



Department of Counseling  
& Human Services

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **COLORADO SPRINGS**

# **Clinical Mental Health Counseling Fieldwork Experience Guidelines**

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## Introduction

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This document describes the practicum and internship training requirements for the Master of Arts in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling track. It includes the procedures for applying for Practicum/Internship placement, descriptions of roles and responsibilities of those involved, and a description of relevant terms.

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling training experiences are designed to be compatible with general education requirements for professional counselor licensure; there are notes included herein that pertain to considerations of licensure requirements. Students are advised to regularly review the licensure requirements of the jurisdiction in which they wish to pursue licensing in order to stay apprised of changes.

The Department of Counseling & Human Service (DCHS) expects all those participating in counselor education and supervision to be practicing within the ethical standards and practice guidelines of the American Counseling Association (ACA).

<https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics#2014code>

The Department of Counseling & Human Services (DCHS) permits training affiliation only with sites and supervisors who practice empirically based interventions that follow the current practice guidelines of the ACA.

## Practicum & Internship Overview

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The Practicum and Internship are essential elements of the degree program. They involve a supervised off-site counseling field training experience. This training provides students with the opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge; to implement, develop and assess the efficacy of counseling techniques based on this knowledge; and to develop the professional and personal attitudes important to the identity of a counselor. Students are supervised by experienced clinicians who teach relevant skills, provide supervision of on-going work, and serve as role models of professional identity and behavior. Students must be released by faculty for practicum. Students must also be approved by practicum instructor for internship.

The primary emphasis of training is the acquisition and refinement of core counseling skills, including initial interviewing, empathic listening, rapport-building, case formulation, treatment planning, establishing and maintaining appropriate conditions for counseling, evaluation of the counseling process and progress, and beginning recognition and management of transference and counter-transference phenomena. The major goal of training is experience providing direct counseling experiences. The culminating experience is preparation and presentation of the Case Presentation, the student's professional case presentation to a panel of peers and faculty members.

Notwithstanding that students are drawn to practice areas that interest them, the Department of Counseling & Human Services (DCHS) emphasizes that the expectation for this training experience is skill building. The setting where the student is invited to train may not be the student's first choice with respect to their ultimate career goals, but the learning objectives for the training experiences focus on developing skills in relationship building and case conceptualization, which will occur in any counseling setting.

**The Practicum (COUN 5120) occurs the first spring semester for three credits.** During this experience, you will receive training and supervision from your site and conduct a minimum of 40 direct hours of services with clients (a total of 100 hours on site). Students can continue into Internship at the same site. The practicum agreement is for the practicum semester and ends at the end of the semester. Students must be approved to begin practicum during the DAM Score process in the Fall prior to the Practicum semester. Students should register for Practicum and if they are not approved to move forward, they will drop the course.

**The Internship (COUN 5720) occurs over two or three semesters for a total of 6 credits.** Students must complete their Practicum (COUN 5120) prior to beginning Internship. Practicum hours cannot be counted towards the 600 required internship hours. The student will complete a total of 600 hours (240 are direct) over the course of Internship. The hours should be evenly distributed. You may not be excused from internship class if you complete all hours early. Therefore, we highly encourage you to evenly distribute clinical hours with supervision.

## **Practicum/Internship Requirements**

The requirements cover the areas of preparation of the student (prerequisite courses), the student's choice of training site(s), the supervision provided, and an expected level of progression in the student's counseling and professional skills. All sites must be approved by the Fieldwork Director prior to students collecting hours. Students in Practicum/Internship are expected to spend at least 40 practicum and 240 internship hours providing direct face-to-face services to clients.

### *Prerequisite Coursework for Practicum*

The following courses are prerequisites for the Practicum:

- COUN 5010: Theories and Techniques of Individual Counseling
- COUN 5120: Laboratory in Individual Counseling
- COUN 5040: Human Growth and Development
- COUN 5330: Issues, Ethics and Trends in Professional Counseling
- COUN 5550 Practice of Crisis Counseling, Trauma and Disaster Work
- COUN 5950 Roles and Functions of a Clinical Mental Health Counselor

The following courses are co-requisites for the Practicum: (for 3 year students you will likely have taken these prior to enrolling in Practicum)

- COUN 5100: Theories and Techniques of Group Counseling
- COUN 5860 Social & Cultural Foundations of Professional Counseling

Practicum follows the Department's Core Course Sequence and is completed in the spring semester of the first year in the program after successful completion of Individual Lab and Social & Cultural Foundations of Professional Counseling.

Practicum is only available in the spring semester and is the first opportunity students will have to apply new counseling skills with the public. Therefore, students must have a successful faculty review on the Developmental Assessment Matrix competencies to be released for practicum.

## *Prerequisites for Internship*

Practicum students must earn a B or above in practicum and have satisfactory reviews from their onsite and university supervisors to transition into internship. Internship is a two or three-semester requirement started in the second or third year of the program. Internship may commence in the summer or fall semester, depending on the site and track of study. Students must have a successful faculty review on the Developmental Assessment Matrix competencies to be released for Internship.

Practicum and Internship requirements are based on CACREP standards. These courses are considered the most critical experiential elements in both counselor training programs. According to CACREP, the practicum and internship provide for *“the application of theory and the development of counseling skills under supervision... [as students] counsel clients who represent the ethnic and demographic diversity of their community.”* All faculty members and site supervisors are committed to preparing ethical, effective, culturally competent professional counselors and promoting the development of the student’s professional counselor identity. All prospective practicum students will attend a mandatory fieldwork orientation meeting prior to initiating practicum.

## **Field Experiences in Professional Practice: Practicum and Internship Policies**

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All students must successfully complete a 100-clock hour practicum and a 600-clock hour internship in clinical mental health counseling in order to be recommended for graduation from the Department of Counseling and Human Services. Fieldwork orientation is typically held in September. Attendance is mandatory and information presented in this manual will be discussed at that time.

### **Typical Due Dates for Practicum and Internship Agreements and Paperwork**

Practicum – December 15 <sup>th</sup>	Fall Internship – May 15 <sup>th</sup>
Summer Internship – April 15 <sup>th</sup>	Spring Internship – December 15 <sup>th</sup>

### **Practicum Process**

Identify a Field Placement Site. All students will identify a mental health counseling practicum field site during the fall semester of the first year in the program. A practicum agreement with the practicum site must be completed and submitted to the Fieldwork Experience Director through Canvas by December 15<sup>th</sup>. The **Practicum Agreement** can be located on the Cohorts Canvas Shell under the Paperwork for Practicum Module.

Ensure that the site is approved by the Department. Approval will be granted to sites with supervisors that have:

- a minimum of a master’s degree in counseling or related profession with equivalent qualifications, including appropriate certifications and licenses;
- an LPC license, the department must approve any other license type;

- a minimum of two years pertinent professional experience in the program area in which the student is completing his or her counselor training; and
- knowledge of the Department's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for trainees.

It is mandatory that all site supervisors attend the annual Professional Development Day in the fall of each academic year.

## *Required Student Experiences*

### A. Completion of 100 Clock Hours and Individual Supervision

Practicum students must complete **100 clock hours of experience during the practicum semester**. At least forty (40) hours must be in individual counseling and group work, in which there is direct contact with client(s). The counselor-in-training must receive an average of one hour per week of individual triadic (one site-supervisor with two practicum students) supervision over the duration of the practicum semester. The one-hundred-hour requirement is a MINIMUM for the practicum experience. Most students complete more than 100 hours over the course of the semester. Students are *NOT* permitted to "front load" their 100 hours at the beginning of the semester as the practicum experience **begins and ends with the semester**.

The University Supervisor or another department faculty member typically makes at least one visit to the practicum site to meet with the site supervisor and practicum student to assess the student's counseling knowledge, counseling skills, and personal and professional development over the course of the practicum experience.

### B. Group Supervision and Skills Development

In addition to the on-site individual and triadic supervision, practicum students will meet weekly with their university supervisor for group supervision. Group supervision sessions will provide opportunities for the practicum students to discuss, in a small group setting, issues that emerge from their practicum experiences and present audio/video recordings of their work with students/ clients. Additionally, a portion of the group supervision class will be used to further develop counseling skills, practice counseling sessions using the on-campus counseling laboratory, and to explore topics relevant to the needs of their current clients as well as to the professional practice of clinical mental health counseling.

### C. Evaluations

The site supervisor will provide performance evaluations (verbal and written) twice per semester. In turn, practicum students will complete an evaluation of the practicum site and the practicum experience at the end of the practicum semester.

### D. Log All Practicum Hours and Activities

All students will complete weekly/monthly practicum logs signed by the Site-Supervisor. The Semester Final Hours log is completed each semester and signed by the student, Site-Supervisor, and University Supervisor that will remain the students' practicum/internship files.



## Internship Requirements

Internship is discussed in the 2016 CACREP Standards as “After successful completion of the practicum, students complete 600 clock hours of supervised counseling internship in roles and settings with clients relevant to their specialty area.”

Identify a Field Placement Site. All students will identify a Clinical Mental Health Counseling Internship field site during the spring semester of the first year in the program. An Internship Fieldwork Agreement, with the internship site, must be completed and submitted to the Fieldwork Director by April 15<sup>th</sup> to begin Internship in the Summer and May 15<sup>th</sup> to begin Internship in the Fall. The **Internship Agreement** can be located on the Cohorts Canvas Shell under the Paperwork for Practicum Module. Ensure that Appropriate On-Site Supervision is available. The site supervisor must have:

- a minimum of a master’s degree in counseling or a related profession with equivalent qualifications, including appropriate certifications and licenses;
- an LPC license, the department must approve any other license type;
- a minimum of two years pertinent professional experience in the program area (school or clinical mental health counseling) in which the student is completing his or her counselor training; and
- knowledge of the Department’s expectations, requirements and evaluation procedures for trainees.

It is mandatory that all site supervisors attend the annual Professional Development Day in the fall of each academic year.

## Required Experiences

### A. Completion of 600 Clock Hours and Individual Supervision

Internship students must complete **300 clock hours of experience during each of the two semesters of internship**. Overall, 240 hours must be spent in direct services to clients or students and the remaining hours are spent in indirect service or engaging in those activities that support the work of a counselor.

Hour Requirements for Each Semester:

120 Direct Hours + 180 Indirect Hours = 300 Logged Internship Hours (300 Fall and 300 Spring)

16 hours of Individual Supervision (Onsite Supervisor) (per semester)

Weekly Participation in Internship course throughout the semester (i.e. Group Supervision) (Summer, Fall, and Spring Semesters)

The counselor-in-training must receive an average of one hour per week of individual or triadic (one site-supervisor with two internship students) over the duration of the internship semester. The University Supervisor or another department faculty member typically makes at least one visit to the internship site (per semester) to meet with the site supervisor and internship student to assess the student’s counseling knowledge, counseling skills and personal and professional development over the course of the internship experience.

### B. Group Supervision and Skills Development:

In addition to the on-site individual and triadic supervision, internship students will meet weekly with their university supervisor for group supervision. Group supervision sessions will provide opportunities for the internship students to discuss, in a small group setting, issues that emerge from their internship experiences and present audio/video recordings of their work with clients. Additionally, a portion of group supervision will be used to further develop counseling knowledge and skills, case conceptualization skills, as well as explore students’ self and other awareness (considering transference and countertransference, cross-cultural biases and understanding, among others), as students engage in case presentations and case consultations.

### C. Evaluations

The site supervisor will provide periodic performance evaluations (verbal and/or written) and a written evaluation of the internship student at the close of each semester of internship (i.e. end of fall and spring semesters). In turn, internship students will complete an evaluation of the internship site and the internship experience at the completion of the field work experience. Both will be done electronically, and the student is responsible for ensuring a copy is retained for their practicum/internship file.

D. Log All Internship Hours and Activities:

All students will complete weekly/monthly practicum logs signed by the Site-Supervisor. The Final Hours log is completed each semester and signed by the student, Site-Supervisor, and University Supervisor that will remain the students' practicum/internship files. Students will additionally turn in the End of Program Hours Log with the total hours for Internship, during the final Internship semester before graduation.

# Professional Affiliation and Professional Identity Development

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All students are strongly encouraged to join at least one professional counseling organization while enrolled in graduate study. Early membership permits students to be privy to counseling initiatives and trends at the state and national levels. Further, professional identity is an essential feature of being a knowledgeable, ethical and effective practitioner. Students are encouraged to attend state and annual conferences for professional enrichment and networking opportunities. Finally, liability insurance, which is a required component to participate in fieldwork (i.e. practicum and internship), is available through ACA.

## LICENSURE NOTE: ABOUT YOUR PAPERWORK AND STATE LICENSURE

Students are responsible for keeping copies of their records (hours on site and evaluations).  
**KEEP ORIGINALS OF EVERYTHING..**

*Every jurisdiction is different.* If you anticipate moving to another state, be sure to check their licensure requirements well in advance. Take a moment now to download or request the licensure applications from your jurisdiction. Get your papers in order. Start a portfolio with your training experience, including your hours, a copy of your training agreement, site information and contact information. This can save you hours of hunting and tracking down people in the future.

Note: Clinical Mental Health Counseling students may engage in family and couples counseling during their Practicum/Internship if they engage in co-therapy with a trained therapist for a minimum of 20 contact hours and if coursework in systems theories is completed.

## Placement at Approved Sites

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UCCS has a list of pre-approved Practicum/Internship sites. These sites cover a wide geographic area and deliver a range of services to varied populations. In addition, new sites may be approved for students who identify a site that potentially meets the training requirements described herein. If the student would like to petition a new site, contact the Fieldwork Director about adding this new site. This process can take several weeks; it is advised that you begin the site approval process as early as possible.

## Criteria for Approved Sites

Sites approved as training settings provide the following resources to support the training endeavor:

- Students will provide regularly scheduled individual, family, or group counseling as a primary activity at the site.
- At least one staff member is available for supervision and training of the student(s).
- Supervisors have experience or training in supervising students providing individual or group counseling and the agency has some prior experience in training students.
- The site demonstrates a commitment to training and a clearly articulated philosophy of training which includes some ideas about how to introduce “novice” clinicians to a new area of skills and attitudes, how to assess students’ progress and how to address possible training problems.
- The organization has a sufficient number and variety of clients to assure students will have some breadth as well as depth of experience in counseling. The nature of clients and services offered must be appropriate for students whose primary goal is developing applied skills.
- The site permits audio or videotaping of some of the student’s clinical experiences for the purpose of sharing in the practicum/internship class and completing the comprehensive case study with the client’s informed consent and confidentiality being strictly maintained.

- The site and those designated as supervisors are in compliance with professional ethics standards and practice guidelines published by the ACA. The site and the supervisor practice and permit only those empirically based interventions that follow the current practice guidelines of the ACA.
- Also see supervisor requirements listed above.

## Restriction on Sites with Creedal Statements

The DCHS (and the University) has a policy of non-discrimination against students with regard to race, age, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender, veteran status or any other characteristic protect by state, local or federal law. In addition, the DCHS is committed to fostering the training of members of groups currently under-represented in the profession of counseling.

Practicum/Internship sites approved by the Department of Counseling & Human Services (DCHS) are expected to conduct their selection and training of students in a non-discriminatory manner. Sites are expected to select applicants without regard to race, sex, age, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender, veteran status or any other characteristic protect by state, local, or federal law unless they have compelling legal or therapeutic reasons for limiting the applicant pool. Sites that have a selection policy that disallows students based on any of the above criteria must notify the DCHS and clarify the legal (bona fide occupational qualifications) or therapeutic rational for such policies. The DCHS will approve such sites if, after consultation, it is determined that an adequate legal or therapeutic rational exists for the selection policies.

## Supervisor Qualifications

Supervisors are mental health professionals who are licensed in their respective mental health area. Your supervisor **must** be a licensed mental health care provider through holding an active LPC license that is absent of any active DORA stipulations. The department must approve all other license types including LAC, LCSW, LMFT, and Licensed Psychologists.

## Minimum Hours

The Practicum/Internship requires a minimum of 700 hours of total service time performed over the period of approximately twelve to fifteen months. As part of the 700 hours, you must have 40 direct practicum hours (100 total) and 240 direct internship hours (600 total hours) with clients in individual and group sessions or other approved forms of direct contact. The site you choose may demand a minimal number of hours or a certain period of days (i.e. student must be there Tuesday-Thursday, or four weekdays). Practicum placement must be completed before a student can enroll in the internship class.

Students generally do not accumulate an equal number of direct hours spread over the Practicum/Internship reporting periods. The first reporting period includes time spent on site attending orientations and training events required before students can start seeing clients. As you become more familiar with site operations and demonstrate increasing skills, you should see an increase in direct contact hours. Note that hours spent in the training seminar are to be included in your total hours.

## Apply to the Sites Directly

Once approved to begin the process, students contact the sites directly. You can contact the site by phone or email using the contact information provided by DCHS. You need to prepare a cover letter, resume, references, and other specific materials requested by some training sites. (*Individuals providing reference letters should be given several weeks' notice.*) In most instances, students should plan on applying to three or more sites. Use the sites list (provided on the CMHC and SC Cohorts Canvas Shell) to identify sites you wish to apply to. Be sure to check if the site has a particular start date or application deadline. For example, if you are applying for January placement, do not apply to sites that do not accept January starts.

Sites notify students who will not receive further consideration within a reasonable time so students can make other arrangements. Sites vary in how and when applicants are interviewed. Each training site has its own time schedule regarding the date that offers are made and the deadline for applicants to accept offers. For the fall,

many sites will make their selections in early March or April. For the winter and summer, selection dates are more variable.

## **Site Confirmation & Training Agreement**

Once a student has agreed to accept a training site, the student needs to return the Practicum or Internship Agreement to the Fieldwork Director through the Canvas Shell under Assignments.

## **Student Evaluations**

Students will be evaluated by their supervisors a minimum of three times during the course of their training. The evaluations must be completed and submitted electronically via Qualtrics. The student must sign the evaluation form electronically; the signature is an indication that you have reviewed and received the evaluation, not necessarily that the student agrees with the evaluation. **PRINT AND KEEP AN ORIGINAL COPY OF YOUR EVALUATION ELECTRONICALLY SIGNED BY YOU AND THE SUPERVISOR.**

Evaluation of the student's experience is conducted in consultation with the on-site supervisor(s); however, the final grade is the responsibility of the University Practicum/Internship instructor. In the event the site supervisor submits a negative written evaluation, the instructor of record will bring this documentation to the DCHS chair for discussion. The student will be contacted to present their perspective of their clinical performance. If the negative evaluation occurs during the Practicum/Internship, a decision will be made by DCHS chair and the instructor of record on whether the student will be able to continue the experience, whether a grade of failure will be recorded, if additional hours will be required, or if there is another appropriate course of action. If the negative evaluation occurs at the end of Practicum/Internship, the instructor of record and DCHS chair will meet with the student to determine if the student met the course requirements satisfactorily, or if and when the student may retake the experience. If unethical or unprofessional behavior is documented, a student's program of study may be terminated.

## **Practicum Objectives**

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At the conclusion of the practicum, counselors-in-training will be able to:

- conduct an intake interview in a competent manner,
- employ the basic techniques and strategies of clinical interviewing for the purpose of assessment of client concerns,
- demonstrate an appropriate level of counseling skill development,
- utilize supervision in a constructive manner for continued personal and professional growth,
- critically evaluate their work as counselors-in-training,
- employ basic strategies and techniques of at least 3 different theoretical approaches to counseling,
- begin to develop their own approach to counseling,
- develop a theory of change,
- begin to understand how to conceptualize cases and formulate a treatment plan,
- demonstrate the ability to give and receive feedback during group supervision to facilitate professional and personal growth of oneself and others in the group, and
- demonstrate behavior and attitudes consistent with the roles and ethical expectations of a professional counselor.

Additional Goals of the Practicum:

- To provide opportunities to practice competencies developed throughout the graduate training program
- To foster reflection upon and incorporation of feedback provided by professional supervisors and peers, as well as other practices that contribute to ongoing competency
- To acquaint the counselor-in-training with the organizational structure, protocol, relationships, processes, and working conditions of counseling practice
- To stimulate formulation of and identification with a counselor's professional role(s)

- To provide for awareness of the process of community organization in meeting the needs of the client
- To provide for experience concerning the realities of everyday counseling practice and introduction to the problems of maintaining a regular counseling schedule

## Internship Objectives

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At the conclusion of the internship experience, counselors-in-training will be able to:

- articulate their philosophy and/or theoretical approach to counseling, particularly in regard to the setting in which they intend to practice,
- demonstrate an appropriate level of counseling skill development,
- critically evaluate their work as counselors-in-training, and
- project a competent and professional demeanor as they enter the world of professional counseling.

Additional Goals of the Internship:

- To provide opportunities to practice competencies developed throughout the graduate training program
- To foster reflection upon and incorporation of feedback provided by professional supervisors and peers, as well as other practices that contribute to ongoing competency
- To acquaint the counselor-in-training with the organizational structure, protocol, relationships, processes, and working conditions of counseling practice
- To stimulate formulation of and identification with a counselor's professional role(s)
- To provide for awareness of the process of community organization in meeting the needs of the client
- To provide for experience concerning the realities of everyday counseling practice and introduction to the problems of maintaining a regular counseling schedule

CACREP Standards: This course is designed to comply with the 2016 standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

## Terms

*“Direct service”* includes face-to-face provision of counseling services to individuals or groups designated as clients by the agency/program. This includes intake interviewing, individual counseling, group counseling, psychoeducational groups, family counseling, couples counseling, co-therapy with senior mental health staff, crisis intervention, and outreach. Treatment planning and behavioral intervention planning with the client also fits into the direct service category. Telephone consultation with client is within the bounds of direct service; however, telephoning on behalf of the client is not. Shadowing or observing other therapists does not constitute direct service; however, if the student takes the lead or provides co-counseling while shadowing or while being observed by a therapist, that does constitute direct service.

*“Indirect service”* may include community outreach, formal supervision, case conferences, case management/utilization review meetings, rounds, administrative/planning meetings, in service training/seminars, consultation or education, program development or evaluation, and support services (i.e. report writing, record maintenance, and progress notes). Development of treatment plans and behavioral interventions outside of face-to-face sessions is included here. Hours spent in the training seminar course are included as a training activity under indirect service.

*University Supervisor* is the title given to the instructor of record for the Practicum and Internship courses. These faculty members will likely change throughout your fieldwork experiences. You will be assigned to a section of fieldwork through a Canvas Announcement.

## **Consent/Confidentiality**

Consent forms for audio/video taping are provided by the DCHS, or the agency may choose to provide its own forms. Students are required to adequately disguise/remove identifying client information when turning in written reports to training seminar leaders or when discussing cases with training seminar groups.

## **Evaluation of Students**

Evaluation of student progress in clinical field training focuses on three areas: theoretical knowledge, clinical skills, and professional dispositions. Site supervisors complete the written evaluations at the end of each semester.

## **Roles and Responsibilities in Training**

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The training experiences unite student, supervisor and the Department of Counseling & Human Services (DCHS) in a working relationship in which all parties are responsible to each other.

### **Site Supervisors**

Those involved in training counselors shall conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner in all training activities. The ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice shall govern their behavior at all times. The supervisor practices and permits only those empirically based interventions that follow the current practice guidelines of the ACA. Site supervisors will:

- communicate clear expectations to students;
- set up regular, pre-set, uninterrupted times for supervision;
- provide adequate clinical opportunities for the students to meet training requirements,
- evaluate students in a timely manner;
- give clear and frequent feedback to students regarding their progress in training;
- inform the University as early as possible of any difficulties encountered at the training site,
- inform the University of any changes in the training experience (i.e. supervisor change; change in treatment populations), and
- provide license number and years of experience to the Clinical Mental Health Program Coordinator.

### **The Department of Counseling & Human Services (DCHS)**

- Secures and maintain affiliations with approved sites
- Provides students with resource materials describing approved sites
- Advises students during the application process in order to secure a good match between student training needs and available site experiences
- Monitors student progress during training
- Works with organization personnel, supervisors, and students to resolve any training problems that may be encountered
- Develops new training sites and monitors the quality of training in existing sites
- Maintains up-to-date records of student progress in training and consults with student and supervisor regarding student progress
- Maintains close working ties with the training sites and visits training sites

### **Students**

- Conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner in all training activities. The ACA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice shall govern their behavior at all times on the site as well as at the school. The student must practice only those empirically based interventions that follow the current practice guidelines of the ACA.

- Shall integrate themselves into training sites and develop respectful working relationships with staff and clients. Demanding, threatening, or rude behavior is inconsistent with the identity of a counselor.
- Are expected to appear for all events upon which they have agreed. They should clear vacation times with their supervisors.
- Shall cultivate an attitude of openness to self-examination, supervision and new learning
- Shall immediately inform their supervisor and the course instructor of record of any difficulties encountered.
- Shall make effective use of supervision by preparing for supervision sessions, bringing relevant material from client sessions to supervision. Students are expected to be responsive to direction and guidance from their supervisor and to implement supervision guidance into their work with clients.

## **Insurance**

All students registered for Practicum/Internship must provide documentation of professional student liability insurance. As a member of the ACA, you receive student liability insurance; however, you may obtain your liability insurance from other sources. We recommend 1-million: 3-million-dollar coverage. Please check to be sure this meets the minimum required at your site. Proof of liability insurance must be provided by the start of Practicum and updated when expired.

## **Professional Behavior Expectations**

UCCS has a strong commitment to developing counseling practitioners who demonstrate high levels of professionalism and counseling skills. Its programs are rigorous and demanding, and we require that students continually apply themselves to all aspects of their preparation over an extended period of time.

It is a fundamental requirement of the DCHS that all students meet the standards of the counseling profession. Students are required to do more than complete certain academic and counseling requirements; they are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical and appropriate manner at the training site as well as become familiar and abide by the ACA Ethical Standards. Demanding, threatening, or rude behavior is inconsistent with the identity of a counselor. Any activities that appear to violate the principles of professional standards in the course of the student's education or training will be reviewed carefully by the appropriate committee and/or administrative unit. The following are examples of inappropriate and unethical behaviors on a Practicum/Internship:

- Failure to follow defined training guidelines
- Failure to appear for any scheduled event at a site, such as a therapy session, supervision, etc., without confirming the absence ahead of time with the supervisor
- Taking vacation time without obtaining approval from the supervisor
- Taping an interaction with a client without the expressed and written permission of the supervisor and client
- Removal or private use of any materials from the site without approval of the supervisor
- Playing video of client sessions or presenting client material to another party without the expressed permission of the supervisor and client
- Inappropriate use of computer-generated interpretative reports; using material from these reports without citation in case presentations is considered plagiarism
- Withdrawing from or leaving the training experience (quitting) without the permission of the DCHS University Supervisor
- Accepting one site and then turning it down to accept another site
- Acting in a manner inconsistent with the tenets of counseling as outlined in the ACA Ethical Standards
- Demonstration of lewd or immoral conduct by a student in connection with the delivery of services to clients or interaction with staff, faculty, or other students
- Demonstration of rude, demanding, or threatening behavior toward another member of the training community or UCCS community (student, faculty, staff, or administration)



- Offering to provide or providing services that are beyond the scope of the student's training, experience, or emotional functioning
- Conviction of a crime that has a direct bearing on the practitioner's ability to practice competently
- Continued practice by a student who has become unfit to practice under supervision due to:
  - Inappropriate behavior in counseling and academic settings; or
  - Addiction to, abuse of, or severe dependency on alcohol or other drugs which endanger the public by impairing the practitioner's ability to practice safely

Any questions about these training guidelines may be directed to the department chair.

## **Ethical Behavior**

If a report is made to the DCHS faculty that a student has violated the ethical principles of the American Counseling Association or one of its divisions, the faculty will contact the student with the nature of the ethical complaint and convene a hearing within three weeks of learning of the reported violation. Based on the nature of the violation, the student may be asked to speak with the individual faculty member of the course, meet with the Department Chairperson and/or meet with the entire DCHS Faculty. If the report of an ethical violation is substantiated, the student will be required to complete remedial ethical studies and may be dismissed from the program. In all cases, students have the right of appeal based on College of Education and Graduate School rules. Prior to initiating fieldwork, all students must state in writing that they are familiar with and will follow the American Counseling Association (ACA) and/or the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA).

ACA Code Ethics:

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

AMHCA Code of Ethics:

<http://connections.amhca.org/HigherLogic/System/DownloadDocumentFile.ashx?DocumentFileKey=d4e10fcb-2f3c-c701-aa1d-5d0f53b8bc14>

## **ACA's Technology Competencies for Counselor Education Students**

At the completion of a counselor education program, all students should:

- be able to use productivity software to develop web pages, word processing documents (letters, reports), basic databases, spreadsheets, and other forms of documentation or materials applicable to practice;
- be able to use audiovisual equipment as video recorders, audio recorders, projection equipment, video conferencing equipment, playback units and other applications available through education and training experiences;
- be able to acquire, use and develop multimedia software, (i.e. PowerPoint presentations, animated graphics, digital audio, digital video) applicable to education, training, and practice;
- be able to use statistical software to organize and analyze data;
- be able to use computerized and/or internet-based testing, diagnostic, and career decision-making programs with clients;
- be able to use email;
- be able to help clients search for and evaluate various types of counseling-related information via the Internet, including information about careers, employment opportunities, procedures, and social and personal information; and
- be able to subscribe, participate in, and sign off counseling related listservs or other internet based professional communication applications.

To review the entire document, please go to:

## Continuing Learning/Counseling Opportunities

Students in the DCHS program are encouraged to participate in those experiences that promote personal growth, self-awareness, and adaptability. Opportunities may include being a client for a practicum student, private counseling, activities on and off campus, and the use of the University Counseling Center. Students are made aware of available extracurricular professional development activities in three ways. First, information is sent to the student's University e-mail account; second, professional development activities are announced in each faculty member's classes; third, information is posted in bulletin boards outside each faculty, member's office and outside the COE office; all are located on the third floor of Columbine Hall. Students may receive limited credit for practicum and internship hours for participating in personal and professional development activities that meet the criteria described in this manual.

## Criminal Record

Some students express concern about their criminal background history affecting their chances of being licensed to teach in the State of Colorado. To get a better idea of where you stand, you can read through the following Colorado Revised Statutes regarding denial of licensure based on criminal history. **We cannot guarantee that you will be granted a license, even if we do allow you to complete our licensure program.** The decision to license belongs solely to the Department of Regulatory Agencies and your specific licensing board. Also, please be aware that in some cases, DORA may approve you for licensure, but some agencies or companies may still deny you a job based on the same criminal history. [22-60.5-107. Grounds for denying, annulling, suspending, or revoking license, certificate, endorsement, or authorization.](#) You may request a copy of your current background check in Colorado if you have previously submitted your fingerprints to CBI. Visit the [CBI Records Check](#) website for instructions. Keep in mind that this report is not a replacement for your fingerprinting requirement for our program.

## Fingerprinting

Fingerprints are required prior to beginning the fieldwork experience. The Fingerprint process will be reviewed at Professional Development Day during the Fieldwork Orientation portion. The College will pay for one round of fingerprints, however if you require another set (ex: you move to a three-year track after doing your fingerprints) you will need to provide payment for the extra set of fingerprints.

## Frequently Asked Questions

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This section of frequently asked questions can serve to answer many of your questions.

### Practicum/Internship

**Q: I work full time. How can I complete a Practicum/Internship that needs 20 hours a week of my time? I just cannot give up my employment.**

A: *Very careful planning*, including consideration of available financial aid, adjustments to work schedules, and the length of time you have allowed to complete the degree program. The training can be delayed. One option is to not start the Practicum/Internship until all other coursework is complete. The delay may allow time to consider alternate employment settings. Many students are career changers, and some choose to begin transitioning to human services-related jobs or a combination of part-time or temporary positions in the counseling field while they are in the master's program. In special instances, some students are able to find sites that allow them to work less than 20 hours per week. The Department of Counseling & Human Services (DCHS) requires all students to work a minimum of 10 hours per week on their practicum and internship hours.

**Q: Can I do my Practicum/Internship at my employment location?**

A: No, not usually. Otherwise, dual relationship issues arise. In larger organizations, if you can show administrative separation between your employment supervisor and your training supervisor, you may be able to use them as a training site. However, you must show an organization chart that shows your training and employment supervisors report to different individuals and document via proposal signed by both supervisors that the experience is in accordance with the guidelines identified herein. In some locations, you may not perform Practicum/Internship duties at your work location due to federal fair labor laws. They cannot expect you to provide services for free if you provide those, or very similar services, as an employee.

**Q: Do we have any night/weekend training locations?**

A: The specific hours you arrange to work at your training site are between you and your supervisor. Most sites require your presence sometime during the day to attend staff meetings, client staff meetings, and student trainings. Most graduate students work a combination of full or part time work along with the training experience. It is a good idea when you first start graduate school to discuss your eventual training requirements with your current employer to allow time to consider adjustments to your employment schedule.

**Q: What are sites looking for in students?**

A: In general, they are looking for students with an attitude of openness to new experiences and supervision, a curiosity about the field and about people, and a desire to apply and improve counseling skills. To this end, you may field interview questions about why you chose the counseling field, what you personally have to offer to clients, and what your strengths are. Interviewers may ask what was most important to you in the counseling education program. They may ask if you have a particular theory of counseling. Supervisors look for students who show some evidence of a willingness to explore their own motivation as well as willingness to work with others. Some sites want their student to have some background experience in human

services delivery. To this end, it is always beneficial to students to obtain some volunteer experience working with others.

**Q: How can I be sure I get a site?**

A: Much in the same way you seek employment. Choose a variety of sites to apply to, at a minimum, three sites. We do not make placements. You must prepare and present yourself to the various agencies and organizations. The sites select students who they feel they can work with. The key elements include:

- A well-written resume, that clearly articulates your objectives, clearly provides an employment history, and provides a summary of your skills/qualifications and how they are useful to you in working with people in mental health settings. Include your coursework to date. Include your volunteer work and professional or interest organizations to which you belong.
- A well-written cover letter SPECIFIC to the site to which you are applying. Briefly identify yourself, your reasons for wanting to work for them, and what you feel you have to offer them. Give them a reason to look at your resume and call you for an interview.

Have references available at your interview (name and phone number). Some sites require you to have written references as part of your application. Plan this in advance by getting your references before you apply to sites.

Return phone calls. Schedule interviews as soon as possible and *honor those appointments*. Follow up after your interviews.

Be prepared for your interviews. Dress professionally. Ask questions about their expectations and answer their questions honestly. Be flexible in your expectations about hours and days and show a willingness to adjust your personal schedule to be able to meet theirs.

Also, remember, this is a training engagement. Your responsibility is to learn to apply core counseling skills. No one expects you to be an expert. You are expected to learn about establishing therapeutic relationships with people, maintaining empathy, and applying theoretical knowledge while you learn about your own capabilities and limitations. At this point, you do not need to necessarily be working with a specific population. It is more important to have the opportunity to practice basic skills, rather than to obtain a training experience that works with one particular population in which you are interested.

## **Choosing an Internship Site**

**Q: How do I choose an internship site?**

A: There are many factors you will want to take into consideration when selecting an internship site. The most important being whether the site will give you the experience you are looking for and the area of interest you have in the field of mental health.

Regardless of the site in which you anticipate for your internship, here are some additional things to consider when selecting a site:

- Accessibility – can I get there?
- Hours – how do they fit with my other commitments?
- Responsibilities – do I have the skills to do the job and will I learn new things to move my career forward?

- Contacts – will I be able to expand my professional network?

Professionals, agencies or companies that work in the area in which you plan to pursue your internship can help you begin to answer some of the questions you may have about potential internship site. Call and ask to talk with or meet with someone at a prospective placement. This does not mandate you to completing your internship at this potential placement.

**Q: What do I do when I get an interview at a potential internship site?**

A: Treat this opportunity as an interview for a job. Dress and act professionally. Have the school requirements for internship with you as well as your resume. Be ready to discuss why you will be a good fit with the team and about your past experiences that will help you at this site. Be ready to ask questions about the site and interview how the site will be able to provide you with an opportunity to practice in the field for both your educational and professional needs.

**Q: Are internships paid?**

A: Some are, and some are not. Remember – the key to an internship is that you come away with experience that will let you move your career forward. Some employers may call positions “internships” when they are in fact entry-level jobs and are compensated at entry-level pay. When considering these opportunities, look beyond the pay and ask, “What will I learn?” If you believe you will learn new skills related to your career field of choice, as well as develop important professional contacts, this may be a good opportunity to pursue.

**Q: What counts as direct and indirect?**

A: Below are some specifics as to what counts as direct hours and what counts as indirect hours.

DIRECT hours are any direct-in-person services that the counselor-in-training provides to real clients. This could be counseling, assessment, consultation, and presentations directly related to counseling, psychoeducation, and even some email or phone calls, as outlined below.

- Intakes and interviews of clients, on the phone or in person.
- Individual, group, couple or family counseling, such as time spent with a client or clients providing personal or interpersonal therapy (including shadowing), psychoeducation, support, career counseling, interpretation of assessments, treatment planning and implementation, etc.
- Consultation or interviews with family members or others for the sake of obtaining intake, historical, medical, personal, functional, or other relevant information about a current client or clients. Client staffing, when a client and/or his/her representative is present and the counselor-in-training is serving as an active member of the staffing team.
- Testing or assessment of a client (as allowed by the state and supervisors), such as suicide risk assessment, administering personality inventories, mental status exams, or instruments designed to assess for specific mental health concerns/disorders.
- Phone calls or emails involving counseling or support, encouragement or follow-up on ideas or plans discussed in session, etc. Leaving a message about scheduling does not count as direct client contact.
- Consultation with other professionals where the counselor-in-training serves as consultant, providing expert guidance, program planning, or another service requested by the client (consultee).

- Presentations directly related to counseling in which the counselor-in-training is conducting the workshop and providing the information, as in presentations at professional conferences or in-services on site.

INDIRECT hours involve any time spent preparing for or processing after the delivery of direct services. These include, but are not limited to, class meetings, supervisor meetings, case peer-consultation, preparation for therapy or presentations or consultation, as explained below.

- Individual Supervision Hours involve time spent with your official site supervisor discussing your development as a counselor and your counseling interactions with clients at the site. Individual supervision may be conducted as a dyad or triad, but not as a group staffing, and should cover skills, conceptualization, personalization, and professional identity development.
- Group Supervision hours include time spent in internship seminar on campus. For each seminar attended in full, you may count 2 1/2 hours. In addition, some sites do their own group supervision, which may also be logged as indirect hours - group supervision.
- Other On-Site Activities: Any time at your site that is not direct counseling contact but related to client service, site support, or your development as a counselor. These hours can include staff/faculty consultation, case management, attending in-services or trainings for site staff, site/client-related paperwork, site-related administrative duties, observation, advocacy, reading relevant to client concerns, creating or finding activities for clients, phone or email contact for administrative purposes, etc.

## Licensure

### Q: What do I do after graduation?

A: There are three options for post-graduate students. The Licensed Professional Counselor Provisional (LPCP) or a Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate (LPCC). You can only apply for the LPCP if you are, or will be working, at a residential or outpatient center with children under the age of 18 years old. The LPCC is the same registration form needed to apply for your LPC. You will need to pass the Jurisprudence Examination, provide transcripts and proof of graduation from a CACREP institution, passing NCE scores, and a fee for your LPC application. Each application form specifies other documents needed. Links to the above-mentioned options are provided below as well as a link to the Colorado Revised Statutes regarding Mental Health. This document has all the information you will need regarding licensure, collecting hours, prohibited activities, etc.

Link to Colorado Revised Statutes, Title 12 Professions and Occupations, Article 43 Mental Health: <https://law.justia.com/codes/colorado/2016/title-12/health-care/article-43/>

Link to the Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate form and information:

<https://dpo.colorado.gov/ProfessionalCounselor/ApplicationsDocs>

Professional Counselor Candidate Registration. Effective July 1, 2011, you may register as a Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate when you are completing the post degree supervised experience hours for Licensed Professional Counselor licensure. This is a one-time registration which will expire in four years. Licensed Professional Counselor Candidates are eligible to receive a temporary permit that allows them to practice professional counseling under Board-approved supervision while completing the requirements for licensure as a professional counselor; however, your education must be approved before a permit is granted. Refer to C.R.S. 12-43-603 for more information.

Basic Requirements. Requirements for licensure are outlined in the Colorado Revised Statutes, specifically 12-43-501, and the Board rules. Both are available online at <https://law.justia.com/codes/colorado/2016/title-12/health-care/article-43/>

Link to the Licensed Professional Counselor Provisional License form and information

<https://dpo.colorado.gov/ProfessionalCounselor/Applications>

Basic Requirements. Requirements for licensure are outlined in the Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.), specifically 12-43-601, and legislation passed in 2020, House Bill 20-1206 The statute can be found online at [https://www.statebillinfo.com/bills/bills/20/2020a\\_1206\\_enr.pdf](https://www.statebillinfo.com/bills/bills/20/2020a_1206_enr.pdf)

Applicants for provisional licensure must have completed a post-bachelorate degree that meets the educational requirements for licensure. Please refer to C.R.S. 12- 43-603 in the Mental Health Statute and Board Rule 17, Licensure by Examination.

Applicants for provisional licensure must be working under the supervision of a licensed Colorado Mental Health Professional in a residential child care facility as defined in C.R.S. 26-6-102(8) in the Mental Health Statute. Supervision may not count towards supervised hours for licensure unless it satisfies Board Rule requirements.

Please refer to the Board of Licensed Professional Counselor Examiners Rules, Licensure by Examination.

**Q: How many hours do I need to apply for my LPC?**

A: Post Master's degree, you are required to obtain 2000 hours of experience and 100 hours of supervision evenly distributed over the 2000 direct hours; a minimum of 1500 of these hours must be direct service. Please refer to DORA or the Mental Health Statutes for specific guidelines.

**Q: How do I apply for my LPC?**

A: <https://dpo.colorado.gov/ProfessionalCounselor> Look under the division of registrations and pick the appropriate license under license applicants. It will provide FAQs and appropriate forms.

**Q: Who can supervise me?**

A: For LPC licensure supervision, you must be supervised by a "Licensed Professional" who meets the requirements outlined in the revised Mental Health Act. The most appropriate license would be an LPC. However, according to the statutes licensed professionals can include LPCs, LCSW's, LMFT's as well as a Psychiatrist or Psychologist. Please refer to DORA guidelines to ensure appropriate supervision.

**Q: How much does supervision cost?**

A: If you receive supervision through your agency of employment, supervision may be considered part of your benefit package. If not, you may need to procure supervision from private practice. This may cost anywhere from \$30 - \$300 per hour. Please make sure that your supervisor is licensed and meets the criteria outlined by DORA.

**Q: Can I come back to be a lab leader?**

A: Yes! You can lab lead for UCCS and count those hours toward licensure and receive free supervision!



## ACC/LAC

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Should I/Am I able to work on my LAC (candidate) at my Internship?

*Within this section you will see two terms – ACC (addictions counselor candidate) and CAC (certified addictions counselor). In March 2021 the language will shift away from CAC to ACC (as well as lower certifications of CAT and CAS). LAC (Licensed Addictions Counselor) will remain the same.*

### **ACC (Addictions Counselor Candidate)**

You are able to work on your ACC while working at your internship site if you are at an approved site with an approved LAC (Licensed Addiction Counselor) supervisor. Education, training, and standards must be met to gain your ACC in combination with hours under appropriate supervision. To gain these hours during your internship, you must be registered on DORA as a Registered Therapist. For more information, see the state website.

<https://dpo.colorado.gov/UnlicensedPsychotherapy>  
<https://dpo.colorado.gov/AddictionCounselor/Applications>

### **Handbook for Addictions Counselors**

The Division of Behavioral Health has created a handbook designed to help guide those who wish to pursue an addiction credential in Colorado. The Handbook provides information about the following important subjects:

- Information Regarding the Revised Addiction Counselor Certification and Licensure Rules (eff. 09-01-10)
- Pathways to Certification and Licensure
- Work Verification Form and Clinically Supervised Work Experience
- National Examinations
- DORA Listing Requirements
- Summary of Required Classes for CAT and CAS
- Certification Tracking Sheet (high school diploma or Bachelors)
- Required Class Descriptions
- Advanced Degree Requirements
- Training Requirements (Masters or Doctorate degree)
- ACC/LAC Tracking Sheet (Masters or Doctorate degree)

[Colorado Office of Behavioral Health Handbook for Addition Counselors](#)

### **Q: What does it take to become a Certified or Licensed Addiction Counselor?**

A: The two basic components to the requirements are:

1. Division of Behavioral Health (DBH) (formerly ADAD, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division) approved training and education.
2. Appropriately supervised work/field experience. The amount of training and field experience necessary to become a CAT, CAS, ACC or LAC depends on the application level of certification or licensure. <https://www.addiction-counselors.com/states/colorado-substance-abuse-counselor.html>



## DVOMB

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Should I/am I able to work on my DV endorsement at my Internship?

### **DVOMB (Domestic Violence Offender Management Board)**

For working with Domestic Violent Offenders, you must be on the approved providers list and undergo supervision by a domestic violence approved supervisor who is on the approved providers list. Education, training, and standards must be met. For more information see the state website:

<https://www.colorado.gov/dcj>

### **\*WARNING regarding on-line classes for court ordered domestic violence offender treatment:**

On-line domestic violence offender treatment “classes” or correspondence courses are not approved by the Colorado Domestic Violence Offender Management Board (DVOMB) nor allowed according to Colorado statute for meeting the requirement of court ordered domestic violence offender treatment. 18-6-801 C.R.S.

Offenders who participate in on-line or correspondence classes shall also be required to complete approved domestic violence offender treatment from a Colorado DVOMB Approved Provider which will result in additional costs to the offender.

## SOMB

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Should I/ am I able to work on my Sex Offender Management endorsement at my Internship?

### **SOMB (Sex Offender Management Board)**

For working with sex offenders, you must be on the approved providers list and undergo supervision by a sex offender approved supervisor. Education, training, and standards must be met.

In 2000, the Colorado General Assembly amended and passed legislation (**Section 16-11.7-103, C.R.S.**) which required the Sex Offender Management Board to develop and prescribe a standardized set of procedures for the evaluation and identification of juvenile sex offenders. The legislative mandate to the Board was to develop and implement methods of intervention for juvenile sex offenders, recognizing the need for standards and guidelines specific to these youth. These standards continue to hold public safety as a priority, specifically the physical and psychological safety of victims and potential victims.

For more information, see the state website:

<https://www.colorado.gov/dcj>

# Professional Memberships & Liability Insurance

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## Professional Organizations

### *American Counseling Association (ACA)*

ACA has nearly 60,000 members and is the world's largest organization for professional counselors. Student membership is available to those enrolled in a graduate counseling program. Dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession, ACA offers many benefits and services. Affiliation with one or more of ACA's national divisions is also offered. These areas speak directly to the skills, professional interest, and future work settings and are listed online at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org). Three of the major ACA divisions are the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC), and the American School Counselor Association (ASCA).

### *American School Counselor Association (ASCA)*

ASCA represents the interests of school counselors. ASCA publishes a journal describing the latest research, issues, and trends in the school counseling profession.

### *American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)*

AMHCA represents the interests of clinical mental health counselors. AMHCA publishes a journal describing the latest research, issues, and trends in the mental health counseling profession.

### *International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)*

IAMFC represents the interests of professional counselors who specialize in marriage and family counseling and therapy. IAMFC publishes a journal describing the latest research, issues, and trends in marriage, couple, and family counseling.

### *Colorado Counseling Association (CCA)*

CCA is a state branch of ACA. It is an organization of counseling and human development professionals who work in educational, healthcare, residential, private practice, community agency, government, business, and industry settings in the state of Colorado. CCA's purpose is to promote the professional growth of counselors in Colorado. CCA serves as an umbrella organization for nine state divisions which meet the specialized interests of counselors in Colorado.

### *Colorado School Counselor Association (CSCA)*

CSCA is the state school counselor's professional association. Its purpose is to further the goals of school counseling within Colorado and to sponsor an annual conference to present the latest issues, trends, and research in school counseling to the membership.

### *Chi Sigma Iota: Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International*

Chi Sigma Iota is an international honor society of counseling professionals and counselors-in-training dedicated to excellence in scholarship, research, and clinical practice. The purpose of Chi Sigma Iota is to promote and recognize exemplary attainment in counselor education and the practice of counseling. Chi Sigma Upsilon is the chapter at UCCS. Students with a GPA in

excess of 3.0 may obtain an application from the CSI Faculty Advisor. The Chi Sigma Iota office may be contacted at the School of Education, UNCG, PO Box 2671, Greensboro, NC, 27402-6171, phone 336-334-4035. The CSI website can also be visited at, [www.csi-net.org](http://www.csi-net.org).

## **Liability Insurance**

National and State Memberships offer various discounts among which include liability insurance. More information and rates can be obtained through the following links. Events and training are often offered through state chapters such as CCA as a more cost-effective means of receiving continuing education.

*American Counseling Association (ACA) recommends HPSO Insurance*

- [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)
- [www.hpsso.com](http://www.hpsso.com)

*Colorado Counseling Association (CCA) recommends CPH Insurance*

- <http://www.coloradocounselingassociation.org/>
- <https://www.cphins.com/>

## What is NBCC and NCC, and how is the NCC different from an LPC?

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- NBCC stands for the National Board for Certified Counselors
  - The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. and Affiliates (NBCC), an independent not-for-profit credentialing body for counselors, was incorporated in 1982 to establish and monitor a national certification system, to identify those counselors who have voluntarily sought and obtained certification and to maintain a register of those counselors.
- NBCC offers a national certification and three specialty certifications. A prerequisite and co-requisite of all three specialty certifications is the NCC.
- The National Certified Counselor (NCC)
  - The NCC certification was launched by NBCC in 1983 as a result of the efforts of members of the American Counseling Association (ACA). Since that time, NBCC has become an independent entity and more than 80,000 counselors have become NCCs. The NCC is one of two NBCC certifications that are accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The NCC is the prerequisite for all specialty certifications (below) with NBCC.
  - The [National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification \(NCE\)](#) is required for the NCC certification.
- The Specialty Certifications offered through NBCC:
  - **The Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor**
    - The CCMHC was launched originally in 1979 by the National Academy for Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselors. In 1993, the Academy and NBCC reached an agreement for NBCC to take over administration and testing for the CCMHC certification. Over 1100 NCCs currently hold the CCMHC certification.
    - The [National Clinical Mental Health Counselor Examination \(NCMHCE\)](#) is required for this certification.
  - **The National Certified School Counselor (NCSC)**
    - The NCSC certification was launched in 1991 in cooperation with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). There are more than 2,500 NCCs who also hold the NCSC certification.
    - The [National Certified School Counselor Examination \(NCSCE\)](#) is required for this certification.
  - **The Master Addictions Counselor (MAC)**
    - The MAC certification was first offered in 1995, and testing with the EMAC began in 1996. The MAC is one of two NBCC certifications that is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The MAC is also recognized and accepted by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) as qualifying for the Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) training and credential. More than 700 NCCs currently hold the MAC.

- The examination for Master Addictions Counselor (EMAC) is required for this certification.
- **The National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE)**
  - The NCE is used for two purposes: national counselor certification and state counselor licensure. The purpose of the NCE is to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities viewed as important for providing effective counseling services. The NCE is designed to be general in nature. It is intended to assess cognitive knowledge which should be known by all counselors regardless of their individual professional specialties.
  - Satisfactory performance on the National Counselor Examination (NCE) is one of the criteria used by NBCC to identify professionals who may be eligible to become a National Certified Counselor (NCC). [Click here](#) for information on the NCC credential.
  - Many states also use the NCE for state credentialing (LPC, LAPC, LPGC, etc.).
  - For a link to each state, specific state boards, or licensing requirements go to:  
<https://www.nbcc.org/search/stateboarddirectory>
- **Examination Format**
  - The NCE is comprised of 200 multiple-choice questions and is scheduled for a four-hour period beginning at 9:00 am. Responses are recorded on a separate machine-scorable answer sheet.
  - A different edition of the NCE is compiled for each administration of the exam. Each form's questions are drawn from the NCE item pool which has undergone extensive review and field testing. The entire item pool, each form of the NCE, and the answer sheet are copyrighted. Consequently, any distribution of the examination content or materials through any form of reproduction or oral or written communication is strictly prohibited. Disclosure of examination content is a violation of the NBCC Code of Ethics.
- **National Board of Certified Counselors**  
National Counselor Exam for Licensure and Certification for the State of Colorado holds two locations for the computerized testing:
  - **Denver (Aurora), Colorado**
    - H&R Block Office
    - 13693 E Iliff Avenue
    - Suite 100
    - Aurora, CO 80014
  - **Grand Junction, Colorado**
    - H&R Block Office
    - 2830 North Avenue

- Unit C-1B
- Grand Junction, CO 81501

- **What is national certification?**

- National counselor certification from NBCC proves to the public and employers that the counselor has met the national standards set by the counseling profession. It is not a license to practice. In some states, holding a national certification can assist the counselor in obtaining a state license. National certification travels with the counselor no matter the state or country of residence. The basic national certification offered by NBCC is the NCC. NBCC is the largest national counselor certification program in the world.

- **What is a state license?**

- A state license in counseling is literally permission from a particular state to practice counseling or to call oneself a licensed counselor. Some states have a single license and some have a two-tiered system. The names of state licenses vary from state to state. Some examples are LPC, LCPC, LPCC, LMHC, LPCMH, LCMHC, LPC-MH.

- **Maintaining Certification**

- National Certified Counselors (NCCs) are certified for a period of five years and receive a professional certificate. NCCs must adhere to the NBCC Code of Ethics and must pay, on a yearly basis, an annual certification fee. At the conclusion of each five-year cycle, NCCs are required to be able to provide documentation of completing 100 clock hours of continuing education, or they may opt to retake and pass the NCE.
- Documentation of post-graduate counseling experience and supervision: 3,000 hours with a minimum of 100 hours of counseling supervision, both over a 24-month post-master's period. Supervisors must hold a master's degree or higher in a mental health field. (**Important Note: The post-master's experience and supervision requirements are waived for graduate students who have completed CACREP accredited tracks**).

- **Colorado Licensure Requirements:**

- Post-masters practice in psychotherapy under supervision in no fewer than 24 months
- Supervision evenly distributed over the 2000 hours and 24 months from graduation
- 600 hours of teaching under supervision, up to 30 hours supervised
- For each 1000 hours of supervised practice in psychotherapy, applicants must receive a minimum of 50 hours of supervision (35 of the 50 must be face-to-face supervision)
- Jurisprudence Examination
- National Certified Examination (NCE)
- Application
- Exam Results
- Examination results valid for up to five years after the date of the examination



- **Colorado Licensure Examination Registration**
  - National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE)
  - When you register for the first time submit an official, sealed (unopened) transcript showing conferral of your degree in counseling or related fee
  - Can reschedule, 6-month eligibility period through the state
  - Register as a Licensed Professional Counselor Candidate
- <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dora/node/94451>
- [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)

*It is important to be clear about your credentialing goals. It is common for counselors to confuse state counselor licensure and national certification. Although the examination (NCE) may be the same, the credentials and processes are very different.*

## CACREP

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- The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is an independent agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to accredit master's degree programs in: addiction counseling; career counseling; clinical mental health counseling; marriage, couples, and family counseling; school counseling; student affairs and college counseling; and the doctoral program in Counselor Education and Supervision (CES)
- In the United States, there are two types of accreditation: institutional and specialized. Institutional looks at the entire institution, while specialized accreditors, such as CACREP, look at professional preparation programs within institutions.
- When a program is reviewed by CACREP, the focus is on the program that offers the graduate degree in counseling. Therefore, it is the program that holds the CACREP accreditation, not the department or the university or college in which the program is housed. Eligibility for CACREP includes having institutional accreditation.