



# Graduate Student Handbook

**Spring 2022**

## **Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling**

18<sup>th</sup> edition (2022/2023)

Edited by Dr. Olivia Uwamahoro Williams and Dr. Morgan Jenkins. Revised Fall 2022.  
Please contact Dr. Morgan Jenkins ([mjenkins@westga.edu](mailto:mjenkins@westga.edu)) with any comments, suggestions, or revisions.

# Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Speech-Language Pathology

## Counselor Education Programs

M.Ed. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling & School Counseling



**\*The EdS, and the Ed.D. Program in Professional Counseling & Supervision are detailed in separate handbooks.**

This Handbook is designed to provide graduate students enrolled in the clinical mental health and school counseling programs with helpful information. It is not intended to be a comprehensive listing of policy statements or to supersede University policy.

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## Introduction and Welcome

Welcome to the Counselor Education Program (CEP) in the Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling (CSC). The faculty and staff are pleased that you have selected the University of West Georgia (UWG) for the pursuit of your graduate education. We are committed to helping make this a positive educational, personal, and professional growth experience.



## Overview of the Department

The Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling (CSC) is housed in the College of Education (COE) at the University of West Georgia and is home to graduate degree programs in Counseling as well as undergraduate and graduate degree programs in Speech Language Pathology.

It is the policy of CSC to actively recruit students from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and cultural influences. Our faculty and students have diverse backgrounds and the program strives to maintain multicultural awareness and appreciation. The department is committed to recruiting students and faculty from diverse backgrounds.

### **Vision and Mission Statement**

The vision of the Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling is to

prepare exemplary practitioners who make a meaningful difference in the community and in the lives of the individuals with whom they work.

The mission of the Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling is to:  
Prepare exemplary entry-level practitioners with the professional knowledge, skills, and disposition to deliver evidence-based practices to diverse individuals across the life span.  
Prepare exemplary advanced-level practitioners with professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions to bring about systemic change through program evaluation, advocacy, and leadership.

Provide outreach to the community, including outreach through a comprehensive community clinic that delivers speech-language pathology, audiology, developmental reading instruction, special education, counseling, and related diagnostic and educational services.  
Explore and communicate new knowledge through applied research.

## Accreditations

### **CACREP**

The School Counseling (SC) and Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) programs have been continuously accredited by the [Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs \(CACREP\)](#) since March 2001, and are accredited under the 2009 standards through October 31, 2023.

### **OTHER ACCREDITATIONS**

- ❖ UWG is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).
- ❖ COE is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).



# Counselor Education Program

## Program Faculty and Staff



**CHIBBARO, JULIA, PH.D., ACS**

**Professor & Ed.S. Coordinator**

Ph.D. (University of South Carolina), Ed.S. (University of South Carolina), M.Ed. (The Citadel), B.A. (Randolph-Macon Women's College)

Office: Ed Annex 225

Phone: 678-839-6110

[jchibbar@westga.edu](mailto:jchibbar@westga.edu)



**FINAN, REGINA, PH.D.**

**Assistant Professor**

Ph.D. (University of Georgia), M.S. (Georgia State University), BS (Georgia State University)

Office: Ed. Annex 219

Phone: 678-839-6167

[rfinan@westga.edu](mailto:rfinan@westga.edu)



**HUFFSTEAD, MARY, PH.D., LPC, NCC, CPCS**

**Assistant Professor & Clinical Mental Health & School Counseling Track Coordinator**

Ph.D. (Georgia State University), M.Ed. (Auburn University), BS (Indiana State University)

Office: Ed. Annex 235

Phone: 678-839-2359

[mhuffste@westga.edu](mailto:mhuffste@westga.edu)



**JENKINS, MORGAN, PH.D., LPC, ACS**

**Clinical Assistant Professor**

Ph.D. (Auburn University), M.Ed. (Auburn University), B.A. (Auburn University)

Office: Ed Annex 227

Phone: 678-839-6161

[mjenkins@westga.edu](mailto:mjenkins@westga.edu)





**PINELLAS, MICHELE, Ed.D.**

**Clinical Assistant Professor**

Ed.D. (National Louis University), M.Ed. (Florida A&M University), B.A. (Florida A&M University)

Office: Ed Annex 143

Phone: 678-839-2245

[mpinellas@westga.edu](mailto:mpinellas@westga.edu)

**ROBINSON, REBECCA**

**Staff Member**

Office: Education Annex 239

Phone: 678-839-6567

[rebeccar@westga.edu](mailto:rebeccar@westga.edu)



**UWAMAHORO, OLIVIA, PH.D., LPC, NCC, CPCS**

**Assistant Professor**

Ph.D. (University of Central Florida), M.S. (University of Memphis), B.A. (University of Tennessee)

Office: Ed Annex 229

Phone: 678-839-6127

[oliviau@westga.edu](mailto:oliviau@westga.edu)



**VARGA, MATT, PH.D.**

**Department Chair and Associate Professor**

Ph.D. (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), M.S. (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), B.A. (Christopher Newport University)

Office: Ed Annex 237

Phone: 678-839-6117

[mvarga@westga.edu](mailto:mvarga@westga.edu)



**WHISENHUNT, JULIA, PH.D., LPC, NCC, CPCS**

**Associate Professor and Director of the Ed.D. in Professional Counseling and Ed.D. Coordinator**

Ph.D. (Georgia State University), Ed.S. (University of West Georgia), M.A. (University of West Georgia), B.A. (State University of West Georgia)

Office: Ed Annex 241

Phone: 678-839-6116

[jwhisenh@westga.edu](mailto:jwhisenh@westga.edu)

### **Degree Programs**

The Counselor Education Program (CEP) offers graduate level course work leading to the following degrees:

- ❖ M.Ed. with specialties in:
  - Clinical Mental Health Counseling (60 semester hours)
  - School Counseling (60 semester hours)
- ❖ Ed.S. degree in Professional Counseling (information regarding the 27 hour Ed.S. is outlined in a separate handbook)
- ❖ Ed.D. in Professional Counseling and Supervision (information regarding the Ed.D is outlined in a separate handbook)

### **Mission Statement**

The CEP is committed to excellence in teaching in a caring and open student-focused environment. In accordance with this belief, the CEP is guided by the mission statement below:

The Counselor Education Program provides educational excellence in a personal environment through:

- ❖ challenging and supporting personal and professional development of students and faculty;
- ❖ promoting evidence-based practice;
- ❖ teaching from a knowledge base grounded in research;
- ❖ affirming diversity of ideas, values and persons;
- ❖ upholding the highest ethical principles in professional conduct;
- ❖ communicating new knowledge and ideas through applied research; and
- ❖ engaging in collaborative relationships with colleagues, institutions and communities.

We are committed to the education of exemplary practitioners through adherence to the highest professional preparation standards.

### **Program Goals (CMHC and SC)**

Candidates will demonstrate:

1. An identity as a professional counselor;
2. Understanding of the roles and functions of professional counselors as leaders, advocates, collaborators, and consultants;
3. Understanding of and compliance with codes of ethics and standards of practice of the counseling profession;
4. Ability to use technology to enhance services delivered to clients/students;
5. Understanding of and skills to work with and advocate for diverse client/student populations;
6. Understanding and practical application of theories of individual and group counseling and
7. human development;
8. Ability to facilitate growth, development, success, and health with clients/students in individual and group settings;
9. Understanding of approaches to research, assessment, and evaluation and use of data to meet the needs of clients, students, and/or communities; AND
10. Understanding of career development theories and ability to facilitate client/student career decision making and/or opportunities.

### **Core Student Learning Outcomes (CMHC and SC)**

1. Candidates will demonstrate professional dispositions consistent with the field of professional counseling, as measured by an average rating of “proficient” or higher on a summative administration of the Professional Dispositions and Behaviors Rubric.
2. Candidates will demonstrate professional skills consistent with the field of professional

counseling, as measured by an average rating of “proficient” or higher on a summative administration of the Field Placement Evaluation.

3. Candidates will know the major concepts, theories, and practices articulated in current counselor preparation standards, as measured by a passing score on the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE).

## **Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is to prepare skilled and knowledgeable professional counselors for careers in clinical mental health and community settings including hospitals, clinics, independent practice, managed behavioral care organizations, employee assistance programs, substance abuse treatment centers and other community agencies. Our program is designed to meet educational requirements for Georgia licensure as well as the 2009 standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational (CACREP) for Clinical Mental Health. Our graduates will be ethical, reflective practitioners competent in serving a diverse population. We are committed to the delivery of excellent client services, to understanding and respecting human diversity, to ethical and social responsibility, and to leadership in the counseling profession.

Graduates of the 60 hour M.Ed. Clinical Mental Health Counseling program meet all of the academic requirements for licensure as an APC in Georgia. For additional rules and regulations related to licensure refer to the [Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists website](#) . Graduates are also eligible for certification as a NCC upon application and passing the National Counselor Exam (NCE). For more information on national certification, visit the [NBCC website](#).

## **School Counseling Program**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the School Counseling program is to educate Professional School Counselors. Through leadership, advocacy, collaboration, use of data, and action, our graduates will be competent at identifying and removing barriers that impede equal access to educational and career opportunities for all students. We are committed to educating Professional School Counselors skilled in needs assessment who are effective counselors and advocates for providing equal resources and support for all students. We believe in and are dedicated to high academic achievement, career success, and personal/social development of all students.

Graduates of the 60-hour M.Ed. program in School Counseling meet the academic requirements established by the Georgia State Department of Education for certification as a school counselor in grades P-12. Students entering the program who have not acquired a teaching certificate will be required to take an additional course in special education that is mandatory for initial certification in Georgia. Upon successful completion of the school counseling concentration and meeting all state requirements (passing the GACE content and any other requirements in place at the time), graduates may apply and be recommended for certification as a school counselor by UWG’s certification officer.

## **Program Evaluation**

The CEP evaluates our programs in a number of ways including the following:

### **Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:**

An integral part of all of our degree programs is the ongoing assessment of student learning outcomes. In order to achieve this, key assessments across the curriculum are linked to learning outcomes. Data are entered into Tk20, the Assessment and Data Management System to which **all students must subscribe**. Students may subscribe directly on line at <https://westga.tk20.com> or may buy a subscription pack at the University Bookstore.

### **Course Evaluations**

At the end of each semester, students are asked to anonymously evaluate each course and instructor. This is a University-wide evaluation process. The purpose of this evaluation is to provide the instructor with constructive feedback relative to future teaching of the course. Additionally, students may at any time communicate to any faculty member their needs, observations, or appraisal.

### **Other evaluations include**

- ❖ Graduate Surveys
- ❖ Employer Surveys
- ❖ Site Supervisor Surveys

The data collected from all evaluation methods are used by the faculty for continuous improvement of the program.

## **Advisement**

Students are assigned an advisor upon admission to the program and receive initial advisement during orientation. Students must meet with their advisor during their first semester of coursework to discuss program requirements as well as to develop their individual plans of study. Students also are recommended to schedule periodic meetings with their advisor to be sure program requirements are being met. It is imperative that you keep in contact with your advisor. Because changes do occur, it is the responsibility of the student to check their official UWG email address and to visit the Counselor Education Program website <https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.westga.edu/academics/education/cspc/counselor-education-and-college-student-affairs.php&sa=D&ust=1603115474041000&usg=AFQjCNESfIncfqwLq3tkDhJdqa8SnLdAAw> for notice of change.

## **Transfer Credits**

A maximum of 6 semester hours of appropriate graduate credit MAY be transferred from another academic institution upon approval of the advisor. The following conditions must be met:

- ❖ Coursework credited toward awarding of another degree cannot be transferred;
- ❖ No course older than 7 years will be accepted for transfer credit;
- ❖ Work must have been for graduate degree credit; and
- ❖ Transfer courses must meet the student learning objectives for the courses they replace.

A transfer credit request form is available in the department office and must be completed and signed by the appropriate parties.

## Plan of Studies

Current plans of studies may be found at the following webpages:  
[http://www.westga.edu/share/documents/sheets/program\\_000287.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/share/documents/sheets/program_000287.pdf) and  
[https://www.westga.edu/share/documents/sheets/program\\_000135.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/share/documents/sheets/program_000135.pdf)

## Change of Specialty Area

Students may request a transfer from one specialty area (CMHC, CSA, or SC) to another within the M.Ed. program. The student must meet all admission requirements in the newly selected specialty area. This process begins with a written statement describing the rationale for the request and a discussion with their advisor. The advisor will make a recommendation regarding the request to the department chair who will notify the student regarding the request. If it is approved, the student must make an appointment with their advisor to determine a new plan of study.

## Course Syllabi

Course syllabi contain descriptions of course objectives, activities, evaluation criteria, and other general information and are available at [http://www.westga.edu/coecps/index\\_1160.php](http://www.westga.edu/coecps/index_1160.php). They may also be accessed via individual faculty profiles. From the Counselor Education Program website [UWG | Counselor Education and College Student Affairs](#), select “Directory” from menu on the left hand side of the page. Then select “view my profile” under the individual instructor’s name. The courses taught by that instructor are listed by semester. Select “view syllabus” next to the course name and number. Syllabi for the upcoming/current semester are posted on Course Den. Students are expected to print the course syllabus and bring it to the first class meeting.

## Registration

### **The Scoop**

The Scoop is an online resource published each semester. This indispensable guide contains essential information including the University calendar, general announcements, class periods, exam schedules, registration deadlines, financial aid information, a map of the campus, and other important details. Find The Scoop at <https://www.westga.edu/student-services/registrar/the-scoop.php>.

### **Class Bulletin**

A listing of courses offered during the current and, usually two semesters past, can be found at the UWG website. Click “Future Students” or “Current Students” on the homepage [www.westga.edu](http://www.westga.edu), then “Class Bulletin.”

### **Selection of Courses**

Selection of courses should be done in consultation with one’s advisor. During advisement sessions, the academic advisor will go over the Plan of Study and discuss scheduling of classes. Be sure to make an appointment with your advisor soon after admission during the first semester and at regular intervals thereafter.

### **New Student Orientation and Registration:**

Students who are newly admitted in the CEP program will receive an invitation to our mandatory New

Student Orientation and have the opportunity to be initially advised and registered for courses. During this meeting, students and faculty will be introduced, important details relevant to the CEP will be shared, and students will have an opportunity to register for courses.

### **Continuing Students**

Registration dates are available online in the Scoop. After the first semester, continuing students may register for next semester courses during “early registration.” Registration may be accomplished on-line at <http://banweb.westga.edu> in person at the Registrar Office, or by mail. Registration during the “early registration” period is recommended because returning students are more likely to obtain a seat in the desired class.

### **Class Schedules and Mode of Delivery**

Courses may be offered fully face-to-face, fully online (synchronous or asynchronous), or in a hybrid model. Most face-to-face course sessions are offered from 5:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m. during Fall and Spring semesters. Summer semester classes are spread across daytime and evening hours. Occasionally, courses are taught on Saturdays or weekends. Check the University Class Bulletin for course schedules at <http://banweb.westga.edu>. The CEP clinical courses will include on campus supervision that often requires time before or after class or a return to campus another day.

### **Fees and Fee Payment**

Tuition and fee payment may be made on-line <http://banweb.westga.edu> (recommended), in person at the Registrar’s Office, or by mail. If payment is late, classes may be dropped and a late fee will be assessed. In addition to university fees, a fee of \$150 is assessed for enrollment in CEPD 6182 (internship) and a fee of \$60 for enrollment in CEPD 6188 (practicum). Further, a \$30 education simulator fee is associated with the following courses: CEPD 6135, CEPD 6140, CEPD 6160, CEPD 6172, CEPD 7136, CEPD 7141, and CEPD 7153. The courses to which education simulator fees are attached may change over time.

### **Drop/Add and Withdrawal**

If it is necessary to drop or add a course after registration, there is a one to three day opportunity at the beginning of each semester. After that time period, withdrawal policies are in effect, including a grade of “W” on the transcript and no refund of tuition. See [www.westga.edu/registrar/](http://www.westga.edu/registrar/) for policies and procedures.

## **Financial Aid, Scholarships and Awards**

### **Financial Aid**

Financial Aid is available in a variety of forms including federal, state and institutional loans, grants, scholarships and work programs. Please visit the Financial Aid office [www.westga.edu/finaid/](http://www.westga.edu/finaid/) for more information.

### **CEP Scholarships**

The CEP selects one candidate in the program each year for the John J. and Ann K. Pershing Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship was established in memory of the Pershings by family, friends, and former students. Dr. Pershing served as Dean of Student Services and also was a professor and acting chair of the Guidance and Counseling Department at West Georgia. The scholarship award is usually around \$200.00, though the availability of monies and the actual amount of the award will vary with the economy. CEP students may be eligible for other scholarships. Detailed information about all scholarships may be found

at the COE homepage [UWG | College of Education](#)

### **CEP Awards**

CEP presents two awards each year at the COE Convocation. Criteria for the awards vary from year to year but consistently recognize those students who excel in academic performance, advocacy, leadership, professional development and service.

## **Graduate Research Assistantships**

The CEP employs Graduate Research Assistants (GRA). The appointments are for 20 hours per week or less. GRAs must be full time students carrying 9 semester hours. Preference will be given to students enrolled full time in CEP course work. In addition to a set salary, students receive a tuition waiver each semester. GRAs are evaluated each semester by the faculty member(s) with whom they work. Responsibilities vary according to the needs within the department each semester. Assistantships introduce students to many opportunities to work with faculty. These opportunities include such assignments as library research, data input, statistical processing, writing, and professional development in the form of presentations with professors. Interested students should apply through Career Services and/or Graduate studies. Occasionally, professors are able to employ students for work because of research grant funding. If interested, be sure to share your interest with your advisor.

## **Clinical Experiences**

All students enrolled in the CMHC and SC programs must complete the appropriate practicum and internship. Information regarding these clinical experiences is detailed in the most current edition of the Practicum and Internship Handbook located at [http://www.westga.edu/coecps/index\\_588.php](http://www.westga.edu/coecps/index_588.php).

## **Grades**

### **Academic Standing and Retention**

Grades are letter grades of A, B, C, and F for graduate students. The Practicum and Internships are graded with S/U (satisfactory and unsatisfactory). All students enrolled in CEP programs must maintain a cumulative graduate-level GPA of 3.0 or higher to remain in good academic standing. Any student earning a C in a core course must retake the course, regardless of the cumulative GPA, and earn a grade of B or higher. A C in a non-core course will not be included in the student's approved plan of studies. The student may retake the same course or substitute another graduate-level course (approved by the advisor) one time. The student must earn a B or higher in order for the grade to be included in the approved plan of study. The repeated course will not replace the grade for the original course; in other words, all grades will be calculated to comprise the cumulative GPA. Earning an Unsatisfactory, two C's, or an F in a core course will result in dismissal from the program.

### **Grading Policy**

Grading policies are outlined in the course syllabus and are in accordance with the Grading System for Graduate Students as outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook located at [UWG | Academic Policies](#)

### **Academic Standards**

Academic Standards are described in the Graduate Catalog located at [UWG | Academic Policies](#)

### **Academic Appeals**

Students have the right to appeal a course grade. Policy for grade appeals may be found in the Graduate Catalog at [UWG | Academic Policies](#)

### **Assignment of Incomplete**

An incomplete (I) indicates that a student was doing satisfactory work but, for non-academic reasons beyond his or her control, was unable to meet the full requirements of the course. An incomplete will be given only for illness, death in the family, or other major emergencies. Approval for an incomplete must be made by student's instructor, Department Chair, and COE Dean. An incomplete must be removed by the completion of work within one calendar year; otherwise, the Incomplete (I) becomes a Failure (F).

### **Courses with a Clinical Component**

The following statement represents the grading policy for courses with a clinical component (exclusive of practicum and internship).

*This is a course concentrating on clinical performance. In order to successfully complete the course students must demonstrate clinical skills which in the assessment of the instructor meet at least 80% of the expected level of performance. Failure to meet this 80% criterion will result in the assignment of a grade of C or F for the course. No grade of A or B regardless of academic performance will be assigned to any individual who fails to perform at the 80% level clinically.*

This grading policy pertains to the following courses: CEPD 6151 Assessment and Appraisal in Counseling, CEPD 6140 Basic Counseling Skills, and CEPD 6160 Group Counseling. This policy may pertain to other courses as well; refer to course syllabi.

## **Academic and Ethical Expectations**

### **Faculty Expectations of Students**

Faculty expectations of students' academic, professional, and personal development are explicit in admission and grade point policies, as well as in the course syllabi. Students are advised to plan their progress through the program at a pace that allows for meeting normal responsibilities to self and others. Students are responsible for knowing and following all college and departmental policies and procedures.

### **Class Attendance**

Class attendance policies are outlined in the syllabus. Students are expected to attend each class session, to be on time, and be present for the full class session. Failure to adhere to attendance policy as outlined in the syllabus may result in a reduction of grade.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty located at this hyperlink <https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpsa/handbook.php>. All work completed in this program must be original work. Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty. Plagiarism occurs when a student uses or purchases ghostwritten papers. It also occurs when a student utilizes ideas or information obtained from another person without giving credit to that person. If plagiarism or another act of academic dishonesty occurs, it will be dealt with in accordance with the academic misconduct policy as stated in the latest Student Handbook and the Graduate Catalog.

### **Style Manual**

Students in the Counselor Education Program are expected to use the most recent edition of the



Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association as the style manual for writing reports and papers. This manual is available in the University bookstore and other local bookstores. The APA publication manual addresses correct format, organization of the paper, and plagiarism. Grades may be lowered due to non-compliance to APA style. It is the student's responsibility to learn APA style outside the classroom and ensure papers comply.

### **Ethical Standards**

Ethical standards of the profession (ACA Code of Ethics) guide and protect the client, the counselor, and the student. Ethical standards such as confidentiality, informed consent, and dual relationships will be introduced in CEPD 6140 Introduction to Counseling Practice and impressed upon the students throughout the program. The issues regarding confidentiality will be especially stressed and maintained in courses such as CEPD 6160 Group Counseling and CEPD 7141, Professional Orientation and Ethics. During the Practicum and Internship, students will directly adhere to the ethical standards as a part of the counseling experience. There are likely to be items on professional examinations (i.e., CEP exit exam, LPC licensure exam, etc.) specific to the ACA Code of Ethics. Students are expected to be familiar with the ACA Code of Ethics which can be found at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org).

### **On-Line Social Networks**

Students who participate in on-line social networks (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.) should be mindful that as counselors-in-training, they represent the counseling profession. Carefully select "friends" who have access to your information and carefully screen the information about you that has public access. Restrict or remove access to any information (including pictures) that could be construed as unprofessional. Remember, your clients, their families, your peers, UWG faculty members, and others could be looking at your page. Do not "friend" or communicate with clients via social media.

### **Exit Exam**

All M.Ed. students in CMHC and SC programs must pass the exit exam (CPCE) in order to be eligible for graduation. The CPCE is offered three times per year, during Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. See full policy under Graduation Requirements and Information.

### **Technology Competencies**

Students are expected to already possess basic computer skills upon entering CEP and to acquire more skills as they progress through the program. Below is a list of computer competencies that describe this developmental expectation:

- ❖ Basic Computer Operation and Concepts
- ❖ Word Processing Skills
- ❖ Spreadsheet Skills
- ❖ Internet/Web Skills
- ❖ Myuwg
- ❖ Library Skills
- ❖ Course Den/D2L
- ❖ TK20

## **Systematic Review of Students**

In accordance with 2016 CACREP standards and best practices, CEP faculty systematically monitor and evaluate the academic, clinical, and intrapersonal/interpersonal functioning of all students enrolled in programs in Counselor Education and College Student Affairs at the University of West Georgia. It is our intent and responsibility to maintain rigorous academic and dispositional standards in the preparation of CMHC and SC students. As a result, the UWG CSC faculty strives for transparency when evaluating

students throughout the program. As you know, ALL students undergo the systematic review process, which takes place during CEPD 6160: Group Counseling, and CEPD 6188: Professional Counseling Practicum. Sometimes, however, students are struggling in courses, or are showing dispositional concerns that require immediate attention between the systematic review processes. The following outline illustrates the process that faculty adhere to when evaluating and remediating students throughout their matriculation in the program, inclusive of the systematic student review process and student reviews that are situation-specific. To provide context, the following information includes examples, but is not exclusive, of behaviors expected of students in three critical areas of functioning and are usually reasons for evaluation and intervention.

Academic: Maintain 3.0 GPA and earn no more than one grade of C; complete program in timely manner in compliance with all program, college, and university requirements, and university policies and procedures; maintain contact with advisor and take appropriate sequencing of coursework; make consistent progress in thesis/dissertation; demonstrate creative problem solving, critical thinking and intellectual flexibility; progress in career role by developing an area of specialization and practice.

Examples of problem behaviors include failure to maintain academic standards, academic dishonesty, and inconsistency in academic performance, failure to respond to and incorporate feedback regarding academic performance across courses and assignments.

Clinical: Integrate theory and research to guide clinical practice; demonstrate consistent progress in ability to work with clients including: assessment, conceptualization, selection, implementation, and evaluation of counseling interventions; demonstrate development of change agent skills; integrate multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills into professional interactions; establish professional interactions with clients and supervisors; and, uphold professional ethics.

Examples of problem behaviors include unsatisfactory performance and/or progress in counseling practice courses; failure to maintain security of client records or assessment instruments; engagement in exploitive relationship with clients; failure to recognize limits of competence and/or working outside boundaries of competence; and failure to accurately disclose one's professional status.

Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Functioning: Is aware of and manages emotions and behavior in a way that facilitates interpersonal interactions; is sensitive to issues of diversity and demonstrates respect for individual differences; establishes and maintains effective working relationships with peers and clients; understands and demonstrates professional and personal boundaries within role and context; actively practices wellness activities; and, recognizes and responds appropriately to personal limitations, values, and traits that impede counselor development

Examples of problem behaviors include those that obstruct the training process and/or threaten the welfare of the individual student, peers, colleagues, and clients (e.g., active substance abuse); failure to maintain academic commitments (i.e. contribute to group work); relationships with peers, supervisors, faculty, and/or clients characterized by conflict, dishonesty, harassment, discrimination, and/or exploitation.

## **STEP BY STEP SUMMARY OF SYSTEMATIC STUDENT REVIEW PROCESS**

**Step 1:** Student enrolled in CEPD 6160 and CEPD 6188.

**Step 2:** Student is notified by course faculty to complete progress reporting form in TK20.

**Step 3:** Faculty will complete Performance Monitoring Rubric for each student in collaboration with program faculty. Results will be available to students as soon as the review has been completed.

**Step 4a:** Acceptable progress at the first review (CEPD 6160) is determined by rubric scores of 2 or higher in all categories. Any scores of 1 (unacceptable) will immediately result in a professional development plan developed jointly by the student and his/her advisor. The goal of the plan is remediation of problem areas when possible. Students who are making unsatisfactory progress in more than one area may be referred to the student review committee.

**Step 4b** (2nd review; CEPD 6188): Acceptable progress at the second review is determined by rubric scores of 3 or higher in all categories. Any scores of 1 (unacceptable), or more than one score of 2 (developing), will immediately result in a referral to the student review committee and may result in suspension or expulsion from the program.

### **STEP BY STEP SUMMARY OF STUDENT REVIEW PROCESS, SITUATION-SPECIFIC**

**Step 1:** Student is notified by program faculty that they are under review, and are given information as to the nature of the review (e.g., clinical, dispositional, and/or inter/intra-personal)

**Step 2:** A student review committee is formed, which includes 2 faculty members from the CPS department

**Step 3:** Student attends review and has opportunity to express concerns and opinions. Student is given evidence of reasons for review.

**Step 4:** Following the outcome of this meeting, a Professional Development Plan may be initiated. This plan will be created by faculty. The Professional Development plan includes the following: The student's advisor and at least one other faculty member of the student's selection will meet with a student to discuss the noted deficiencies and suggest the steps necessary for remediation. The remediation plan must include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Specific measures to be taken;
2. Time line for completing the plan;
3. The means for determining whether the measures taken have resulted in remediation;
4. The consequences to the student if there is a failure to remedy the problem within the specified time line, which may include being dropped from the program;
5. Notification of the student's rights in this process

A copy of the plan for remediation and a summary of the committee meeting will be developed by the advisor and provided to the student, program coordinator, department head, and Director of Graduate Studies.

If the student's committee, at the end of the designated time line, determines that the remediation efforts have been successful, all of the individuals listed above will be formally notified of that determination. If the student's committee determines that the conditions for remediation have not been met in the time designated, the student will be given time to prepare and present his/her case to the Student Review

Committee (SRC). The SRC will make a recommendation based on input from the student and the student's advisor.

If the recommendation is made to drop the student from the program, the SRC will prepare a statement reiterating the deficiencies and the outcome of the original professional development plan and forward it to the same individuals listed in "a" above.

### **Student Rights**

- Students have a right to review this policy
- Students have a right to receive written description of the faculty concerns prior to any meetings to discuss progress or remediation
- Students have a right to respond to concerns raised about their progress and have their responses considered and integrated, when feasible, into professional development plans
- Students whose progress review results in recommendations for suspension or dismissal have the right to appeal that decision beginning with the department head.

## **Graduation Requirements and Information**

### **General Requirements**

Students must have successfully completed the appropriate plan of studies with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and receive a passing score on the department exit exam to be eligible for graduation. See [UWG | Office of Graduate Admissions](#) for university policy related to graduation requirements.

### **Exit Exam**

All M.Ed. students in CMHC and SC programs are required to take and pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) in order to graduate. The CPCE is administered every semester including summer. The CPCE is a multiple choice exam testing the eight CACREP core areas. Additional information regarding the CPCE may be found at <http://www.cce-global.org/org/cpce>. Work with your advisor to determine your eligibility for the exam. In order to be eligible to take the exam students must:

- ❖ complete an online application to indicate eligibility to sit for the exam
- ❖ create a Pearson VUE account, per the instructions provided by CCE
- ❖ submit payment through Pearson VUE

The program coordinator disseminates information via the UWG Counseling Student listserv regarding the CPCE each semester. All students should check their UWG email account to learn more about the CPCE application and registration processes. A passing score on the exam is at or equal to 1 standard deviation below the national mean of the exam (for the exit examination administration of the CPCE). If a passing score is not obtained, the student may take the exam the following semester. The exam may only be taken 3 times. If a student fails the exam 3 times he/she may graduate only if he/she takes and submits a passing score on the National Counselor Exam (NCE).

### **Application for Admission to Candidacy**

The student must file for candidacy by midterm of the semester preceding graduation. When the student has filed for candidacy, the Graduate Studies Department of the COE will notify the CEP office so that appropriate signatures can be obtained.

### **Plan of Study**

The official Proposed Plan of Study is to be filed with the Graduate Studies Department of the College of Education at the same time as the Admission to Candidacy. The planned program of study includes the following: program prerequisite curricular experiences, core curriculum requirements, specialized

curricular experiences, supervised practicum and internship requirements, and appropriate elective curricular requirements. The student's advisor, Department Chair and the Dean of the Graduate School must sign the Plan of Study for the graduate school.

### **Application for Graduation**

A student is required to make application for the graduation with the Graduate Office. There is a minimal fee. The deadline for submission of the graduation application is during the semester prior to graduation. Deadlines for completing and submitting the application for graduation are posted in the CEP office. A packet of the forms is also available in the CEP office.

### **Graduation Regalia and Supplies**

Graduation supplies may be ordered on-line through the University Bookstore website <http://www.bookstore.westga.edu/>, Contact the bookstore for information about announcements, thank-you notes, and other supplies 678-839-6523.

### **Chi Sigma Iota Honor Cords**

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) members may purchase a CSI honor cord for minimal cost from a CSI faculty advisor (Dr. Julia Chibbaro or Dr. Julia Whisenhunt) or through the [Chi Sigma Iota](#)

### **CEP Hooding Ceremony**

Each Spring semester, the CEP holds an annual hooding ceremony for M.Ed. (CMHC and School Counseling) and Ed.S. graduates. Additional information is sent directly to students through the student listserv and UWG email.

## **Professional Endorsement**

The Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling programs are designed to prepare counselors who are competent to enter into appropriate work settings. Further specialization is necessary to become competent in specific areas of concentration. Therefore, endorsements for CEP graduates can be given only for professional positions and position levels specific to the program from which the respective student graduates and appropriate to the student's skill level.

Graduates from the Clinical Mental Health Counseling specialty must be licensed in order to practice in the State of Georgia. Clinical Mental Health Counseling students who successfully complete their planned programs of study will meet the educational requirements for professional counselor licensure in Georgia. Visit the [Georgia Secretary of State](#) for details. Graduates also meet the academic requirements to become an NCC. Visit the [NBCC](#) for details.

For purposes of School Counseling certification, the Office of Clinical Experiences for Teacher-Certification in the College of Education verifies the completion of the student's planned program at University of West Georgia. The office also provides information and assistance in completing the certification process. School Counseling students who successfully complete their planned programs of study also meet the educational requirements for professional counselor licensure in Georgia. Visit the [Georgia Secretary of State](#) for details. They also meet the academic requirements to become an NCC. Visit the NBCC for details.

## **General Information**

### **Address /Phone Number Changes**

For a variety of reasons, it is important that the department is able to reach students. Therefore, it is necessary to report any change of address or phone number to the CEP Administrative Assistant as soon as possible. In addition, changes in contact information also must be made at the Registrar's office. The CEP department does not make changes for the student to the Registrar's office. Likewise, the Registrar's Office is unable to provide the department with an address change for the student's record. It is the student's responsibility to make the appropriate changes to both the CEP Office and the Registrar. This may be easily done online through the [UWG | Enrollment Services Center](#)

### **I.D. Cards**

Student ID cards are made in the Wolves Card Office located in the University Community Center (UCC), Top Floor, from 8 am until 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Student I. D. cards are free of charge for students enrolled in a University program. The same card is used throughout the entire enrollment period. It is validated as students pay fees each term and is non-transferable.

### **myUWG**

MyUWG is an innovative tool designed to simplify the process of using email, Banweb, WebCT and more. It provides a central login and url for access to most everything a student needs at UWG. To access myUWG go to <http://myuwg.westga.edu/>. To learn about myUWG services go to <http://myuwg.westga.edu/>

### **MyUWG email account**

Upon admission to the university every student is automatically provided with a free Google Apps account and free personal webspace. The University considers this account to be an official means of communication between the University and the student. The purpose of the official use of the student e-mail account is to provide an effective means of communicating important university related information to UWG students in a timely manner. It is the student's responsibility to check his or her email. For information regarding your email account visit [Google Information For Students - Campus Email](#)

### **CEP Listserv**

The CEP maintains a student listserv. You are automatically enrolled in this listserv upon admission to the program. The listserv is moderated and used to communicate about important matters such as deadlines, course scheduling changes, job openings and other current news items.

### **Parking And Vehicle Registration**

All vehicles parking on campus must be registered with Parking Services. Students must register their vehicles and obtain a hangtag in person at Parking Services in Row Hall (hours 7:30am to 4:30pm). Students have the first 5 class days after the beginning of their first semester to register their vehicles. Upon vehicle registration, a hangtag will be issued and is required for parking on campus. Failure to display a hangtag will result in a citation. Park only in the designated parking area that is depicted on your

parking hangtag. It is important to pay all parking tickets promptly; unpaid parking tickets will result in an inability to register for classes until the fine is paid. Parking ticket appeals must be made within 5 days. Students should be familiar with the UWG Parking Code found at the Parking Services webpage [Online Registration](#)

### **Weather/Emergency Closing**

Classes may be canceled during times of inclement weather or an emergency. However, because of the

difficulty in making up lost time, classes are canceled only in extreme circumstances. Final decision about University closings rests with the President. Notification of official closing or delayed opening of the University will be made by the Director of University Communications. Announcements are made through local and Atlanta media and posted on the University website [www.westga.edu](http://www.westga.edu).

### **Safety and Security of Minor-Children**

Due to the safety and security of minor-children, potential distractions within the classroom/clinical settings, and the demanding and sometimes confidential nature of some information covered in our courses, it is not appropriate for our enrolled students to bring their children into classroom sessions and/or into the CCC during active class and/or clinical periods.

Please be aware that the Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling has the following policy:

The “minor children of enrolled students” are not approved to be present in classrooms and/or in the CCC during active class/clinical meetings;

The “minor children of enrolled students” are not to be left unattended in any of the COE facilities while students attend class, clinical or advisement sessions.

We are sensitive to the fact that some of our students have childcare responsibilities, and we clearly support childcare as taking priority over a class and/or clinical meeting. Although such absences are not “excused” under the UWG attendance requirements, our faculty (instructors) will be cooperative in dealing with missed class meetings where there is a legitimate childcare conflict, and such situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis between the student, the instructor and the Department Chair (if necessary).

If students have a class/clinical meeting conflict, related to a childcare, they should:

Contact their instructor as early as possible (preferably in advance of the class meeting) in order to advise the instructor of the conflict;

The student should request the relevant information/materials that they will miss (or have missed) during the class session from the instructor, and/or from their fellow classmates;

The student should make arrangements with the instructor to make up the class absence (if appropriate).

Finally, it is the responsibility of the faculty member (instructor of record for the class/clinical section) to clearly articulate this policy to their students and to enforce the policy.

## **Student Support Services**

### **Personal Counseling**

Personal counseling for students is available at no cost through UWG Counseling Center. Students are encouraged to use this confidential service if the need should arise. Often when learning how to promote growth and change for clients, it becomes necessary to examine one’s own change process. Faculty may suggest students seek counseling when personal issues appear to be interfering with the student's professional development or with the counseling process during Practicum or Internship. Neither CEP faculty nor counselors in training at the Counseling Center counsel students and any contact with UWG Counseling Center is confidential. To learn more about services or to learn how to make an appointment visit <http://www.westga.edu/counseling/>.

### **Accessibility Services**

The official UWG policy is contained in the link to the [UWG | Common Language for Course Syllabi](#)

located on the Provost's website. All students are provided with equal access to classes and materials, regardless of special needs, temporary or permanent disability, special needs related to pregnancy, etc. For more information, please contact Disability Services at the University of West Georgia: [UWG | Accessibility Services Accommodations](#).

Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. All entitlements to accommodations are based on documentation and USG Board of Regents standards. If a student needs course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability or chronic illness, or if he/she needs to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, the student should notify his/her instructor in writing and provide a copy of his/her Student Accommodations Report (SAR), which is available only from Accessibility Services. Faculty cannot offer accommodations without timely receipt of the SAR; further, no retroactive accommodations will be given.

### **Career Services**

UWG career services offers comprehensive resources for students including job search information, student employment and volunteer opportunities. Staff also provides help with resume and cover letter writing and mock interviews. To learn more about UWG career services visit <http://careerweb.westga.edu/>.

## **Other Resources**

### **Bookstore**

The University Bookstore is a campus resource for UWG textbooks, gear and supplies. The bookstore website enables students to buy or sell used and new textbooks; find official UWG gear; and purchase software, gifts, and graduation supplies on-line. Search the bookstore homepage at [www.bookstore.westga.edu/](http://www.bookstore.westga.edu/).

### **CourseDen/D2L**

CourseDen/D2L is the online course management system used by UWG. All or part of your course content for every course will be delivered using CourseDen. The log in page for CourseDen is at <https://westga.view.usg.edu/> Your login is your UWG ID and password. Help information is noted on the log in page as well as at [UWG | CourseDen Help](#).

### **Ingram Library**

The Ingram Library on the UWG campus houses a multitude of resources, including books, professional journals, government documents, and the Annie Belle Weaver Special Collections. Visit the library's website [www.westga.edu/~library/](http://www.westga.edu/~library/) for complete information about the library holdings, reference resources, circulation, and other details. A useful service offered by the library is Ask-A-Librarian, an electronic connection to library the staff.

### **Innovation Lab**

The COE houses Innovation Lab, a free resource center for students and educators, located in the Education Center on the first floor. The Innovations Lab is designed to provide a space for university faculty, students, and local educators to learn, use, and innovate emerging technology for use in the classroom and the community. The Innovation Lab website can be found at <https://www.westga.edu/academics/education/innovations-lab.php>

### **Technology Resources**

The COE has computer labs available to students on the second floor of the Education Center in rooms



204 and 205. For information including hours of operation and available software visit [UWG | Information Technology Services](#) UWG also provides wireless access to students through connect West Wireless access. Coverage can be found throughout campus. To learn how to connect and for access points please visit [UWG OneLogin -- UWG OneLogin SelfService Tools](#) .

## Professional Organizations

Professional organizations are vital to any profession. Such organizations foster standards, ethical principles, research, accreditation, and governance. Students are encouraged to join appropriate professional organizations. Most professional counseling organizations offer lowered rates for student membership.

Faculty members belong to professional organizations, attend and present at professional conferences, hold editorial positions for national and state journals, and hold office or chair committees in national and state organizations.

Students are encouraged to attend professional meetings and to offer proposals for presentations and manuscripts for publication. Some courses may require participation in professional development activities.

Following is a partial list of relevant national and state organizations with contact information. Students are encouraged to explore and join organizations of interest to them.

American Counseling Association (ACA)	<a href="http://www.counseling.org">http://www.counseling.org</a>
American School Counselors' Association (ASCA)	<a href="http://schoolcounselor.org">http://schoolcounselor.org</a>
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)	<a href="http://amhca.org">http://amhca.org</a>
Chi Sigma Iota (CSI)	<a href="http://www.csi-net.org">http://www.csi-net.org</a>
National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)	<a href="http://www.nbcc.org/">http://www.nbcc.org/</a>
Licensed Professional Counselor Association of Georgia (LPCA)	<a href="http://www.lpcaga.org/">http://www.lpcaga.org/</a>
Georgia School Counselors Association (GSCA)	<a href="http://www.gaschoolcounselors.com/">http://www.gaschoolcounselors.com/</a>

# Appendix A

## Program Sheet and Plan of Study M.Ed. in Professional Counseling (Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling concentrations)

Department of Communication Sciences and Professional Counseling  
University of West Georgia

The M.Ed. in Professional Counseling is designed for candidates preparing for employment as professional counselors in schools, mental health facilities, hospitals, community agencies, and colleges or universities or for careers in college student services in colleges and universities. Three options of study, Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC), School Counseling (SC), and College Student Affairs (CSA) are available. The SC and CMHC programs are accredited by the [Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Educational Related Programs \(CACREP\)](#). Courses, listed in the eight core areas, satisfy the educational requirements for licensure as a professional counselor in Georgia and as a nationally certified counselor (NCC). Candidates must complete the appropriate program of studies with a 3.0 GPA and make a passing score on the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) in order to graduate. Completion of the M.Ed. degree in Professional Counseling (clinical mental health and school counseling tracks only) meet the educational requirements for licensure as a professional counselor in Georgia and as a nationally certified counselor (NCC). Graduates will receive faculty endorsement only for the relevant option and plan of study completed.

The master's degree in clinical mental health counseling concentration requires completion of a minimum of 60 semester hours of study while the school counseling concentration requires completion of a minimum of 60 hours of study. The completion of the master's degree in school counseling meets one of the requirements for recommendation by the University of West Georgia for initial certification in Georgia as a school counselor (S-5 level). School counseling candidates must also pass the required certification test in school counseling before a certification recommendation is given by the University of West Georgia.

<b>Name:</b> _____	<b>Student ID #:</b> _____
<b>Address:</b> _____ _____	<b>Telephone:</b> _____
<b>Email:</b> _____	<b>Advisor:</b> _____

**Current Certification in Education (if any):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Current licensure or certification in Counseling:** LPC, LAPC, NCC, Other (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Completion Dates	
Initial Advising	GACE Content Assessment in School Counseling
SPED 6706*	Tk20 Application for Practicum / Internship
teaching certificate Department written exam	GACE Basic Passed; or: Application for Candidacy Exempt: hold
Counselors' Exam	Exempt: SAT, GRE, ACT Score CPCE / NBCC National Exempt: Master's Degree
<b>Comments:</b>	

**M.Ed. in Professional Counseling:**  
 Department of Counseling, Higher Education, and Speech-Language Pathology  
**Clinical Mental health Counseling Track**

<b>Clinical Mental Health Counseling</b>					
<b>CORE CURRICULUM</b>	<b>SE</b>	<b>HR</b>	<b>SEMESTER</b>	<b>GR</b>	<b>SEM/YR</b>
<b>NOTE: COURSE SEQUENCE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. ANY DEVIATION FROM REQUIRED SEQUENCE MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ADVISOR</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>REQUIRED</b>		<b>COMPLET ED</b>
CEPD 6140 Basic Counseling Skills	1	3	1 <sup>st</sup> FALL		
CEPD 6131 Counseling Theories	2	3	1 <sup>st</sup> FALL		
CEPD 6141 Principles of Clinical Mental Health Counseling	3	3	1 <sup>st</sup> FALL		
CEPD 7141 Professional Orientation and Ethics in Counseling	4	3	1 <sup>st</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7134 Couples and Family Counseling	5	3	1 <sup>st</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 6160 Group Counseling (CEPD 6140, 6131 Prerequisite)	6	3	1 <sup>st</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 6151 Assessment & Appraisal in Counseling	7	3	1 <sup>st</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 7138 Multicultural Counseling and Education	8	3	1 <sup>st</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 7145 Advocacy and Leadership	9	3	1 <sup>st</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 7111 Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental and Emotional Disorders	10	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> FALL		
CEPD 6135 Applied Counseling Theories	11	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> FALL		
CEPD 7153 Crisis and Trauma Counseling	12	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> FALL		
<b>The above listed courses, except CEPD 7145, are required prior to approval for entry into CEPD 6188.</b>					
CEPD 6188 Practicum: Professional Counseling	13	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7155 Substance Abuse Counseling	14	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7105 Counseling across the Lifespan	15	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> SPRING		
<b>The above listed courses and CEPD 7112 are required prior to approval for entry into CEPD 6182.</b>					
CEPD 7112 Career Theory and Intervention	16	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 7152 Research and Program Evaluation	17	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> SUMMER		
Elective ( <i>only 1 elective required, CEPD 7158</i> Counseling in the Military Community or other elective)	18	3	2 <sup>nd</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 6182 Internship: Professional Counseling	19	6	3 <sup>rd</sup> FALL		
Elective ( <i>only 1 elective required, CEPD 6182</i> 300 hour internship; CEPD 7136 Counseling Children & Adolescents or other elective)	20	3	3 <sup>rd</sup> FALL		
<b>Total Required Hours</b>		<b>60</b>			

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Plan of Study

### M.Ed.in Professional Counseling: *School Counseling (60-hour)*

Department of Counseling, Higher Education,  
and Speech-Language and Pathology  
University of West Georgia

<b>School Counseling</b>					
<b>CORE CURRICULUM</b> <b>NOTE: COURSE SEQUENCE WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. ANY DEVIATION FROM REQUIRED SEQUENCE MUST BE APPROVED BY THE ADVISOR</b>	SEQ	HRS	SEMESTER REQUIRED	GR	SEM/YR COMPLETED
CEPD 7112 Career Theory and Intervention	1	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 7145 Advocacy and Leadership	2	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 6151 Assessment and Appraisal in Counseling	3	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 6140 Basic Counseling Skills	4	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> FALL		
CEPD 6131 Counseling Theories	5	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> FALL		
CEPD 6180 Principles of Professional School Counseling	6	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> FALL		
CEPD 7105 Counseling Across the Lifespan	7	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7152 Research and Program Evaluation	8	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7141 Professional Orientation and Ethics in Counseling	9	3	1 <sup>ST</sup> SPRING		
SPED 6706 Spec Educ in Regular Classroom	10	3*	1 <sup>ST</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7138 Multicultural Counseling and Education	11	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 7121 Spec Topics in School Counseling	12	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUMMER		
CEPD 6160 Group Counseling	13	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> SUMMER		
The above listed courses, except CEPD 7145 and 7112, are required prior to approval for entry into CEPD 6188.					
CEPD 7153 Crisis Intervention	14	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> FALL		
CEPD 7136 Counseling Children & Adolescents	15	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> FALL		
CEPD 7111 Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental and Emotional Disorders	16	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> FALL		
CEPD 6188 Practicum	17	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> FALL		
The above listed courses are required prior to approval for entry into CEPD 6182.					
CEPD 7134 Couples and Family Counseling	18	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 7155 Substance Abuse Counseling	20	3	2 <sup>ND</sup> SPRING		
CEPD 6182 Internship	19	6	2 <sup>ND</sup> SPRING		
<b>Total Hours (*3 hours in addition to the "60 hours")</b>		<b>60</b>			
<b>Comments:</b>					

Student signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Appendix B

## The Professional Counseling Program at the University of West Georgia Non-Discrimination Statement

The counseling program at University of West Georgia leads directly to certification, licensure, and professional practice in the field of counseling. For this reason, should any faculty within the program note any impairment in the judgment, interpersonal attributes, or intellectual functioning, this will be brought to the attention of the student and measures may be required for remediation. The counseling program at UWG is committed to nondiscrimination for all people, including but not limited to—race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin, age, disability, and veteran status. To graduate from the program, the student must be willing and able to endorse the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA) and adhere to the ACA’s Nondiscrimination Position Statement, which reads as follows:

### **ACA’s NONDISCRIMINATION: POSITION STATEMENT**

- ❖ The American Counseling Association is committed to nondiscrimination and to the prevention of harassment in all forms—verbal, physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological—including protections for transgender, gender non-conforming, and LGBTQ+ individuals.
- ❖ Every human being on earth is unique and uniquely important. Each person embarks on the adventure of life guided by their own spirit, outlook, and traits of character. These facets help to shape and guide the course of every human journey. Everyone is equal on this path. No individual has the right or the authority to judge or mock another, or to force anyone to adhere to any type of societal norm.
- ❖ Through its members, ACA strives to enhance quality of life in society by promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, and using the profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity. ACA members help advocate for equity and fair treatment for all people and groups in order to end oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, families, communities, schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems.
- ❖ ACA and its members agree that all individuals have the right to be accepted for their unique and authentic self. ACA members consider it a privilege to work with—and on behalf of—people of all orientations, emphasizing multicultural competence and a respect for diverse views. We encourage our clients to be genuine and to work to find their own authentic self, even if that authentic self appears to be somewhat different from dominant social norms.
- ❖ The ACA commitment to nondiscrimination and the prevention of harassment includes, but is not limited to, access to learning environments that are free of discrimination, bullying, and harassment; access to restrooms and changing facilities that are safe and affirming for gender non-conforming youth and adults; and use of preferred names.
- ❖ ACA recognizes the stress and psychological impact of discrimination and is committed to helping counselors advocate for nondiscrimination policies and practices in their work settings and practices.
- ❖ Our goal is to ensure that everyone has a safe, unthreatened space to continuously build a vibrant, thriving self, which in turn can build a vibrant, thriving family, as well as a constantly evolving and improving community.
- ❖ We respect and honor the unique human spirit that everyone—regardless of cultural attributes or sexual orientation—brings to our communities. At ACA, it is our goal to help make certain that everyone has an opportunity to grow and to achieve their full potential.

American Counseling Association (2017). *Nondiscrimination: Position statement*. Retrieved from:  
<https://www.counseling.org/about-us/social-justice/nondiscrimination>

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to follow the University of West Georgia Professional Counseling Program’s Non-Discrimination Policy.

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**Applicant Signature**

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**Date**

*Note: This handbook is subject to change without notice.*