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Welcome

Welcome to the University of Phoenix Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health (CCMH) program. You have joined a community of counseling professionals and educators committed to providing you with a collaborative, scholarly and practitioner-oriented academic and clinical experience. University of Phoenix cultivates an award-winning multi-cultural environment of mutual respect. Our CCMH program maintains a low faculty-to-student ratio, which allows for engagement with you, our students, via ongoing dialogue for personal mentoring as well as for collaborative inquiry and practice. Our comprehensive, rigorous, and research-based curriculum is designed to build your professional counselor identity and prepare you for state licensure.

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You will be supported

Section I

Introduction

This handbook outlines the areas critical to effective student learning in the Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health Counseling (MSC/CCMH v003, 03CA, 03NV) online program. Students will use this handbook, along with other University of Phoenix (UOPX) student resources and materials, as a resource guide as they progress through their program.

General Policies and Procedures

Overview of MSC Program

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences offers graduate-level counseling programs with curricula designed to meet the educational standards for Board certification as a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and licensure by state authorities. The American Counseling Association (2018) provides the following definition as a foundation: “Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.”

The Master’s in Counseling, Counseling Clinical Mental Health (MSC/CCMH) program at University of Phoenix meets the needs of the working adult professional who will benefit from a graduate education in counseling. Because counseling and jobs requiring counseling skills have an above-average expected growth in both the public and private sectors through the first quarter of the 21st century, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2021), students from diverse settings and backgrounds will find the interpersonal communication and therapeutic skills they master in this program useful in enhancing their careers.

Post-Graduate Licensure Requirements

Our CCMH curriculum prepares students for licensure in the jurisdictions where it is offered. Our Phoenix, AZ campus is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

In order to practice as a counselor in most states, the student must be licensed as an LPC (licensed professional counselor), MFT (marriage and family therapist), or other comparable state professional license designation. License requirements vary by state. Students should ensure they stay updated on the licensure requirements in any state in which the student desires to practice. Review the [state licensure requirements](#).

The Master of Science in Counseling/Clinical Mental Health Counseling program meets the California Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) educational requirements for registration with the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) as an Associate Professional Clinical Counselor (APCC). Upon successful completion of all educational requirements and required postgraduate supervised clinical hours, graduates are eligible to sit for LPCC licensure exam in California. Students should ensure they stay updated on the licensure requirements in any state in which the student desires to practice. Review the [state licensure requirements](#).

Program Structure

Curriculum, course work, and clinical experience combine to produce theoretical knowledge, critical thinking skills, affective awareness, ethical development, and counseling skills. These outcomes are based upon accepted CACREP standards emphasizing programmatic attention to counselor professional identity and ethics, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, career development, helping relationships, group work, assessment, research and program evaluation. Outcome-based assessments of core counseling competencies are ongoing throughout the program. For that reason, the

practicum/internship courses are completed at the end of the required course sequence. The CCMH program length is 3-4 years, including practicum and internship requirements.

The program involves a variety of delivery formats depending on the subject matter and the competencies to be developed. These formats include multimodal delivery methods that may involve, but are not limited to the following:

- Class lecture
- Assigned readings
- Role-plays
- Small in-class group work
- Discussion
- Small group Collaborative presentations
- Small group and independent research
- Collaborative exercises
- Access to an electronic chat room to discuss materials with other class members and faculty
- Written assignments
- Quizzes and in-class exams
- Critical thinking activities
- Take-home exams and exercises
- Synchronous individual and group supervision

Because of the compressed timeframe and therefore intensive nature of graduate courses at University of Phoenix (UOPX), we do not recommend taking more than one course at a time (doubling up). In addition to classroom time, out-of-class time is required for homework, collaborative meetings, project activities, and comprehensive clinical coursework.

Online Resources

The CCMH program offers several online resources to facilitate learning and development of core competencies. The UOPX classroom includes student textbooks in electronic format, an extensive online library (the University Library) with multiple databases, information about the local campus, access online support, and links to assistance with educational tasks (such as writing, researching, and subject tutoring). Students will access the UOPX classroom throughout their program.

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17. To use principles of clinical evaluation and assessment in order to make clinical and program decisions within sound ethical, legal, and regulatory parameters.
18. To apply supervision and consultative principles and practices in a variety of settings.
19. To assist with identifying and providing needed services in the event of individual or community crises, emergencies, and disasters.

Information About Professional Organizations

The CCMH program promotes and facilitates the development of a strong professional identity between and amongst counselors. Students are required to join and participate in the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its branches and divisions. Proof of membership and coverage for professional liability insurance is required prior to entering a practicum or internship course.

The ACA offers counseling resources and serves as a platform for national leadership, advocacy, and development of the counseling profession. In addition to the parent organization, the ACA includes interest-based opportunities for students to pursue. Students can access the [ACA](#) website.

State branches of these professional organizations advocate for counselors at the state level and typically provide continuing education opportunities for the counseling community. Students can become involved in their respective choice of professional affiliation at the national and state levels by attending meetings and conferences, joining committees, offering input, volunteering, submitting manuscripts to journals, and submitting presentations for conferences.

Program Orientation

Students and potential students receive multiple levels of orientation. Students are provided with information on the following:

- Specific information about the program, policies, and requirements
- Counselor identity
- Specific practicum and internship expectations

Graduate Portfolio (CCMH/502)

Graduate Portfolio, CCMH/502, is a 6-week orientation required for MSC/CCMH counseling program

supervision, through the Collaborate platform. Students will be expected to be online at the assigned hours, in order to participate fully in all residency activities.

Residencies are designed in an optimized, sequential format that allows students to enhance their online coursework and develop their counselor professional identity. The residency experiences provide students the time to collaborate and build a strong learning community—a factor that can help strengthen and maintain motivation so that students continue moving toward the degree.

When it comes to residency requirements, timing is key. Coursework builds the foundation for residencies, and experience keeps students on track in the program. Residency course tracks are scheduled for students to create quality work and complete all tasks for each track before moving on to the next one.

Each residency is designed to evaluate students' counseling skill sets and counselor professional dispositions, based on prior learning within the program. This is a great opportunity for students to gain insights regarding their developing skills based on faculty assessment and feedback. It is also an opportunity to develop rapport with both faculty and fellow students by developing social networks and support groups. Students must earn a passing grade in each residency in order to move into the next sequence of courses.

Each residency is an important milestone in the development of professional counseling skills. The residencies provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate skills and apply learning through face-to-face counseling situations. Attendance at the in-person workshop portion of the residency course is mandatory. Students are required to be present for the entire portion of the 3-day workshop, and the virtual CNSL/513R residency II synchronous activities. Arriving late or leaving early will result in not passing the residency course. It is important for students to keep this in mind when making travel arrangements or planning schedules for the virtual Residency II course.

If a student does not pass a residency course on the first attempt, they must wait 3 months before retaking the course. During this 3-month remediation period, the student will work closely with his or her faculty advisor on skill development to prepare for the second attempt. If the student does not pass a residency course on the second attempt, the student will be placed on scholastic suspension.

The residency courses are a great benefit for students in this program. Not only do the courses allow students to receive constructive feedback on skill development, they also ensure students are progressing through their mastery of skills at the pace required for the program. These courses allow students to demonstrate readiness for the next courses in their program while preparing them for the professional field of counseling.

The in-person workshop portion of local residency courses starts at 8:00 a.m. on Friday and concludes at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, including homework Friday and Saturday nights. This is an intensive 3 days of working individually and in groups, as both group members and group leaders. The virtual format of Residency II will have a strict schedule for the live synchronous components.

Placement staff will work with our students to prepare them with all the necessary information, timelines,

Practicum and Internships are supervised clinical experiences that provide opportunities for students to counsel clients in community settings. The Phoenix campus Counseling Skills Center (CSC) is equipped with private counseling rooms, a small group meeting room, video/audio recording technology, a bulletin board for information sharing, and inter(r)5(e)19(s) bulletin

Student Responsibilities

Each student will maintain behavior in accordance with the highest ethical and professional counseling standards as outlined by the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its branches and divisions. Students are expected to keep all information about clients confidential. Logs, case notes, and other clinical assignments should contain no identifying information.

In addition to the counseling professional standards, all students at UOPX must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. Students are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and with integrity as responsible members of the University's academic community. This requires the demonstration of mutual respect and civility in academic and professional discourse. Conduct, either on or off-campus that is

7. The candidate appreciates and values human diversity and shows respect for others' varied talents and perspectives.
8. The candidate values the development of critical thinking, independent problem solving, and performance capabilities in themselves and those with whom they interacts.
9. The candidate demonstrates a commitment to keeping abreast of new ideas and understanding in the human service and/or counseling field.
10. The candidate demonstrates a level of responsibility and ethical judgment consistent with professional guidelines developed for these fields and appropriate for a professional human service worker and/or counselor.
11. The candidate maintains the highest ethical standards in interactions with faculty, students, staff, and clients, as well as in preparation and submission of required course work and the completion of tests.
12. The candidate maintains a pattern of exceeding minimal requirements in courses, field placements, practica, and internships.

When it is determined by faculty, college staff, or campus management that a candidate falls short of meeting any of the above Supplemental Standards, they may file a "Referral" with the Academic Director of Counseling, or designee. Any candidate who receives one or more referral(s) shall be counseled, remediated, or withdrawn from their program, as appropriate.

Candidates who are separately charged with violating the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to the policies, procedures, and sanctions for processing such charges. However, a charge under the Student Code of Conduct may also be the basis for a referral on separate academic grounds under these Supplemental Standards. Similarly, an observation under the Referral Process may be the basis for a Student Code of Conduct charge.

Procedure for Processing Supplemental Standards Referrals

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has instituted processes to ensure candidates are regularly evaluated by faculty and have access to advisement on professional requirements. These processes are conducted through collaboration between faculty, college and campus staff, and college and campus management who understand the professions and who can offer constructive feedback. It is the intention of the Referral Process to identify a candidate's opportunities for personal development and professional growth and promote dialogue on how the candidate can improve and move forward in their program.

During a candidate's program, faculty members, through a review of grades and dispositions, will monitor the candidate's academic and ethical progress. The Academic Director of Counseling or designee will serve as the primary point of contact in instances where a remediation plan and/or Candidate Retention Committee meeting is deemed necessary.

First Referral

1. Upon receipt of a Notification of a Referral, the college appointed administrator will review the information presented, as well as gather any additional information relevant to the notification. The appointed administrator will forward a letter of referral identifying the student's deficiencies in meeting the Supplemental Standards to Resolution Services for review. Upon approval by Resolution Services, the appointed administrator will then notify the student by letter of the referral, identifying the student's deficiencies in meeting the Supplemental Standards.

Note: The appointed administrator may convene a meeting of the Retention Committee if the reported conduct is deemed serious enough to warrant possible recommendation options available to the Retention Committee. (See Sections B and C below).
2. Upon receipt of the Notification of Referral letter, the student must respond in writing within ten (10) calendar days. Failure to respond may result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled. A student

5. The student will be notified in writing of the decision of the Retention Committee, including any right of appeal.

B. Retention Committee

1. The Retention Committee is comprised of the appointed administrator or designee and at least two (2) faculty members within the student's college.
2. The appointed administrator and the student will agree to a time/date that the student must meet with the Retention Committee.
3. Failure by the student to meet with the Retention Committee within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the notification will result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled. A student suspended solely for failure to meet with the Retention Committee will remain suspended pending the decision of the Retention Committee.
4. The student must participate in a dialogue with the Retention Committee to discuss why the referral occurred and whether a formal remediation plan or withdrawal from the program shall be implemented. The Retention Committee members shall discuss with the student the issues or problems that appear to be hindering the student's academic progress and the student is expected to provide insight regarding the referral and possible solutions.
5. The student will not be permitted to have representation by an attorney or any other third party during the process.
6. After meeting with the student, the Retention Committee members shall dismiss the student from the meeting prior to their deliberations on a recommendation. The Retention Committee shall make one of the following recommendations:
 - a. Take no action
 - b. Institute a formal remediation plan
 - c. Withdraw the student from the program
7. The Retention Committee shall issue a summary report, generally containing findings and recommendations to the college appointed dean, who has the ultimate authority to accept, reject, or modify the recommendations of the Retention Committee and render the decision.

C. Decision

1. Take No Action
 - a. Upon a decision to take no action, the student will be notified in writing of the decision. A decision to take no action may be taken into consideration should the student receive any future referral. A decision to take no action is final and cannot be appealed.
2. Institute a Formal Remediation Plan
 - a. Upon the decision that a formal remediation plan be instituted, the student will be notified in writing of this decision and directed to contact the appointed administrator.
 - b. Upon notification, the student is expected to contact the appointed administrator within thirty (30) calendar days for the purpose of scheduling a meeting to develop a remediation plan to assist the student in correcting identified deficiencies. Failure by the student to meet with the appointed administrator within thirty (30) calendar days of notification may result in an additional referral under the Supplemental Standards.
 - c. The appointed administrator has final authority over the terms of the remediation plan. The student will be provided a written copy of the remediation plan.
 - d. The student is expected to maintain contact with the appointed administrator regarding progress in completing the remediation plan or challenges with completing the remediation plan. Failure to complete the remediation plan within the prescribed time may result in an additional referral under the Supplemental Standards.

Code of Ethics, Glossary of Terms, p. 19). This objective is achieved, in part, when student are evaluated

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (95-100%) <i>A</i>	Meets Expectations
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Class Participation Guidelines

Grading the student, both individually and as a group member, is a complex task for the faculty member. The philosophy of UOPX is to encourage active student participation in each week to augment the learning; thus, faculty members must be able to objectively and subjectively grade participation.

In most courses, part of the student's grade is derived from class participation or is a factor in collaborative assignments. Outlined below is a suggested class participation guide:

1. With regard to group involvement, the student:
 - Contributes to group discussion frequently
 - Chooses topics relevant to the topic being presented in class at that time
 - Is interested in class and faculty discussion
 - Actively listens to others
 - Leads group discussion
 - Serves as group spokesperson
 - Relates theory to practice in group discussion
 - Asks questions
 - Is prepared for group discussion
 - Enhances the group presentation
2. With regard to class involvement, the student:
 - Arrives prepared to each class
 - Shows interest in faculty and class discussion
 - Asks pertinent questions in class
 - Relates theory to practice
 - Contributes to class discussion frequently
 - Brings materials to share with the class (at least once)
 - Does not dominate or monopolize group discussions
 - Makes an effort to involve classmates in discussions

University of Phoenix Approved Writing Style Guide

The UOPX-approved writing style guide is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition. As a suggestion, purchase the manual before the first course of the

Course Sequence and Prerequisites

Counseling Fundamentals				
Course ID	Course Title	Credits	Length	Prerequisites
CCMH/502	Graduate Portfolio	0	6 weeks	
CCMH/504	Individual and Family Development Across the Life Span	3	6 weeks	CCMH/500
CCMH/506	Personality Theories and Counseling Models	3	8 weeks	CCMH/504
CCMH/515*	Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Counseling	3	8 weeks	CCMH/504
CCMH/510*	Multi-Cultural Issues in Mental Health Counseling	3	6 weeks	CCMH/504

References

- American Counseling Association. (2014). *ACA code of ethics*.
<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>
- Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Marriage and Family Therapists, at

University of Phoenix Master of Science in Counseling Statement of Acknowledgement and Understanding

I, _____ (Print Student Name), hereby state that I have downloaded an electronic copy or received a hard copy of the University of Phoenix MSC/CCMH Online Program Handbook and have read and understand the Program Handbook for the University of Phoenix MSC/CCMH degree program. I further state that I acknowledge and will adhere to the supplemental