information without student authorization unless required to do so by Title IX, and should only share information with authorized individuals. Be mindful not to share details about student physical or mental health status, affectional orientation, gender identity, or other information that could potentially be marginalizing or stigmatizing.				
FYI	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	DISCIPLINARY
An alert to the advisor of a possible need for awareness, compassionate support, encouragement, or resources. Student's behavior or circumstances have some bearing on current academic or clinical experience (i.e., need for extension on assignment deadlines, signs or expressions of stress that are appropriate to the situation) but not necessarily a measurable impact on performance. The issue is likely to be an isolated incident that will be resolved within the academic term, and is unlikely to become a pattern. Likely only to become a concern if it should become a pattern or ongoing situation.	Behavior has demonstrable impact on student's current academic or clinical performance, but not to the level of academic failure or requiring action at the programmatic level. Student's behavior / performance has <b>not</b> been sufficiently resolved or addressed within the current term and/or seems likely to be an ongoing concern with the potential to hinder the student's success in the program.  If the student's difficulty / behavior <i>has</i> been resolved within the current term <i>and</i> does not seem likely to be an ongoing concern, then submit an FYI Update.	Behavior has significant and demonstrable impact on student's current academic or clinical performance, up to the level of academic failure <i>if</i> the course is an elective that does not have to be repeated. Student's behavior/performance has <b>not</b> been sufficiently resolved or addressed within the current term and seems likely to be an ongoing concern with the potential to hinder the student's success in the program.  An update indicating a moderate level of concern warrants follow-up from the advisor. The student may benefit from advising, mentoring, or resources.	Behavior has significant and demonstrable impact on student's current academic or clinical performance, up to the level of academic failure in a required course, and appears to warrant immediate support, corrective learning, or other follow-up from the advisor or the Counseling program.  Student's behavior / performance has <b>not</b> been sufficiently resolved or addressed within the current term and has the potential to jeopardize the student's success in the program if action is not taken. A grade of C+ or lower in any required course always constitutes a major concern.	Can be used when student's behavior involves a violation of academic integrity, a violation of clinical / professional ethics, or other form of student misconduct. This category is distinct from other types of Student Updates in which students appear to be striving in earnest to adhere to program expectations but are struggling in some manner. This category documents an act in which the student's behavior is in clear disregard for stated or normative expectations in a graduate school, professional, or mental health service provider setting. This category may be submitted at the Minor, Moderate, or Major levels of concern.

## APPENDIX D: PRACTICUM AND CONFERRAL ELIGIBILITY AND VERIFICATION FORM

### PRACTICUM AND CONFERRAL ELIGIBILITY AND VERIFICATION FORM

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SMU ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Program Start Semester/Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Advisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Specialty: CMH \_\_\_\_\_ MCF \_\_\_\_\_ School Counseling \_\_\_\_\_

### SMU MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COUNSELING PROGRAM

(63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)

Attached is the standard core curriculum and clinical training sequence for the M.S. in Counseling degree, which is taken by all students. Beyond the standard curriculum, students complete three elective courses that are determined by their Specialty. Students must complete a minimum of 36 credit hours of the required core classes listed below before starting the Clinical Sequence. Please note, most students will complete 45 credit hours before starting their clinical sequence. Keep in mind, students only need to be enrolled in 6 credit hours in order to be eligible for financial aid. In addition, students must pass the MOCe Exam and complete other requirements prior to the start of Practicum. Please refer to the Counseling Program Student Handbook for additional details.

In order to be eligible to begin the pre-practicum process and/or to be eligible to complete the Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG), students must complete the attached form and meet with their advisor in a timely manner to review their degree progress and receive feedback on their individual assessment of knowledge, skills and professional dispositions (CACREP 2.C.3). Students must have the form signed by their advisor verifying completion of required classes and confirming eligibility for Practicum or conferral and then email their completed and signed form to the Counseling Department at [counselingmaster@smu.edu](mailto:counselingmaster@smu.edu) by the due dates listed below. **Students should wait to complete their form until after they have enrolled in all required classes needed to be eligible for either Practicum or Conferral (graduation).** Students will email their completed forms to their advisor, **prior** to their meeting.

Summer Practicum (Spring pre-practicum process) or Spring Conferral – December 1

Fall Practicum (Summer pre-practicum process) or Summer Conferral – May 1

**\*\*Spring Practicum (Fall pre-practicum) or Fall Conferral – Aug 1**

**\*\*** Please note, most faculty are not on contract during the summer months so please keep this in mind when scheduling your advising appointment. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate with their advisor and have the form signed **prior** to the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline in order to be included in the Fall pre-practicum process or have access to their Fall Application for Candidacy to Graduate (ACG). *If you are unable to reach your advisor during the summer months, you can email the Program Director for Student Affairs, Dr. Farnoosh Nouri at [fnouri@smu.edu](mailto:fnouri@smu.edu).*

**Remember, it is your responsibility to ensure that your enrollment is accurate and all University and Program deadlines are met.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

SMU ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Program Start Semester/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Specialty: CMH \_\_\_\_\_

MCF \_\_\_\_\_

School Counseling \_\_\_\_\_

## SMU MASTER OF SCIENCE IN COUNSELING PROGRAM

(63 Credit Hours; Core Courses Fulfill Texas LPC Academic Requirements)

*\* These courses can be take alongside your clinical sequence*

PRE-CLINICAL CORE REQUIREMENTS (Required before entry into Practicum)	Semester Completed	Semester to be Completed	CREDIT HOURS
HDCN 6301: Counseling Theories			
HDCN 6302: Basic Clinical Methods			
HDCN 6303: Group Counseling			
HDCN 6304: Counseling Diverse Communities			
HDCN 6305: Advanced Clinical Methods			
HDCN 6316: Family Therapy I			
HDCN 6318: Ethics I			
HDCN 6319: Ethics II			
HDCN 6320: Life Span Human Development			
HDCN 6321: Lifestyle & Career Development *			
HDCN 6330: Psychopathology: Adult			
HDCN 6331: Psychopathology: Child/Adolescent *			
HDCN 6340: Assessment			
HDCN 6349: Research Design and Statistics			
HDCN 6352: Psychology of Addictions *			
<b>TOTAL CORE HOURS</b>			
<b>ELECTIVES (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>			
* Course Name and #:			
* Course Name and #:			
* Course Name and #:			
<b>TOTAL ELECTIVE HOURS</b>			
<b>CLINICAL SEQUENCE: PRACTICUM, INTERNSHIP I &amp; INTERNSHIP II (3 COURSES = 9 CREDIT HOURS)</b>			
HDCN 6395: Supervised Clinical Practicum			
HDCN 6398: Internship I			
HDCN 6399: Internship II			
<b>TOTAL CREDIT HOURS</b>			

*The student and advisor agree that they have discussed the student's individual assessment of knowledge, skills and professional dispositions (CACREP 2.C.3); degree progress; and eligibility for practicum or conferral as indicated by the signatures below.*

### Practicum Eligibility

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature & Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature & Date

### Conferral/Graduation Eligibility

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature & Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature & Date