



**TEXAS WOMAN'S**  
UNIVERSITY™

**Master's Student Handbook**  
**Program in Counselor Education**

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## **Master's Student Handbook**

### **Program in Counselor Education**

Welcome to the counselor education program at Texas Woman's University. This handbook is designed to assist you, the master's level student, with everything you need to know to be successful in your matriculation process.

This handbook was created to serve as a supplement to the Graduate Catalog and the Counseling & Development (C&D) program's clinical handbook. It is your responsibility as a student to be familiar with the content of the Graduate Catalog under which you will be entering graduate work and with the contents of this handbook.

To confirm that you have indeed read this handbook and have understood the responsibilities, policies, and procedures outlined herein, **please sign the Agreement Contract** given to you at orientation and submit it to the C&D program director for inclusion in your permanent student file.

## **I. General Information**

### **Introduction to the Counselor Education Program**

The counselor education program at Texas Woman's University prepares counseling professionals for one or more work settings such as school, community, or private practice.

Professional training is offered at the master's level ONLY.

The TWU counselor education program exists within the larger framework of the university. The Chancellor/President administers the university. Academic programs at TWU are administered

by the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and are housed in eight schools or colleges.

The College of Professional Education (COPE) is administered by the Dean of the College of Education and comprised of several departments.

Counseling and Development is housed in the **School of Human Sciences** with Early Childhood and Early Childhood Education, Family Therapy, and Family Studies. The Department Chair administers the School of Human Sciences. The Program Director administers the C&D program.

The Council For Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) exists, in part, to “promote high standards of graduate preparation in counselor education.”

CACREP has conferred accreditation to the following program areas in counselor education at TWU: Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.S.) and Professional School Counseling (M.S.).

This accreditation process is a voluntary one that the TWU C&D faculty has met to ensure the rigor of our program for the benefit of our students.

The following is a table designed to provide an overview of different mental health fields:

<b>Professional Name</b>	<b>Degree Required</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>License Held</b>	<b>Role</b>
Professional Counselor	M.A., M.S., M.Ed., Ph.D., or Ed.D.	At least 2-3 years of graduate study	Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)	Assessment and counseling emphasizing prevention and development and/or treatment and diagnosis perspective

Psychiatrist	M.D.	Medical school with residency in psychiatry		Psychiatric evaluation and assessment, prescription of medication, psychotherapy
Psychologist	Ph.D.	4-7 years of clinical or counseling psychology, research-oriented degree	Licensed Psychologist	Psychological assessment and evaluation, psychotherapy, research
Psychologist	Psy.D.	Same as above, greater emphasis on clinical experience	Licensed Psychologist	Psychological assessment and evaluation, psychotherapy, research
Clinical Social Worker	M.S.W. or Ph.D.	At least 2-3 years of graduate study	Licensed Master's Social Worker (LMSW); Advanced Clinical Practitioner	Focus is on linking clients with community resources; psychotherapy
Marriage & Family	M.A., M.S., M.Ed., Ph.D., or Ed.D.	At least 2-3 years of graduate study	Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)	Focus is on the application of family systems therapies, assessment, psychotherapy

## Admission

Applicants seeking admission to the counselor education program should be aware that Texas State Boards for certification and licensure, as well as credentialing boards of other states and some professional organizations, run criminal history checks on all licensure or certification. In Texas, certification is required to counsel in the public schools; licensure is also required to counsel outside the public school or religious settings. The applicant with a criminal background



who seeks professional credentials should contact the appropriate board prior to enrollment in the program to determine eligibility for certification and/or licensure.

## Activities for Student Professional Involvement in the Counselor Education Program

### **Counseling and Family Therapy Clinic (CFTC)**

The CFTC offers individual counseling for clients of all ages as well as couple, family, and group counseling, and play therapy. Counselors-in-training, under the supervision of counselor education faculty, provide low-cost counseling services for the community. All sessions are video recorded for supervision purposes.

### **Chi Sigma Iota (CSI)**

The Alpha Rho chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) is the TWU chapter of this international honor society for students, professional counselors, and counselor educators. The Alpha Rho chapter was established in 1989. Our mission 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.

Alpha Rho membership is open to both students and graduates of counselor education programs. Students must have completed at least 9 graduate hours in a counseling program and have earned a 3.5 GPA. Faculty, professionals, and alumni with a professional identity of professional counselor, evidence of state or national credentials, and an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher are also eligible for membership in CSI.

## **Professional Counseling Organizations**

It is highly encouraged that counseling students join professional organizations. Professional organizations are beneficial for students in a variety of ways. Most professional organizations provide the following to their members: information through newsletters, social media, and access to professional counseling journals, advocacy for the profession, professional development opportunities through conferences, networking opportunities, legislative information, legal consultation, and more.

The following organizations are recommended for counseling students:

### American Counseling Association (ACA)

ACA is a not-for-profit professional and educational organization that is dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession. Founded in 1952, ACA is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in various practice settings. Students can join ACA or learn more at this website:

<https://www.counseling.org/about/who-we-are>

### Texas Counseling Association (TCA)

TCA is a member-driven organization focused on promoting high professional standards and increasing access to professional counselors across Texas. TCA members work in an array of setting including private practice, elementary and secondary schools, college campuses, criminal justice programs, community mental health centers, hospitals, nursing homes, and managed care facilities. TCA members also include counselor educators, LPC supervisors, graduate students, LPC-As, and affiliate members who support the mission

of TCA. Students can join TCA or learn more at this website:

<https://www.txca.org/about.php>

#### American School Counseling Association (ASCA)

ASCA supports school counselor's efforts to help students focus on academic, career, and social/emotional development so they can achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. ASCA provides professional development, publications and other resources, research, and advocacy to school counselors around the world. Students can join ASCA or learn more at this website:

<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/About-ASCA>

#### Texas School Counseling Association (TSCA)

TSCA's mission is to serve professional school counselors by advocating for and advancing the role of the professional school counselor and the comprehensive school guidance and counseling program throughout Texas. Students can join TSCA or learn more at this website:

<https://www.txca.org/tsca/>

#### Association for Play Therapy (APT)

APT is a national professional society established in 1982 to foster contact among mental health professional interested in exploring, and when developmentally appropriate, applying the therapeutic power of play to communicate with and treat clients, particularly children. Students can join APT or learn more at this website:

<https://www.a4pt.org/>

## II. Studies in the Counselor Education Program

### Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives

#### **Mission Statement**

“The Counseling and Development program facilitates the development of counseling competencies in an inclusive environment for students which enhance the quality of lives of individuals and their communities in a diverse global society. By preparing caring and creative practitioners as school and clinical mental health counselors in the twenty-first century, the program promotes excellence in the practice of counseling, advocacy, research, and service. Our mission aligns with the mission statement of the School of Human Studies and is facilitated through the goals and objectives listed in each of the syllabi.”

#### **Goals**

1. To instill in each student an understanding of the process of human and family growth, development, and change within the context of counseling with individuals, groups, families, and communities.
2. To encourage a mindset of self-reflection and self-awareness in support of professional and clinical development to uphold ethical standards in counseling practice.
3. To assure that each student develops knowledge of interpersonal skills as related to counseling individuals, groups, and families.
4. To prepare students to provide counseling services to diverse populations in educational settings, clinical mental health settings, private practice, managed care facilities, and other related counseling settings.

## Core Objectives

1. The student will demonstrate knowledge of normal human growth and development which includes: the process and stages of human intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development from prenatal origins through old age.
2. The student will demonstrate knowledge of appraisal or assessment techniques useful in the counseling process including the principles, concepts, and procedures of systemic appraisal or assessment of an individual's attitudes, aptitude, achievements, interests, and personal characteristics which may include the use of both non-testing and test instruments.
3. The student will demonstrate and apply knowledge of the major theories of counseling.
4. The student will demonstrate and apply knowledge of research in individual and group methods of counseling.
5. The student will demonstrate knowledge of research and statistical methods used in education and counseling.
6. The student will demonstrate understanding of lifestyle and career development including theories of vocational choice, career and lifestyle choice, sources of occupational and educational information, and career decision-making processes.
7. The student will apply knowledge of social, cultural, and family issues as they relate to the counseling process and counseling relationship.
8. The student will demonstrate a commitment to cultural competence and self-awareness and will see knowledge when necessary to effectively treat clients from diverse identities and backgrounds.

9. The student will demonstrate knowledge and skills related to diagnosis and treatment planning for clients in their counseling practices.
10. The student will apply knowledge of the objectives of professional counseling organizations, codes of ethics, legal aspects of practice, standards of preparation, and the role identity of persons providing direct counseling services.
11. The student will demonstrate skills in counseling and case management in practicum and internship placements appropriate to their counseling interests.

## Program Requirements

### **Master's Degree Programs**

All of the following master's level courses of study require that the counselor education program applicant go through the master's admission process and be accepted to the Graduate School before beginning C&D coursework (course prefix COUN for counseling will be used hereafter).

The counselor education faculty will endorse the student only for the program area(s) that the student has completed. Individuals who are seeing to become counseling professionals will pursue the Master of Science in Counseling degree.

The two program areas, Professional School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counseling, are not considered "majors;" they simply define which program area students are pursuing.

Students pursuing Professional School Counseling must meet requirements and be accepted to the university's Certification Program in addition to acceptance to the master's degree plan of study.

## **Advising and Degree Plans of Study**

Students must complete a plan of study through their Pioneer Portal page during their first semester of full enrollment and acceptance into the program. However, it is strongly suggested that students make contact with their assigned advisor prior to enrolling for their first semester.

### **First Semester of Study**

Students are required to take the following four courses as twelve of their first twenty-one hours. It is highly advised that these courses are completed within the first two semesters. COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice **must** be taken during the student's first semester.

COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice

COUN 5303 Professional Orientation and Ethics

COUN 5443 Multicultural Counseling

COUN 5353 Treatment Planning and Diagnosis for Counselors

### **Requirements for Clinical Courses**

Students must take COUN 5363 Prepracticum as one of three of the first twenty-seven hours of study. COUN 5363 Practicum and COUN 5373 Group Counseling **must** be taken concurrently during the same semester.

Once students have successfully completed these two courses, they must enroll in COUN 5364 Practicum. Upon completion of Practicum, students are required to take COUN 5894 Internship in Counseling for two semesters.

The only exception to this is for students pursuing the School Counseling track, in which case COUN 5894 Internship 1 or 2 may not be taken during the summer semester.

## Clinical Mental Health Counseling Requirements

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program area prepares students for counseling positions in various community agencies such as mental health centers, private counseling agencies, drug abuse centers, centers for counseling the elderly, child counseling clinics, family counseling centers, pastoral counseling centers, business, and industry. The program area provides the opportunity to counsel a broad range of clientele. This program meets the academic specifications for Texas licensure as a professional counselor.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is designed to prepare persons for work in private and public agencies where primary focus is on the mental health concerns of their clients. The philosophical orientation is founded upon the belief of democratic values, the worth and dignity of each individual, personal uniqueness and value, and the freedom of the individual to be self-determined within a context of responsibility to others. Individuals live in a social world. Within the context of that world, all individuals attempt to find their place, to be involved, to feel worthwhile, to be useful, and to enhance self-esteem. This striving is manifested in the attempt of individuals to solve the basic problem of living, occupation, relationship, community living, and spirituality. Stress and crisis are frequently experienced in attempting to solve these problems.

### Courses Offered

#### **Counseling Core (required as 12 of first 21 hours):**

- COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice
- COUN 5303 Professional Orientation and Ethics
- COUN 5443 Multicultural Counseling



- COUN 5353 Treatment Planning and Diagnosis for Counselors

**Additional Counseling Core (16 hours – all required):**

- HDFS 5003 Lifespan Human Development
- COUN 5143 Addiction Counseling
- COUN 5173 Abnormal Behavior: Crisis Impacts and Treatments
- COUN 5323 Psychological Appraisal of the Individual
- COUN 5453 Counseling for Career Development
- HDFS 5931 Individual Study: Portfolio

**Community Counseling Specialty (3 hours):**

- COUN 5493 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Ethics, Law, and Practice

**Research (3 hours):**

- HDFS 5693 Research Methods in Human Development, Family Studies, & Counseling

**Electives (9 hours):**

- One MFT course in couples, marriage, or families (consult with your advisor)
- Choose a minimum of 2 electives (more opportunities may be available). Electives include:
  - o HDFS 5183 Grief and Bereavement
  - o COUN 5163 Play Therapy
  - o COUN 5293 Advanced Play Therapy: Theories & Applications
  - o COUN 5383 Counseling Children & Adolescents
  - o COUN 5483 Expressive Arts

- COUN 5083 Counseling an Aging Population

### **Clinical Competencies (18 hours):**

- COUN 5363 Prepracticum (required as 3 of first 30 hours; taken after completion of counseling core)
- COUN 5373 Group Counseling Procedures (taken concurrently with Prepracticum)
- COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling (1 semester)
- COUN 5894 Internship in Counseling (2 semesters)

\*Prepracticum and Group must be taken concurrently; Practicum, Internship 1, and Internship 2 cannot be taken concurrently.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program are as follows:

1. To acquaint students with administrative systems in agencies
2. To acquaint students with agency interrelations
3. To acquaint students with staffing patterns of agencies
4. To acquaint students with client populations of various agencies and methods of appropriate interventions
5. To acquaint students with the “helping style” of various agencies
6. To assist individual students to assess the positive and negative aspects of various agencies as these apply to potential places of employment
7. To acquaint students with sources of funding for various agencies
8. To assist each student to evaluate their counseling philosophy as it relates to various agencies

9. To assist each student to develop a sense of the type of client with whom they feel most comfortable
10. To acquaint the student with various counseling approaches and how different approaches are more relevant and valid for different agencies
11. To acquaint the student with the team approach to counseling
12. To gain an appreciation for the various roles counselors play in agencies

## Licensure Requirements for Professional Counselors (Post Masters)

Requirements for Licensure for Professional Counselor in Texas are determined by the following board:

Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors

1801 Congress Avenue, Suite 7.300

Austin, Texas 78701

(512) 305-7700

### **Examination Requirement**

The applicant must pass the board's licensing examination, the National Counselor Examination (NCE). One may apply to take the exam following graduation.

### **Experience Requirements for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPCs)**

Upon completion of the education requirement and before beginning the experience requirement, one must apply to the board to become temporarily licensed as an LPC-Intern *following completion and passing of the National Counselor Examination*. The experience requirement

consists of 3000 clock hours of appropriately supervised experience in the provision of counseling services. Experience submitted to meet this requirement must meet board rules. Ongoing volunteer work may be acceptable. Acceptable supervisors are only those listed as approved supervisors by the board (denoted by LPC-S).

Students are eligible to sit for the National Counselor Examination the final semester of their matriculation process. This is coordinated through the program director and the National Board of Certified Counselors.

## Professional School Counseling Requirements

This program area prepares the student to become a school counselor. Students become familiar with counseling services, develop better self-understanding, and develop competencies of school counseling specialists. The school counseling program meets Texas specifications for public school counselor certification. The program areas also meet academic specifications for Texas Licensure as a Professional Counselor (some additional coursework required outside of school counseling degree plan).

The entry-level area program in school counseling is designed to prepare persons for positions in public or private elementary and secondary schools. Upon completion of the Professional School Counseling Program area, the candidate will have fulfilled the academic requirements for certification as a school counselor by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification.

Candidates interested in employment in specific school districts of other states should investigate the possible additional or different requirements in effect in those districts of states.

The philosophical orientation is founded up the belief in democratic values, the worth and dignity of each individual, personal uniqueness and value, and the freedom of the individual to

be self-determined within a context of responsibility to others. However, the gap that exists between the verbalization of such values and the practical application of them often heightens the difficulty many students experience in finding satisfactory solutions to problems involving relationships, education, and career aspirations, as well as recognizing personal uniqueness and value as part of a social group.

In the Professional School Counseling Program area, a developmental perspective is emphasized. Attention is also given to any atypical behavior and to the circumstances and conditions that may be barriers to pupil growth and development.

## Courses Offered

### **Counseling Core (required as 12 of first 21 hours):**

- COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice
- COUN 5303 Professional Orientation and Ethics in Counseling
- COUN 5443 Multicultural Counseling
- COUN 5353 Clinical Diagnosis & Treatment Planning for Counselors

### **Additional Counseling Core (13 hours – all required):**

- HDFS 5003 Lifespan Human Development
- COUN 5173 Abnormal Behavior: Crisis Impacts and Treatments
- COUN 5323 Psychological Appraisal of the Individual
- COUN 5453 Counseling for Career Development
- HDFS 5931 Individual Study: Portfolio

**School Counseling Specialty (9 hours):**

- COUN 5033 Foundations of School Counseling
- COUN 5043 Critical Issues in School Counseling
- COUN 5053 Applied Skills in School Counseling

**Research (3 hours):**

- HDFS 5693 Research Methods in Human Development, Family Studies, & Counseling

**Electives (6 hours):**

- Choose a minimum of 2 courses (more may be available). Electives include:
  - o One MFT course in couples, marriage, or families (consult with your advisor – required for LPC)
  - o COUN 5143 Addiction Counseling (required for LPC)
  - o COUN 5173 Grief and Bereavement
  - o COUN 5136 Play Therapy
  - o COUN 5293 Advanced Play Therapy: Theories & Applications
  - o COUN 5383 Counseling Children & Adolescents
  - o COUN 5493 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Ethics, Law, & Practice (required for LPC)
  - o COUN 5903 Expressive Arts
  - o COUN 5903 Counseling an Aging Population

### **Counseling Competencies (18 hours):**

- COUN 5363 Prepracticum (required as 3 of first 30 hours; taken after completion of counseling core)
- COUN 5373 Group Counseling Procedures (taken concurrently with Prepracticum)
- COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling (1 semester)
- COUN 5894 Internship in Counseling (2 semesters)

\*Prepracticum and Group must be taken concurrently; Practicum, Internship 1, and Internship 2 cannot be taken concurrently.

### **Objectives**

Professional School Counseling Program area graduates are expected to have the following knowledge and skills:

1. To define the role and function of the school counselor (e.g., counselor, consultant, coordinator)
2. To explore theoretical approaches and their use with students, teachers, administrators, parents, and significant others
3. To study and apply counseling techniques that will effectively enhance the school counselor's role with students, teachers, administrators, parents, and significant others
4. To explore the developmental needs of the student
5. To explore many variables and issues which affect the development and full functioning of the students (e.g., stepfamilies, divorce, abuses, academic difficulties)
6. To study and discuss ethical and legal issues relating directly to schools

7. To explore effective strategies that lead to the development, organization, and administration of a school guidance and counseling program
8. To use statistical concepts basic to tests and measurements
9. To develop skill in the use of formal and informal diagnostic and observation procedures related to defining and interpreting characteristics of children with learning and/or behavioral problems
10. To develop skill in interpretation of specific learning disabilities (lack of learning, skills due to developmental lag or central processing dysfunction) that interfere with school learning
11. To develop skill in interpretation of behavioral problems of children that are manifested as school learning problems
12. To develop intervention strategies for use in remediation of learning and/or behavioral problems
13. To be able to establish a facilitative/helping relationship with children and adolescents

### Post-Master's Certificate in School Counseling

The individual who seeks to become a public school counselor and who already holds a Master's degree in counseling may pursue the Post-Master's Certificate in School Counseling program area. This program requires participants to meet the substantial equivalent of all requirements in our 61-hour CACREP accredited programs. Accreditation does not allow us to provide an alternative academic route into the profession that involves fewer requirements than our accredited program.



Effective September 2023, Texas no longer requires two years of teaching experience in a TEA accredited public or private school. Individuals must pass the TExES exam to become certified as a public school counselor in Texas. Individuals seeking certification in other states are urged to contact the relevant state(s) because requirements differ. Students pursuing certification must have a completed Certification Deficiency Plan on file with the School of Human Sciences and a College of Professional Education Deficiency plan on file with the college prior to enrollment in the first counselor education course.

Individuals wishing to pursue a Post-Master's Certificate in School Counseling program area must go through the counselor education admissions process, including fulfillment of Graduate School requirements for students who have completed a master's degree. Upon admission to the counselor education program, the student must contact the faculty advisor in charge of Post-Master's Certificate in School Counseling program area to complete a Certification Deficiency Plan. The student must then meet with the College of Professional Education Certification Advisor to complete the College of Professional Education Deficiency Plan.

## Certification Requirements for Public School Counselors

To be certified as a public school counselor in Texas, one must complete the courses listed on the Certification Deficiency Plan in addition to the following requirements:

1. Master's degree in counseling
2. Valid Texas teaching certificate
3. Passing score on the TExES exam (taken after completion of deficiency coursework)

Local districts may have additional requirements. Other states may have different requirements. To ascertain these requirements, the candidate must contact the district or state in which employment may be sought.

### III. General Policies and Procedures

#### Disability Accommodation Policy

##### **Policy Statement**

Statement of department's compliance with established university policy for provision of equal opportunity for disabled persons and extent to which the department is able to provide alternatives to requirements or to standard methods of achieving requirement.

In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, the Counseling and Development Program is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. To this end, the faculty of Counseling and Development is willing to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methods in order to facilitate equality of educational access for persons with disabilities while upholding the integrity and rigor of academic standards. The emphasis of the Counseling and Development Program is upon attainment of essential competencies and maintenance of academic/professional standards in counseling.

CACREP defines essential competencies, which must be progressively developed and integrated throughout the degree program in Counseling and Development. Assessment of these competencies is a regular and normal part of all accredited counselor education degree programs throughout the United States. While alternative competencies, alternative means of attaining

these competencies, or alternative means of assessing attainment of competencies may be proposed, the Counseling and Development Program is not prepared to waive the specific competency requirements themselves. To do so would endanger the accreditation for the counselor education program, the resulting degrees issued to all graduates in this department, and the quality of services to the public served by our graduates.

### **Procedures for Requesting Special Accommodation**

A student who encounters access problems in Counseling and Development or who wishes to request special accommodations because of a disability should follow the procedures listed below:

Students should contact Disability Support Services and follow the processes that have been laid out by that department. This process is done as such to protect the student's privacy and ensures that the accommodations are necessary and appropriate, as well as meet the legal requirements.

### **Methods of Appeal**

The appeal policy follows the guidelines as outlined by Texas Woman's University. Those may be found at this link:

<https://twu.edu/academic-affairs/academic-complaints-appeals/graduate-sequence-of-offices-for-complaints--appeals/>

- A. In the event the department must deny the request for special accommodation, the student may file a petition with the Academic Dean for formal review of their request. The purpose of the review is to assure procedural correctness has been observed in denying the student's requested accommodations. The request for review must include:

- a. Certification by competent authority (medical, psychological, educational as appropriate) of the exact nature of the disability and the specific limitations the disability imposes on the student
  - b. The date of the examination for such certification must be within a time span appropriate for judgement of the student's current abilities/disabilities (usually within the past three years)
  - c. A copy of the requested accommodation presented to the instructor/department
  - d. A summary of the student's efforts to date to compete the course/requirement
  - e. A copy of the denial of request from the department
- B. The Dean may choose to:
- a. Conduct an administrative review of the petition and make a final decision; or
  - b. Appoint a review committee composed of persons knowledgeable in the specific issues involved
- C. Membership of the review committee will include:
- a. Two faculty members from Counseling and Development competent to interpret specific essential competencies or other applicable academic-related issues
  - b. One faculty member from outside the department to address the definition and scope of the disability (selected from the Office of the Dean of the College of Professional Education or the Equal Opportunity Office of the General Counsel's staff) who will serve as Chair of the Committee
- D. In the event that incorrect procedures are discovered, the committee will recommend specific measures to be taken by the department

## Ethical/Legal Awareness

Any training relationship in which students take client/counselor roles is considered a client/counselor relationship and, therefore, subject to all the ethical and legal regulations governing such a relationship. During the first semester of enrollment in the counselor education program, the student must become familiar with the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association and Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors, as well as the relevant aspects of the Texas penal code.

## Group Counseling Experience

The counselor education program requires a group counseling experience. Over the course of one academic semester, students in COUN 5373 Group Counseling are required to have “direct experiences in which students participate as group members in a small group activity, approved by the program, for a minimum of 10 clock hours” (CACREP, 2016 standards, p. 13). COUN 5373 Group Counseling divides this small-group activity into approximately eight group counseling sessions with other students from the class, under the leadership of an experienced group counselor. This counselor is not a faculty member but is selected by the instructor. Faculty members are not utilized as group leaders in order to avoid dual relationships between C&D faculty members and students. The counselor is supervised in such a way that protects the confidentiality of group members.

According to the 2014 Ethical Code F.8.c:

Self-growth is expected in the program of counselor education. Counselor educators are mindful of ethical principles when they require students to engage in self-growth

experiences. Counselor educators and supervisors inform students that they have a right to decide what information will be shared or withheld in class.

## IV. Academic Policies and Procedures

### **Advisor Assignments**

A faculty advisor is assigned to each degree-seeking student upon admission to the program and before enrollment in the first counselor education process.

Allow two weeks for processing. Students may check advisor updates in Student Planning. The student is expected to consult with the advisor a minimum of once a year after entering the program and as needed during progress through the program.

Consultation with an advisor is required for:

1. Completing a degree plan
2. Changing a filed degree plan
3. Advisement on an annual basis
4. Addressing questions and concerns about the program that are not addressed in this

Master's Handbook, the Graduate Catalog, or the Schedule of Classes.

Other occasions may arise when advisor consultation is required or desired. When in doubt about any issues or concerns related to your program of study or progress in the program that cannot be answered by program or university print resources, consult your advisor.

It is to the student's advantage to have a good working relationship with the assigned advisor.

Should the need arise, a student may request a change of advisor. The procedure to make a change is as follows:

1. Contact the prospective advisor to ascertain their availability and agreement to the proposed change
2. Obtain consent to the change from the current advisor
3. Submit a completed "Change in Advisor" form. Forms may be obtained online.
4. Allow three weeks for processing, then check with the Graduate School to make sure the change is on file.

### **American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Style**

The counselor education program faculty requires that all papers written for counselor education courses conform to the American Psychological Association (APA) style. The current edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition* is a required text for the introductory courses in the counselor education program. During these courses, instructors assist students in becoming fluent in the use of APA style. Students are highly encouraged to retain a copy of the *Publication Manual* as a reference throughout their coursework in the program. Instructors may allot a portion of grades on assigned papers to conformity to APA format.

### **Degree Plan of Study**

Students submit and complete their Pioneer Portal plan of study during the first semester after being admitted. However, it is strongly suggested that students make contact with their assigned advisor prior to enrolling for their first semester. Students transferring a course or courses in lieu

of other courses must contact their advisor to discuss this option. Plans must contain a total of 61 hours (Practicum, Internship 1, and Internship 2 are each four-hour courses), and must be viewed and approved by the advisor. It is the student's responsibility to see that the plan is completed.

1. The advisor will be assigned at the time a recommendation for admission is made. At the admission interview, the candidate should make known the area of study they wish to pursue
2. An advisor will be assigned upon admission to the program
3. At the direction of the advisor, the student will complete the degree plan
4. Students are to complete the plan of study according to program guidelines and expectations

#### Changes in Courses:

If a student wishes to drop a course(s) and add another course(s), the student should confer with their advisor to approve any changes.

#### **Course Sequence**

The student is responsible for meeting prerequisites for and following the sequencing of courses listed on the degree plan. A student enrolled for a course for which they do not meet prerequisites may be administratively dropped prior to or after the class begins.

Students must meet the minimum requirements of the grading policy in all courses to avoid being placed on Scholastic Probation (see below).



## **Grading**

All students admitted to the C&D program must meet departmental and program criteria prior to filing a degree plan. Students should refer to the School of Human Sciences Graduate Handbook and the C&D Program Guidelines for specific program criteria.

Six of the first thirty semester credit hours must be COUN 5363 Prepracticum and COUN 5373 Group Counseling Procedures. A grade of 'B' or better is required in COUN 5363 Prepracticum and COUN 5373 Group Counseling Procedures prior to enrolling in COUN 5364 Practicum.

A grade of 'B' or better is required in COUN 5364 Practicum prior to enrolling in COUN 5894 Internship 1.

Any student who earns a grade of less than 'B' ('C', 'D', 'F', or 'WF') in two graduate courses or in the same graduate course will be dismissed from the program.

Passing a criminal background check may be required by TWU and/or certain facilities associated with the required clinical work or for certifications/licensures. If students are unable to be cleared on any of these requirements, they may not be eligible to continue in the program or become certified/licensed.

At the beginning of each course, the instructor will provide students with a syllabus that includes grading criteria for the course. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the grading criteria for each course and to seek clarification from the course instructor as needed.

## **Incompletes**

A student who receives a grade of "incomplete" in a course has a specified period of time (e.g., specific number of weeks, one semester, etc.) to complete the coursework and have the

incomplete grade replaced by an appropriate letter grade. The student must follow a specified procedure to have an "incomplete" grade removed.

[An] Incomplete (I) grade is [appropriate] only when a student [has a passing grade in at least 2/3 of the assigned work for the course] but, because of extenuating circumstances, cannot complete all of the course work by the end of the semester/term.

Extenuating circumstances include:

1. Incapacitating illness which prevents a student from attending classes
2. A death in the immediate family
3. Change in work schedule as required by an employer; or
4. Other emergencies deemed appropriate by the instructor

A grade of Incomplete (I) should not be requested or given for lack of completion of work because of procrastination or dissatisfaction with the grade earned. Under the conditions above, the student may petition the instructor for time beyond the end of the semester/term to finish the course work. The instructor, the student, and the department chair (or equivalent) of the academic department in which the course is offered must fill out and sign the form "Application for Grade of Incomplete" available in the Office of the Registrar.

[If laboratory or clinical work remains to be completed, the department or program must certify that the student can successfully complete such work by the assigned completion date.]

Specific arrangements to remove the grade of Incomplete (I) must be made between the instructor and the student. The instructor will also specify that, if the work is not completed by the assigned time, a grade of 'B', 'C', 'D', or 'F' will replace the Incomplete (I) on the student's

transcript. If the student completes the required work by the assigned completion date, the instructor will submit the new grade to the Office of the Registrar.

The maximum time allowed to finish the course work is one calendar year. In most instances, the work to be completed should be finished within the first several weeks following the end of the semester/term in which the Incomplete (I) was given. Exceptions must be specifically indicated and appropriate explanations documented.

**NOTE:** No student may graduate with a grade of Incomplete even if the "I" is in a course unrelated to the degree plan.

Incomplete work cannot be finished by repeating the class. If such an option is preferred, the student should accept the grade earned and re-enroll in the course in the expectation of earning a better grade. The grade for the later class will be calculated in the GPA. Any exceptions to these regulations which describe the use of the grade of Incomplete (I) require the approval of the instructor, the department chair (or equivalent), and the dean or director of the academic unit in which the course was offered. A student may not take any further courses for which the incomplete is a prerequisite.

## **Evaluation**

Students are routinely evaluated throughout the program on the criteria of knowledge, personal characteristics, interpersonal skills, and counseling skills to determine progress is adequate, if remedial work is needed, or if the student should discontinue the program. Any evaluation that results in a decision for remediation or withdrawal follows the procedure specified for review of student competency described later in this handbook under the Policies and Procedures section, Student Retention Policy topic.

## Grievances and Grade Appeals

If you have a grievance, whether or not it specifically involves a Grade Appeal, follow the procedure specified in the “Grade Appeal Process for Counselor Education Program” below.

The grade appeal process for the Counselor Education Program follows the Grade Appeal process for students in the College of Professional Education, which can be found at this link:

<https://twu.edu/academic-affairs/academic-complaints-appeals/graduate-sequence-of-offices-for-complaints--appeals/>

Grade appeals can be submitted so that an attempt can be made to mediate student concerns regarding the issue of their grade. If a student feels that the current grade is a result of either differential treatment, arbitrary or capricious assignment of grades, or a miscalculation of the grade, then the effort will be made to correct any mistakes made. Listed below are the instructions for the grade appeal process. Processing the appeal will be handled in a timely manner. Timely processing will include 10 days after a decision is rendered at each level.

Processing grade appeals may take longer during university breaks or summer schedules.

- I. Student contacts instructor with concerns. If an agreeable solution is not found, the student may make a formal appeal. This appeal must occur in writing, within 10 regular business days (that TWU is in session) after the grades are posted by the university (typically Monday after a semester ends). Written appeal should include all paperwork the student has concerning the class (e.g., syllabus, assignments, papers, and tests returned to the student) as well as a written justification. The appeal is given to the faculty member.

- II. If not satisfied with final grade, the student may formally appeal to the Department Chair. The student will provide the chair with documentation gathered at the first level of appeal. The faculty member will provide necessary supporting information concerning the assigned grade. The Department Chair will review all materials and may meet with both student and instructor.
- III. If the student is dissatisfied with the Department Chair decision, the student may write a letter of appeal to the Dean of the College of Professional Education. Each party forwards the already reviewed packet of information to the Dean. The Dean will review the request as well as the student's documents and faculty member's documents, and will meet with the student, faculty, and department chair as needed to review and clarify the report. The Dean will review all materials and render a decision in writing. The student may appeal to the Graduate Dean after this point.

### **Non-Passing Grades in Classes**

Students are required to take three core classes as their first nine (9) hours and earn 'B' or better in each of them before they are allowed to proceed in the program. These include: COUN 5303 Professional Orientation and Ethics, COUN 5443 Multicultural Counseling, COUN 5313 Counseling Theories and Practice, and COUN 5353 Treatment Planning and Diagnosis for Counselors.

If less than a 'B' is earned in any course, students must retake the course the next available semester the course is offered. Any course in which students fail to earn a 'B' or above means they must retake the course the next semester that course is offered. Students must also schedule a meeting with their faculty advisor within the first two weeks of the following semester to

discuss a plan to address this grade and their progress in the program. Failure to do so may result in the student being administratively removed from current classes.

### **Two Non-Passing Grades in Classes**

Any student who earns a grade of less than 'B' ('C', 'D', 'F', or 'WF') in two graduate courses or in the same graduate course will be dismissed from the program.

## **Counselor Impairment**

It is the student's responsibility to communicate with their designated faculty advisor if they need to refrain from offering or providing counseling services due to impairment. This impairment may be of a temporary or permanent nature and may be due to physical, mental, or emotional problems. When the faculty advisor becomes aware of such an impairment, they will bring the situation to the attention of the program faculty as soon as reasonably possible so that the appropriate action can be taken by faculty decision (C.2.g, F.5.b).

If the faculty assesses or addresses impairment of a student, it is possible for the creation of a remediation plan or possible withdrawal from the program. The definition of impairment includes mental illness and emotional distress rather than just substance abuse, which is also deemed as an impairment. It is expected for the student to disclose to their faculty advisor any impairment of a mental, emotional, or physical nature. The student will refrain from offering counseling services.

The advisor will then meet with the remaining counseling faculty. The faculty will then create a remediation plan to outline the requirements needed to resume clinical courses.

Gaining universal clarity on what is meant by the term “impairment” is essential. The task force on impaired counselors has developed the following working definition of counselor impairment to guide our work:

“Therapeutic impairment occurs when there is a significant negative impact on a counselor’s professional functioning which compromises client care or poses the potential for harm to the client. Impairment may be due to:

- Substance abuse or chemical dependency
- Mental illness
- Personal crisis (traumatic events, vicarious trauma, burnout, life crisis)
- Physical illness or debilitation

Impairment in and of itself does not imply unethical behavior. Such behavior may occur as a symptom of impairment or may occur in counselors who are not impaired.

Counselors who are impaired are distinguished from stressed or distressed counselors who are experiencing significant stressors, but whose work is not significantly impacted.

Similarly, it is assumed that an impaired counselor has at some point had a sufficient level of clinical competence, which has become diminished as described above.”

This definition highlights the reasoning behind the development of wellness education. All counselors are on the spectrum from “well” to “impaired” at any point in time. Estimates of the prevalence of mental and emotional disorders in the American population cluster around 21% (US Surgeon General, 1999) and it is believed that counselors may, in fact, be more vulnerable for a number of reasons (Figley, 1995; Grosch & Olsen, 1994). As such, it would be useful for

counselors to know what places them at risk for progressing along the spectrum and to better equip them with activities and strategies that promote health.

### **Other Relevant Definitions of Impairment**

Compassion fatigue: “A feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by suffering or misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the pain or remove its cause.” It is described as the “emotional residue of exposure to working with the suffering” (Figley, 1995).

Vicarious traumatization: A cumulative process of change in the helper's inner experience that happens through empathic connection with clients. The concept is applicable even when clients are not disclosing personal histories of trauma; in the process of connecting with clients, we are connecting with their pain, and our empathy with that pain has an impact. (Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP, 1996).

Burnout: “A state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations.” (Figley, 1995). Current literature typically attributes burnout to the work environment, context, or job choice. It is seen as cumulative and, frequently, a vacation or job change helps considerably.

### **Risk Factors for Counselor Impairment**

There are a number of characteristics of counselors, and components of the work that counselors do, which make them especially vulnerable (Yassen, 1995). Those who practice in the helping field often have an acute sense of empathy to the experiences of others. It is not simply the empathy that counselors possess, but empathy coupled with the intimate exposure to the struggles and suffering that clients present, which can take a toll (Figley, 1995).



Moreover, counselors are taught that the counselor is the instrument of change, and that the therapeutic relationship is a prominent program of success in treatment. This may serve to increase counselors' strong feelings of responsibility for positive therapeutic outcomes and reinforce already unrealistic expectations they have for their own infallibility (Cerney, 1995).

### **Skovholt's "High Touch" Hazards**

Skovholt (2001) described "high touch" hazards, those characteristics of professionals in the helping fields which make them more susceptible to burnout. Those hazards include:

1. Clients have an unsolvable problem that must be solved
2. All clients are not "honors students" (they may not have the skills or resources to meet their goals)
3. There is often a readiness gap between them and us
4. Our inability to say no
5. Constant empathy, interpersonal sensitivity, and one-way caring
6. Elusive measures of success
7. Normative failure

These hazards challenge counselors' personal wellness, and highlight the need for supportive environments, an on-going assessment of our own wellness, and strategies for resilience.

### **Systemic Factors that Increase Our Vulnerability**

Contextual factors can compromise the ability of individuals and systems to practice effective self-care. Agencies may set unrealistic expectations for clinicians to carry a large caseload, with many seriously troubled clients. Managed care policies may require that hospitals discharge clients before the clinician determines they are ready. A client may express anger and resentment

when a clinician sets limits on availability after hours. Often counselors are told directly and indirectly that they need to work longer, see more clients, produce results in shorter time periods, and put aside their own needs in the service of others.

Other factors that increase vulnerability include the ability to obtain quality supervision, the nature of our clientele (e.g. vulnerable children, complexity of problems, safety concerns), and the nature of our workplace (e.g. insufficient resources or vacation time, lack of input into the decision-making process of the organization, current policies prohibit best practice treatment).

### **Personal Risk Factors**

Personal factors also contribute to our vulnerability. How prepared do we feel to be doing the work we are doing? What is our training, education and experience? Are there current stressors and/or changes in our life outside of work? What is our natural coping style? If we have a personal history of trauma or hold beliefs that it is not okay to seek help, we are more at risk for becoming impaired (Catherall, 1995; Cerney, 1995; Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP, 1996). Real life expectations and commonly held myths about counselor invulnerability create barriers to establishing and maintaining strong wellness routines.

### **Secondary Traumatic Stress**

One particular issue that contributes to counselor vulnerability is exposure to primary and secondary trauma and violence. When counselors either witness or experience violence firsthand (in the workplace or in their personal lives), they are more vulnerable to developing traumatic stress symptoms which can lead to impairment. The concept of vicarious traumatization applies to all helping professionals and does not require primary exposure to violence (Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP, 1996).

Vicarious traumatization is a cumulative process of personal change in helpers that happens through empathic connection with clients. The concept is applicable even when clients are not disclosing personal histories of trauma; in the process of connecting with clients, we are connecting with their pain and our empathy with that pain has an impact.

### **Manifestations of Impairment**

1. Burnout
2. Compassion fatigue
3. Vicarious traumatization
4. Depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions
5. Drug and alcohol abuse
6. Over-involvement and overwork
7. Contagion
8. Relationship problems

### **School of Human Sciences Professional Behavior Policy**

Use this link to access the Professional Behavior Policy:

<https://twu.edu/media/documents/family-sciences/HDFS&C-Professional-Behavior-Policy.pdf>

### **TWU Student Code of Conduct**

Use this link to access the Student Code of Conduct:

<https://public.powerdms.com/TWU1/tree/documents/1745742>

## **Wellness Monitoring and Renewal**

One of the most important skills counselors can learn in guarding against impairment is the regular practice of self-monitoring and self-care activities. The task force on impaired counselors has examined a number of self-assessment instruments designed to identify counselors' vulnerabilities to impairment.

Two instruments in particular, Rethinking Your "Shoulds" and Begin Where You are Now, seem to be especially helpful in identifying areas of vulnerability across the many spheres of wellness with which counselors should be concerned.

### **Rethinking Your "Shoulds"**

One of the struggles in making the case for a wellness effort among counselors is that often counselors do not practice what they preach (O'Halloran & Linton, 2000). The task force is sensitive to the fact that counselors have unique challenges to their own wellness when regularly and intimately involved in the painful experiences of other peoples' lives. Cognitive restructuring (namely taking time to track negative cognitions that interfere with self-care) can be an effective tool for clinicians who clearly know successful strategies to promote their wellness yet have difficulty implementing them.

What are the "should" statements that prevent you from leaving the office earlier, saying "no" to requests from colleagues, or taking lunch? Giving yourself permission to set limits and say "yes" to your own needs is a critical first step.

### **Begin Where You Are Now**

In assessing your wellness strategies generally, ask yourself the following two questions:

1. When I examine my wellness needs, what area do I want to begin with *today*?
2. What area is being most taxed *today*?

**Develop a Self-Care Program for Your Whole Self**

A self-care program should take a holistic approach toward preserving and maintaining our own wellness across all domains. Pearlman and MacIan (1995) note the ten most helpful activities that trauma therapists use to promote wellness. They include:

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. Discussing cases with colleagues     | 6. Socializing               |
| 2. Attending workshops                  | 7. Exercise                  |
| 3. Spending time with family or friends | 8. Limiting case load        |
| 4. Travel, vacations, hobbies, & movies | 9. Developing spiritual life |
| 5. Talk with colleague between sessions | 10. Receiving supervision.   |

These are strategies that cut across the domains of wellness and match perfectly to the causes of counselor vulnerability.

**Wellness Activities by Category**

<b>Cognitive</b>	<b>Emotional</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Spiritual</b>
Meditation	Talk to friends	Drink plenty of water	Learn to garden
Journaling	Laugh	Eat regular meals	Spend time outside
Reading for pleasure	See a counselor	Exercise regularly	Practice mindfulness
Hobbies	Keep in touch with important people	Get enough sleep	Take time for reflection
Volunteering (not counseling related)	Encouragement exchange with colleague	Turn off the computer or cell phone	Connect with community
Visiting a theater, symphony, museum, or community event	Give yourself permission to cry	Go for a walk during lunch	Practice gratitude
Going to movies		Get a massage	

		Yoga, acupuncture, or meditation	
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**Seek Social Support**

The support of peers and other social supports is often overlooked, and yet consistently appear as an asset in maintaining wellness. An active, supportive relationship with supervisors and peers is an especially important part of self-care for counselors (Catherall, 1995; Munroe, Shay, Fisher, Makary, Rapperport, & Zimering, 1995).

When a counselor is struggling, their ability to accurately monitor their own wellness may also become impaired. At those times the support of peers and supervisors can be especially helpful. More important than simply identifying whether we are stressed, distressed, or impaired, supervisors and peers play a role on the assets side of the ledger. Too often supervision is provided only for counselors who are new to the field or seeking licensure. Supervision can help even veteran counselors maintain an appropriate perspective on the counselor's role, mitigating the harmful secondary exposure to trauma by helping counselors to process their counseling work.

It is especially important for supervisors in this role to understand that counselors experiencing impairment, or the prelude to impairment, require support towards ameliorating the problem and promoting resiliency. Ultimately, the care that counselors provide others will be only as good as the care they provide themselves.

**Student Retention Policy**

The current ACA Code of Ethics (2014) is the ethical code that guides the C&D program faculty. Code F.9.a states:

*Evaluation of students.* “Counselor educators clearly state to students, prior to and throughout the training program, the levels of competency expected, appraisal methods, and timing of evaluations for both didactic and clinical competencies. Counselor educators provide students with ongoing feedback regarding their performance throughout the training program”

Code F.9.b states:

“Counselor educators, through ongoing evaluation, are aware of and address the inability of some students to achieve counseling competencies. Counselor educators do the following: 1) assist students in securing remedial assistance when needed, 2) seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students for assistance, and 3) ensure that students have recourse in a timely manner to address decisions requiring them to seek assistance or to dismiss them and provide students with due processing according to institutional policies and procedures”

Students are routinely evaluated throughout the counselor education program on the criteria of knowledge, personal characteristics, interpersonal skills, and counseling skills to determine if progress is adequate, if remedial work is needed, or if the student should withdraw from the program. At any faculty meeting, a faculty member may bring up a student about whom the faculty member has concerns. In addition, the faculty program specifically addresses concerns at the last faculty meeting of each semester. Any decision involving remediation or withdrawal follows the procedure specified for Reviewing Student Competency that appears below.

## V. Clinical Instruction

### **Statement of Liability Awareness**

In light of the prevailing legal climate and increased litigation in the United States today, it is increasingly apparent that students in training for the helping professions must have adequate liability coverage for themselves during the training period. Texas Woman's University provides legal protection for students when enrolled in clinical classes; however, the counselor education faculty encourages students to acquire additional insurance coverage. Sources that will insure students include:

- ACA Insurance Trust: 1 (800) 509-6107
- Texas Counseling Association: (512) 472-3403

Each of these sources requires that the student be a member of the respective professional organization (ACA or TCA) in order to receive coverage. In providing the name of the forgoing companies, the university is not endorsing them. It is the student's responsibility to evaluate the insurance available prior to choosing a particular company. The student may choose to use their personal insuring agent if that company can provide satisfactory coverage.

### **Skills Required for Successful Completion of the Program**

The counselor education program of study cumulates in three clinical courses: one semester of COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling and COUN 5894 Internships (1 and 2). In these courses, the student's overall performance is assessed, and the student must earn a grade of "PR" to successfully complete the courses. The evaluation forms that are used in these courses are found in the current Clinical Handbook.



## Master's Clinical Courses

### Registration Deadline

Clinical courses are restricted enrollment – a limited number of students are allowed in each clinical course per semester. These courses fill up quickly, so it is *imperative* that you submit your application as soon as possible within the enrollment periods. Applications will not be accepted prior to or following the due dates. It is your responsibility to submit the applications between 8 am and 5 pm to the School of Human Sciences office to the secretary in charge of restricted enrollment course applications. Each application will be logged on a master record in the School of Human Sciences office and stamped (with date and time) by the office staff.

You will be required to sign your application in, and you may request a copy of the front sheet (with date and time) for your personal records. Students are assigned on a first-come, first-assigned basis. This becomes crucial if there are not enough clinical slots for all students in any given semester.

*Students will be notified via email regarding semester due dates for submission forms for Application of Limited Enrollment.*

### Initial Clinical Course Enrollment Requirements

COUN 5363 Prepracticum and COUN 5373 Group Counseling Procedures are the first two required clinical classes and *must* be taken in the same semester. Prepracticum must be three (3) of the first 30 hours in the student's program. Prerequisites for these two courses are the four (4) core classes:

CON 5303 Professional Orientation and Ethics

COUN 5443 Multicultural Counseling

COUN 5313 Counseling Theories and Practice

COUN 5353 Treatment Planning and Diagnosis for Counselors

### **Sequence of Clinical Courses**

Once students enter the clinical sequence, they must take the next clinical class in the sequence the next semester. The sequence of clinical classes include:

COUN 5363 Prepracticum and

COUN 5373 Group (taken concurrently)

COUN 5364 Practicum

COUN 5894 Internship (2 semesters)

### **Application Procedures for All Clinical Courses**

Applications must be made for all clinical classes according to the semester deadlines, and students must include a current unofficial transcript of their grades with each application. Failure to include an unofficial transcript or submit the completed application through the office on time may result in not being considered for admission to clinical class for the following semester.

Clinical class enrollment is restricted based on CACREP requirements and program expectations, and it is imperative that applications be submitted on time to schedule enough seats to accommodate the student enrollment.

## Exceptions to Consecutive Clinical Enrollment

Students in the School Counseling track are not permitted to take COUN 5894 Internship in the summer semester; however, they must make application in the spring for Internship in the following fall semester. Any other exceptions must be addressed on a case-by-case basis with the Program Director who will bring the request to the faculty for full consideration. Failure to register for a clinical class, without an approved exception, may result in the student being administratively removed from the clinical sequence and may require an additional semester out of the sequence.

## VI. Degree Requirements

### Identification of a Guiding Counseling Theory

The counselor education faculty requires that each student identify with a guiding theory. One's guiding theory is the established theory that most closely aligns with one's beliefs about the nature of people, the development of personality, how people change, and how counseling facilitates the change. Counselor education students are introduced to the established theories of counseling in COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice. The established theories from which a student may choose are:

- Behavioral counseling
- Cognitive counseling
- Psychoanalytic counseling
- Gestalt counseling
- Individual psychology

- Person-centered counseling
- Rational Emotive Behavioral counseling
- Reality therapy
- Transactional analysis
- Existential
- Feminist

At the end of COUN 5313, students are asked to make a preliminary decision about the guiding theory with which their beliefs are most closely aligned. In COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling, each student further develops their theory paper, and the identified theory becomes the basis for supervision in that course and all remaining clinical courses in the program.

Identification of a guiding theory carries potential disadvantages. However, the counselor education faculty believes that the advantages are greater. The beginning counselor conceptualizes people from one internally consistent perspective. The beginning counselor then masters one approach to counseling rather than being overwhelmed by numerous points of view and techniques.

Basic counseling skills are used in every theory of counseling; these are the focus of COUN 5353 Prepracticum in Counseling. Specific change techniques that arise from other theories, other than one's own guiding theory, may be incorporated; this is known as theoretical consistency and technical eclecticism. Finally, the ability to justify one's treatment on the basis of a guiding theory is the recognized standard of care and is one the counselor's best defenses in case of being charged with malpractice.

Students often feel challenged in the process of uncovering beliefs about people identifying the established theory that most closely aligns with those beliefs. The counselor education faculty is

available to assist students in this process, and students are encouraged to read in greater depth about their potential guiding theories to facilitate the guiding theory identification process.

## Theoretical Orientation Paper

### **Introduction**

The theoretical orientation paper is designed as a process paper on which to build your personal counseling theory and personal counseling style. The paper will originate in COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice and progress through COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling, COUN 5894 Internship 1 and completed in COUN 5894 Internship 2.

The paper will require different components as you progress through each of the classes. The format and outline for this theoretical paper have been adopted by the Counseling and Development Component. An explanation of the specific requirements for the content of the paper is included.

### **Technical Aspects**

\*These will apply at ALL levels of the Theory Paper

\*NOTE: To effectively prepare for this assignment you will need to read ahead in the text, as well as engage in outside readings and dialogues with your classmates.

The theoretical orientation paper is designed to serve as a directed self-study. The goals of this process are to:

1. require you to research counseling theory literature
2. apply theoretical techniques in your work with clients, and

3. aid in the development of an effective, personal counseling style.

### **Format for Theoretical Orientation Paper**

- Each paper will contain a title page, text pages (content), and reference page(s).  
Minimum and maximum numbers of text pages DO NOT include title and reference pages.
- Use appropriate Roman numeral titles for each section as indicated in this document.
- All papers and subsequent addendums MUST utilize APA style. *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)* is an essential reference for this paper and others you will be writing during your enrollment in the counseling program. Please review the section in the *APA manual* on plagiarism and ethics in publication (pp.349-350) and the graduate bulletin on cheating and plagiarism. All university policies will be strictly followed.
- The title page (see *APA manual* for specific directions) will include a page header and a running head plus title, name, and institution. In addition, the following three lines will be added to the title page for this assignment: Course, Instructor, and Date. (Course, instructor, and date, in this order, should all be centered under the institution.) All components of the title page will be double spaced.
- Additional references and page requirements are expected for each version of the theory paper. Continued reading outside of textbook material is expected; therefore, please note specific requirements.
- No more than one source from the Internet.
- Utilization of course texts is expected; therefore, they do not count as part of the required references.

- References shall be from appropriate professional books and peer-reviewed journals.

Note: Brochures, popular magazine articles, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and other non-professional materials are unacceptable as reference material for this paper. If in doubt about a particular reference, please consult with the professor or library staff.

- A reference page containing all references is required, and all references listed in the reference section must be referenced in the body of the paper.
- A minimum of three (3) seminal (original author's work) references must be included. Other references should include current literature within the last ten (10) years.

## **Evaluation and Grading**

Papers will be evaluated on:

- Ability to follow the established format
- Depth of thought about theory
- Incorporation of instructor feedback into subsequent revisions of the paper
- Clarity and continuity of writing style
- Appropriate reference list, spelling, grammar and citation of material
- APA format

This paper is a work-in-progress and a reflection of your professional development over the course of your program. Students are strongly encouraged to consult with the appropriate course instructor throughout the entire process of this project.

Grading for the paper will be Pass/Fail with a 3-point rating system:

In all of the required courses, the 3-point grading scale will be utilized, and the paper will be part of the grading and evaluating process.

3 = Acceptable paper with minor technical problems to be corrected for future submissions.

2 = Major technical problems which must be corrected before the close of the current semester.

1 = Not Acceptable. Make an appointment with the course instructor to delineate what must be done to correct the paper before the end of the current semester and make the paper acceptable.

If paper receives a rating of 1 or 2, it must be corrected as instructed and re-submitted during the current semester to successfully pass this assignment.

**Brief Guide**

<b>Class Requirements</b>	<b>Text Length</b>	<b>Number References</b>	<b>Sections Required</b>
COUN 5313	5 pages	5 minimum + textbook(s)	Phase 1: Sections I, II
COUN 5364 (Practicum)	7-9 pages	13 minimum + textbook(s)	Phase 2: Sections I, II, and III
COUN 5894 (Internship 1)	9-11 pages	16 minimum + textbook(s)	Phase 3: Sections I, II, III, and IV
COUN 5894 (Internship 2)	Final corrections made beginning of semester Corrected paper included in Portfolio		

**Phase 1: COUN 5313 Counseling Theory and Practice**

Content and vocabulary mastery:

Students will be expected to write a paper summarizing their initial study of various counseling



theories. The COUN 5313 instructor will read through these papers in the context that these theory papers are the beginning of a work in progress. The instructor will return the paper - with feedback - to the student for a re-write or in preparation for Phase 2.

Format for Phase 1 – Sections I & II:

- The paper should be no more than five (5) text pages in length.
- Must have a minimum of 5 references, in addition to the textbook(s), with the exclusions listed above.
- Key concepts associated with the selected theory should be incorporated into the language of the paper.
- The paper will contain two sections as identified and explained below:

Section 1: My Personal Approach to Counseling (Structure & Function of the Personality)

Name and describe existing theoretical orientation(s) from which your personal theory comes (e.g., Client-centered, Existential, Cognitive-Behavioral, Psychoanalytic, Reality, Gestalt, REBT, etc.). Be specific about what elements of the existing theoretical orientation relate to your personal theory. It is strongly suggested that you select ONE theory that best “fits” for you; all elements must be supported and adequately referenced.

Section II: How Client Problems Originate (Role of the Environment, Healthy & Unhealthy Functioning)

From your theoretical position, describe how client problems originate. Be specific and use examples to illustrate your views. (e.g., Do problems stem from client beliefs? The way people think? Feelings? Unconscious forces? Chemical imbalances in the brain? Issues related to family of origin? The way people view themselves, others, their lives? etc.)

Be specific in your description and discussion and incorporate the language of your selected theory. Please remember this is a working paper and you are not expected to have a polished product at this stage of writing. See grading policy. A paper containing appropriate content reflective of genuine depth of thought and incorporation of key concepts is the objective for this phase of the process.

## **Phase 2: COUN 5363 Practicum in Counseling**

### Initial application of theory:

Think of this as the remainder of the Theories Outline...

During the beginning of the course (see applicable syllabus for specific due date), the student will be required to submit to the COUN 5364 Practicum instructor a second draft that incorporates the feedback received in COUN 5313. Students will attach their previous draft to their new version. This will allow the instructor to have an understanding of the theoretical orientation of the student and allow for further refining.

### Format for Phase 2 – Section III:

- Minimum of 8 additional references for a total minimum of 13 references
- Minimum of 7 and maximum of 9 text pages. The length of the paper will reflect the additional materials as well as additional clarifications
- All other procedures are the same as outlined previously. The instructor will read and give feedback on this draft and return to the student in preparation for COUN 5894 (Internship 1)

### Section III: How Clients Are Best Helped

Describe your view of how clients are best helped in the counseling process, incorporating your

theoretical perspective. This must be related to your personal perspective (e.g., “This is how I would approach working with clients . . .” “I would . . .” etc.). Be specific with techniques and interventions and justify your rationale. Use brief examples to illustrate your position. Use first person.

### **Phase 3: COUN 5894 Internship 1**

#### Expanded Application and Integration of Theory:

During the first two weeks of the course the student will be required to incorporate the feedback received in COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling into their third version of the paper and turn it in to the COUN 5894 Internship 1 instructor/supervisor. Students will attach their previous draft(s) to their new version. This will allow the instructor to get a feel for the student's developing theoretical orientation as well as allow for further refining.

#### Format for Phase 3 – Section IV:

- Minimum of 3 additional references for a total minimum of 16 references
- Minimum of 9 and maximum of 11 text pages
- The instructor will read and give feedback on the third draft and return to the student in preparation for the final corrections to be completed in COUN 5894 Internship

#### Section IV: Field Experience Insights

At the required date, set by the instructor, the student will present a revised version of the theory paper incorporating new knowledge gained from the experiences during the field experience based on the student's selected theoretical perspective. Specific “language” (key concepts) of the theory should be included in the paper. The student will incorporate real life experiences

with clients, colleagues, and clinical settings during COUN 5364 Practicum in Counseling and COUN 5894 Internship 1 into their developing theoretical orientation.

#### **Phase 4: COUN 5894 Internship 2**

##### Final draft:

During the first two weeks of the final internship the student will be required to incorporate the feedback received in COUN 5894 Internship 1 and turn it into the COUN 5894 Internship 2 instructor/supervisor. Students will attach the previous drafts to their final version. As before, the instructor will read this version of the paper for clarification of the student's orientation and application. Comments, both technical and content, may be returned to the student, if appropriate. All final corrections must be made at this time and a clean copy included in the student's portfolio for review.

## Portfolio

### **What is it?**

- A portfolio is a collection of evidence or materials that demonstrate an individual's growth, development, and acquisition of knowledge and skills (Waterman, 1991). They reflect changes in your knowledge, skills, and professional identity

### **What is the purpose?**

- To motivate and assist counseling students in summarizing and creating a holistic view of how individual components of the program are preparing you for the counseling profession

### **Who must complete a portfolio?**

- All C&D students who are completing a master's degree and who have NOT written a professional paper must complete a portfolio
- All C&D students who are completing 21 or more hours of a deficiency plan to be a school counselor must complete a portfolio. The required portfolio is limited to the courses taken as part of the deficiency plan

### **What do I need to have in my portfolio?**

- Materials from all areas of the program
- Students are encouraged, however, to add additional items that they believe reflect their learning and growth and which address the eight core curriculum areas as defined by CACREP
- The required minimum areas include:
  - Professional identity
  - Social and cultural diversity
  - Human growth and development
  - Career development
  - Helping relationships
  - Group work
  - Assessment
  - Research and program evaluation

### **What else should I include?**

- Papers

- Journal entries
- Case assessments
- Activities
- Book reviews
- Conference presentations, etc.

### **In what format should the portfolio be presented?**

- In a binder, with a title page and table of contents
- Be creative!

### **How does the faculty evaluate a portfolio?**

- Assignments required
- Portfolio presented in final semester of work
- Feedback is given, though NO grade will be assigned

### **What do we do when we are in a portfolio presentation?**

- Oral discussion of the portfolio
- Faculty and committee members will be in attendance
- The committee will ask questions related to the portfolio

### **What can I do about appealing my evaluation?**

- Please reference your handouts as well as your Graduate Catalog

### **Reflections Responses:**

- See your handout

- These questions will provide students with an opportunity to consider their own development
- You will consider personal goals and identification, application of knowledge and skills, etc.

### **Student Portfolio Evaluation Form:**

- Feedback about the portfolio evaluation and the student's perspective on the process and their involvement

## **VII. Graduation**

### **Applying for Graduation**

The application for graduation should be obtained from the Graduate School. A completed, properly signed application must be filed in the Graduate School by the date indicated on the academic calendar of the semester of graduation. You may apply for graduation up to one year prior to graduating. All fees must be paid by the deadline. See the Graduate Catalog for further information.

## **VIII. Beyond Graduation: Requirements for Licensure and Certification**

To practice counseling in the public school setting in Texas, one must obtain certification as a public school counselor by the state of Texas and meet all other state of Texas requirements.

To practice counseling outside of the public school setting in Texas, one must be a Licensed Professional Counselor. The counselor education program prepares counselors to enter the field

of counseling in the area for which their program area prepared them. The counselor education program faculty assumes that its graduates will pursue continuing education to develop beyond the level of minimum competence. Continuing education includes further coursework, attendance at workshops and conferences, participation in supervision, and reading the current professional literature.

Some supervised clinical experience completed during the counselor education program may apply toward post-degree clinical experience requirement for licensure. Information in this regard is summarized below.

The counselor education faculty encourages its graduates to pursue certification in areas of specialization.

### **Licensure Requirements for Professional Counselors**

- Graduate degree on at least a master's level in counseling or counseling related field.
- At least 60 semester hours of counseling related courses including a counseling practicum of not less than 300 hours (NOTE: TWU requires 61 hours and 700 hours of clinical classes including: Practicum, 100 hours; Internship 1, 300 hours; Internship 2, 300 hours).
- Pass the National Counselor Examination (NCE) and the Texas Jurisprudence Examination
- 3,000 post-graduate hours, supervised (1,500 must be direct client contact)
- Renewal of licensure requires completion of 24 clock hours of continuing education units annually, including 4 clock hours of counseling ethics.



## Certification Requirements for Professional School Counselors

Take the TExES examination, which is administered throughout the year. You may take it after successfully completing COUN 5363 Prepracticum, COUN 5373 Group Counseling, COUN 5033 Foundations of School Counseling, and COUN 5043 Critical Issues in School Counseling. If your last semester is the summer, you may take the test in the preceding spring.

- Contact the university's Student Advising Office to obtain:
  - o Registration bulletin
  - o An application form WITH a bar code
- Complete and submit the application; prepare for and take the test
- The prep manual for the TExES exam can be printed or ordered online
- Once your TExES exam scores are on file with the university, contact the university's Student Advising Office to obtain:
  - o A university recommendation and application for certification form
  - o An application for professional certificates form
- Complete these forms and submit them to the student advising office. The office strongly advises you to list your home address as recipient of the certification materials. School districts that receive your materials can misplace them. Be sure the address you list is the one where you will be living in five to eight weeks; the documents are not able to be forwarded.
- Upon receipt of these forms, the State Board of Education Certification will conduct a criminal history check. Application by someone who does not pass the check will be rejected.
- Within five to eight weeks, your certification material will arrive.

For further information, contact:

State Board for Educator's Certification

1701 N. Congress Avenue

Austin, Texas 78701

(512) 463-9734



## Steps to Becoming a Licensed Professional Counselor

- Consult our Counseling & Development (C&D) Student Handbook and webpage for relevant information
- Determine if you meet the criteria for admission:
  - o Last 60 hours of coursework completed with a GPA of 3.0 or above
- After you've been accepted to the TWU Graduate School, wait for the School of Human Sciences to extend an invitation to Interview Day (hosted in the spring and fall semesters)
  - o C&D faculty will evaluate your candidacy as a major in the program
  - o You will provide a writing sample, conduct an individual interview with faculty and participate in a mock group counseling session
  - o You will also have the opportunity to ask questions and network with other applicants
- Plan to attend the program's mandatory orientation during your first semester (date and time of orientation are provided in acceptance letters)
- Take courses as determined by your advisor
- Complete courses in conjunction with course and CACREP requirements
- After completion of all TWU requirements and degree is conferred, you may apply to take the National Counselor Exam (NCE)

- After passing the NCE, secure an LPC-S (supervisor)
- Apply to the state board for your LPC-Intern licensure
- Upon receipt of your LPC-Intern licensure you may begin your 3,000 hours of supervised experience, which must be completed in a minimum of 18 months (1,500 direct hours, 1,500 indirect hours).



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- After you've been accepted to the TWU Graduate School, wait for the School of Human Sciences to extend an invitation to Interview Day (hosted in the spring and fall semesters)
  - o C&D faculty will evaluate your candidacy as a major in the program
  - o You will provide a writing sample, conduct an individual interview with faculty and participate in a mock group counseling session
  - o You will also have the opportunity to ask questions and network with other applicants
- If applicable, submit a copy of your service record to the certification office
- Pay any relevant Texas Education Agency fee
- Plan to attend the program's mandatory orientation during your first semester (date and time of orientation are provided in acceptance letters)
- Take courses as determined by your advisor
- Complete courses in conjunction with course and CACREP requirements

- A minimum of 160 hours of direct field experience must be obtained in a school setting
- You will be observed by your assigned Field Supervisor a minimum of 135 minutes over 3 observations during Internship 1 and Internship 2
- You may request permission to sit for the TExES School Counselor (152) exam after the completion of COUN 5363 Prepracticum, COUN 5373 Group Counseling, COUN 5033 Foundations of School Counseling, and COUN 5043 Critical Issues in School Counseling.
- After completion of all TWU requirements and passing your exam, apply for certification



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### **Student Handbook Acknowledgment**

I acknowledge that I have read the Counseling and Development Student Handbook. I agree to follow the policies of the Counseling and Development Program and understand that failure to follow program policies could result in remediation or removal from the program. I agree to uphold the standards of the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics and all relevant policies at Texas Woman's University.

Student Name and ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_