



# Medaille College

Division of Applied and Social Sciences  
**Clinical Mental Health Counseling**  
Student Handbook  
2014-2015

*Notice to students: This handbook serves as the primary source of information, guidelines and requirements for students in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. Rules and guidelines in this Handbook supersede those in the general Medaille College Graduate Catalog. Students are encouraged to keep a hard copy of this handbook as a reference.*

*This handbook has been prepared as part of and in conjunction with the Medaille College Policy Manuals, Volumes I through VII; detailed or background information on some of the policies and procedures covered in this manual may be found by referencing other volumes. Medaille College has made every effort to provide in this publication accurate, up-to-date information regarding the Programs, policies, personnel, and activities of the College. However, changes are likely to take place during the life of this Handbook which cannot be foreseen, and errors may occur. The College cannot be held responsible for information which becomes outdated or is printed in error.*

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## Mission and Goals

The Mission of the Medaille College Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is to provide students with a thorough grounding in advanced principles of clinical mental health counseling at a graduate level; provide students with an understanding of the tools of counseling that are suitable for building careers in private and public mental health agencies; provide students with advanced research-based knowledge in the area of group and individual counseling, counseling techniques, and testing and diagnosis; provide students with a full understanding of the professional and ethical issues relevant to mental health counseling and consultation; provide students with detailed knowledge of multicultural and career issues in counseling and most importantly; provide students with a clear professional identity as a future counselor.

## Program Description

### M.A. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The Master of Art (M.A.) Program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) is a 60-credit course of study in which students are required to take a fixed sequence of courses in professional orientation; social and cultural diversity; human growth and development; career development; helping relationships; group work; assessment and evaluation; and research methods and program evaluation. Students are also required to participate in a child abuse mandated reporter training. These are complemented by courses in counseling and theory; professional, ethical, & legal issues; children & adolescent counseling & theory; grief, trauma, & crisis counseling; clinical supervision; Prepracticum; practicum; and internship.

The CMHC Program is approved by New York State Education Department and fulfills the educational criteria for licensure in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Students must successfully complete a one-year clinical sequence, including a 3- credit supervised clinical practicum and a 6-credit supervised clinical internship. Students must be in good standing and pass the comprehensive examination in order to be awarded the M.A. degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. The comprehensive examination will assess students' abilities to integrate and synthesize theoretical and practical knowledge into an effective, professional applied method of diagnosis, assessment, treatment and intervention.

### Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The CMHC program also offers an Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. This 18 credit hour online Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is designed for students with a master's degree in a related field (rehabilitation counseling, school counseling, and counselor education for example) who are pursuing Mental Health Counseling licensure. It is offered exclusively in an online format. The Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling satisfies New York State's regulations for licensure [see Part 52 of the Regulations, section 52.32(c)], and provides students with the educational requirements needed to sit for the New York State licensure exam in Mental Health Counseling. The program is offered as a fixed sequence of 7-week online courses, taken one course at a time. If available, students will join an online program cohort to take the necessary coursework. Students are able to begin their internship once prerequisites are met. Coursework is determined by each student's previous education as it is compared to the required core courses required by New York

State. Students will also complete a 600 hour internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. They are not required by NY State to complete a 100-hour Practicum.

All students in the Advanced Certificate program are required to participate in a non- credit online learning prep course starting classes. This helps to prepare students for the online learning experience at Medaille.

## Program Delivery Formats

### On-ground Program

Medaille's CMHC on-ground program is offered as a fixed sequence of 20 courses that span two months or 7-8 weeks. There are 3 semesters per academic calendar year (for example, for fall starts: fall, spring, summer). The entire program takes two and a half years to complete. Upon the introduction of the syllabus during Orientation (for the 1st class) or the 2nd weekend of class, the next course officially starts and assignments are given to students. The CMHC On-ground Program is offered in a hybrid format, taught both on-line (via virtual classroom) and on-ground over two weekends in the traditional classroom. Students join a cohort upon admission, and remain with their cohort over the length of the program.

Each course taught on-ground will include 38 in-class hours (split between the fourth and eighth weekends of the course). The Schedule for On-ground is: Friday 6pm to 10pm; Saturday 9am to 5pm; and Sunday 9am to 3pm, with appropriate amounts of professor guided independent study and direction.

### Online Program

The CMHC online program is offered as a fixed sequence of 17 7-week courses, taken one at a time, plus three semesters of Practicum and Internship (MHC 677, MHC 678, & MHC 679). There are 3 semesters per academic calendar year (for example, for fall starts: fall, spring, summer). The entire program takes two and a half years to complete. Students proceed through the Online Program as a cohort. Each 7-week course is comprised of professor-guided independent study, combined with assigned group projects. Courses are delivered via Blackboard and are primarily asynchronous, meaning that for the majority of courses, students can access and complete the course at a time and place of their own choosing within a specified time frame. Students attend residencies for five full days in their first and second academic calendar years for the MHC 605 Group Work (3rd semester) and MHC 669 Prepracticum (4th semester) courses. Clinical supervision for Practicum and Internship (MHC 677, 678, & 679) is synchronous on Blackboard via Blackboard Collaborate on specified days and times as per CACREP requirements.

Each course taught on-line will be equivalently rigorous as the on-ground courses, with appropriate amounts of professor guidance and direction. Online learning is 24/7, with multiple assignments due every week and weekend (usually on Tuesdays and Saturdays).

Students will proceed through the CMHC Program as a cohort. This delivery method requires students to take courses in sequence as a cohort. All students in the Online program are required to participate in a non-credit online learning prep course starting classes. This helps to prepare students for the online learning experience at Medaille.

Mental Health Counseling | Master's or Higher Degree Programs/Licensure-Qualifying Curriculum Content Areas (New York State)

| Required Content Areas:  | Course Number(s), Title(s) and Semester Hours   |
|--|---|
| (i) human growth and development;  | MHC 631 Human Growth and Development (3 credit hours)   |
| (ii) social and cultural foundations of counseling;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (iii) counseling theory and practice;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (iv) psychopathology;  | MHC 620 Psychopathologies (3 credit hours)  |
| (v) group dynamics;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (vi) lifestyle and career development;   | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (vii) assessment and appraisal of individuals, couples, families, and groups;                              | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (viii) research and program evaluation;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (ix) professional orientation and ethics;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (x) foundations of mental health counseling and consultation;  | MHC 650 Professional Orientation and Practice (3 credit hours)  |
| (xi) clinical instruction;   | MHC 670 Helping Relationships (3 credit hours)  |
| (xii) recognition and reporting of child abuse and maltreatment; and                                       | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xiii) one-year (at least 600 clock hours) supervised internship or practicum in mental health counseling. | MHC 678 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling I (3 credits)<br>MHC 679 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling II (3 credits) |

Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Licensure-Qualifying Curriculum Content Areas

| Required Content Areas:  | Course Number(s), Title(s) and Semester Hours   |
|--|---|
| (xiv) human growth and development;  | MHC 631 Human Growth and Development (3 credit hours)   |
| (xv) social and cultural foundations of counseling;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xvi) counseling theory and practice;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xvii) psychopathology;  | MHC 620 Psychopathologies (3 credit hours)  |
| (xviii) group dynamics;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xix) lifestyle and career development;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xx) assessment and appraisal of individuals, couples, families, and groups;                               | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xxi) research and program evaluation;   | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xxii) professional orientation and ethics;  | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xxiii) foundations of mental health counseling and consultation;  | MHC 650 Professional Orientation and Practice (3 credit hours)  |
| (xxiv) clinical instruction;   | MHC 670 Helping Relationships (3 credit hours)  |
| (xxv) recognition and reporting of child abuse and maltreatment; and                                       | Met through prerequisites/admissions criteria   |
| (xxvi) one-year (at least 600 clock hours) supervised internship or practicum in mental health counseling. | MHC 678 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling I (3 credits)<br>MHC 679 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling II (3 credits) |

## M.A. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Course Sequence

| Semester                             | Course   | Credits   |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Semester One<br/>(15 weeks)</b>   | MHC 650 Professional Orientation and Practice                                    | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 600 Counseling Theory and Practice   | 3         |
| <b>Semester Two<br/>(15 weeks)</b>   | MHC 631 Human Growth and Development   | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 640 Cultural and Social Diversity  | 3         |
| <b>Semester Three<br/>(15 weeks)</b> | MHC 605 Group Work   | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 630 Professional, Ethical, and Legal Issues in Counseling                    | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 649 Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training (Note: non-credit bearing)        | 0         |
| <b>Semester Four<br/>(15 weeks)</b>  | MHC 669 Prepracticum   | 6         |
|                                      | MHC 620 Psychopathologies  | 3         |
| <b>Semester Five<br/>(15 weeks)</b>  | MHC 622 Assessment and Evaluation  | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 670 Helping Relationships  | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 677 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling                           | 3         |
| <b>Semester Six<br/>(15 weeks)</b>   | MHC 652 Research and Program Evaluation  | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 634 Grief, Trauma and Crisis Counseling and Therapy                          | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 678 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling I                        | 3         |
| <b>Semester Seven<br/>(15 weeks)</b> | MHC 674 Children and Adolescent Counseling and Therapy                           | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 680 Family Counseling and Therapy  | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 679 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling II                       | 3         |
| <b>Semester Eight<br/>(15 weeks)</b> | MHC 660 Career Development   | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 727 Counseling Supervision and Practice                                      | 3         |
|                                      | MHC 800 Clinical Counseling Comprehensive Examination (Note: non-credit bearing) | 0         |
| <i>Total credit distribution</i>     |  | <i>60</i> |

## Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Course Sequence

The program sequence for the Advanced Certificate in Clinical Mental Health Counseling depends on the specific needs of the student. Students will take the courses they need to meet the NYS requirements for core courses, as they are offered within the curriculum of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. If a student has completed all of the core courses yet need additional coursework to meet the 60-hour requirement, electives will be offered.

| Semester                           | Course   | Credits   |
|------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| <b>Semester One<br/>(15 weeks)</b> | MHC 650 Professional Orientation and Practice              | 3         |
|                                    | MHC 620 Psychopathologies                                  | 3         |
|                                    | MHC 631 Human Growth and Development                       | 3         |
|                                    |  | 3         |
| <b>Semester Two<br/>(15 weeks)</b> | MHC 670 Helping Relationships                              | 3         |
|                                    | MHC 678 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling I  | 3         |
|                                    | MHC 679 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling II | 3         |
| <i>Total credit distribution</i>   |  | <i>18</i> |

## Clinical Mental Health Counseling Course Descriptions

### MHC 600 Counseling Theory and Practice

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650 and MHC 631

Catalog Description of Course: This course covers the basic theory, principles and techniques of mental health counseling and its application to professional counseling settings. It also considers various theories of counseling and issues in the practice of professional counseling and supervision. This course summarizes the history and explores the primary concepts of the major approaches to counseling. We will consider the key concepts of each theory, and application practices. Strengths and limitations of each approach are also explored as well as the impact of these theories on clients diagnosed with mental health disorders. This course will examine strategies to support and advocate for clients.

### MHC 605 Group Work

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620

Catalog Description of Course: This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of group development, process and dynamics. Students will learn theoretical and practical concepts related to the practice of group psychotherapy. It is based on the assumption that experiential learning is the most effective way to get acquainted with a new and challenging topic. It prepares students to work with groups in various settings. Using a clinical model students develop an understanding of relevant group practice, roles and responsibilities of facilitators, and the relevance and purpose of group work. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation

### MHC 620 Psychopathologies

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600

Catalog Description of Course: This course will provide an in depth review of a broad spectrum of psychopathological conditions as defined in the DSM-IV. The focus of this review will include the etiology, prevalence & incidence, signs & symptoms, and criteria for differential diagnosis. The emphasis of this review will be on comparing and contrasting different theoretical perspectives on each disorder, as well as reviewing best practices in treatment plans. This course also covers basic etiology of substance of addiction and co-occurring disorders and subsequent treatment plans.

### MHC 622 Assessment and Evaluation

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650 and MHC 620 and students must pass with a B

Catalog Description of Course: This course provides students with a comprehensive overview of the major principles of assessment, assessment instruments and assessment skills relevant for mental health counselors. Emphasis will be placed on the statistical properties, use and interpretation of assessment and appraisal techniques commonly used in clinical, educational, and organizational fields. It includes an analysis of psychometric properties used to develop and evaluate these instruments. The course also addresses ethical, legal, and diversity issues including cultural bias and fairness in assessments. An extensive review of the clinical interview assessment for future clinicians will be covered. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

### MHC 625 Personality Theories and Counseling

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: Elective

Catalog Description of Course: This course surveys the descriptive and causal aspects of individual differences in personality. Students will examine theories and explanations of the development of normal and abnormal personalities. Major models of personality theory include biological, cognitive social, behavioral, and psychodynamic models. Various personality assessments will be explored.

### MHC 630 Professional, Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620, MHC 605

Catalog Description of Course: This course will focus on the ethical principles and professional standards of counseling practice, and survey the ethical and legal issues facing the professional counselor in our society. Students will review professional goals, objectives, roles and functions. This course also examines ethical and legal standards, risk management, professional credentialing and standards for professional counselors. This course covers significant clinical challenges for the mental health professional. The counseling profession's ethical standards are also addressed with an emphasis on the American Counseling Association code of ethics and counselor ethical decision-making processes. New York State Office of Professions Practice guidelines for Licensed Mental Health Counselors will be used to examine legal issues. Through various methods students have the opportunity to develop their understanding and commitment to professional standards and ethical guidelines for practice as a mental health counselor.

### MHC 631 Human Growth and Development

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650 student must receive a grade of B or above

Catalog Description of Course: This course introduces students to the major theories that have shaped counselor's understanding of human growth and development from conception, childhood and adolescence, to early, middle and late adulthood. Aspects of development discussed include biosocial, cognitive and psychosocial changes. Expected developmental milestones during each of these phases of development are addressed. This course reviews significant research findings and theory about human development. Building a multidimensional framework for understanding development process and dynamics and for predicting challenges associated with life transitions is emphasized. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

### MHC 634 Grief, Trauma and Crisis Counseling and Therapy

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 605, MHC 670

Catalog Description of Course: This course is designed to help students understand both the normal and complicated grieving process with individuals across the life span. This course examines various therapeutic interventions that are useful on helping the bereaved. The impact of culture and how it is related to differences in the grief process are explored. An extensive analysis of the difference between grief counseling and grief therapy will be explored. Students will study historical and current theories in grief and loss. This leads into an in-depth presentation of abnormal grief reactions, complicated mourning processes, and when to use more advanced interventions of counseling. Students will study grief therapies and learn when to refer clients for such. Issues of the counselor's own grief and burn-out syndromes are also addressed.

### MHC 640 Social and Cultural Diversity

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650 and MHC 605; student must receive a grade of B or above

Catalog Description of Course: This course is designed to provide students with a general framework for understanding issues related to mental health services with people from diverse populations. The influence of socio-identities (e.g. race, ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, religious preferences) on individuals' functioning, concerns, and the counseling process will be explored. This course is designed to increase students' awareness and knowledge of, and skills related to, multicultural counseling and the delivery of counseling services. Students explore diversity and identity issues and discuss their impact on the therapeutic relationship. This course is considered

one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

#### MHC 649 Child Abuse Mandated Reporter Training

Number of Credits: 0 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: Required

Catalog Description of Course: This workshop prepares students who are required by law to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment to the New York State Central Register. This workshop is designed to help students understand the risk factors associated with child abuse, as well as, to recognize child emotional, physical and sexual abuse of children. Students will learn their roles and responsibilities as mandated child abuse reporters. This workshop is presented in accordance with the New York State Office of Child and Family Services, Mandated Reporters Guide (Publication #1159) and online training.

#### MHC 650 Professional Orientation and Practice

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: None

Catalog Description of Course: This course focuses on the practical and personal side of counseling. The course provides students with the opportunity to learn about oneself personally and professionally, and accomplish the basic attitudes and techniques of counseling. The course includes class discussion, observation, practice of counseling skills and attitudes, role-plays of counseling, group and individual supervision, observation of a counseling case with supervision, and critical reflection on your experience in these learning and practice exercises. This course focuses on principles and skills related to interviewing and observation, as well as related legal, ethical, and cultural issues. Students gain practice in conducting interviews, making behavioral observations, collecting and interpreting data during an interview, and developing written reports of findings. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

#### MHC 652 Research and Program Evaluation

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620, MHC 605, MHC 630, MHC 649

Catalog Description of Course: This course surveys the major methodologies for conducting psychological research, and focuses on research report development, publication of psychological data, and ethical considerations in conducting research. Students will also be introduced to the statistics necessary for describing and analyzing psychological data. This course also introduces students to the principles and practices of program evaluation and systems research, including quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. This course introduces students to design of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches to counseling research and evaluation. Students learn the

strengths and limitations of each method and under what circumstances each approach would be the most appropriate research design. Students are exposed to legal and ethical issues associated with human subjects' protection. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

### MHC 660 Career Development

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 605, MHC 670

Catalog Description of Course: This course is designed to provide students with the theoretical frameworks and basic counseling skills necessary for the career counseling process and for planning programs for educational and career counseling. The course includes a review of theories of career development, individual and programmed techniques for diagnosis, assessment, decision-making and career search/advancement. Attention is given to assessment of how people make career choices, which are suitable to the individual and are viable in society. Emphasis is on developing a broad view of career as life style and on practical application of theory and information in a professional counseling context. Focus is placed on the implications of individual differences in culture, gender, ability and age-related issues. Students obtain a theoretical and practical basis for supporting individuals in vocation selection and career development. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

### MHC 669 Prepracticum

Number of Credits: 6

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 605, MHC 620, and MHC 630

Catalog Description of Course: This course will introduce you to basic skills that initiate counseling relationships and follow with the four principal approaches to counseling: cognitive, affective, behavioral, and family/systemic. These approaches will provide the context for assessment, goal setting, and the integration of skills into interventions. In addition, this course also provides an introduction to the understanding of the basic neurobiology of psychopathology and the different types of psychotropic medications to treat these conditions. As such, this aspect of the course emphasizes the counselor's role as a member of a multidisciplinary treatment team in facilitating treatment compliance, monitoring the efficacy as well as side effects of the psychotropic medication prescribed, and the counselor's role in integrating pharmacologic treatments with other non-pharmacological modalities.

### MHC 670 Helping Relationships-Advanced Clinical Counseling Skills

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620, MHC 605, MHC 630, MHC 649, MHC 652, MHC 640, MHC 669

Catalog Description of Course: This course focuses on the practical and personal side of counseling. The course provides students with the opportunity to learn about oneself personally and professionally, and accomplish the basic attitudes and techniques of counseling. The course includes class discussion, observation, practice of counseling skills and attitudes, role-plays of counseling, group and individual supervision, observation of a counseling case with supervision, and critical reflection on your experience in these learning and practice exercises. This course focuses on principles and skills related to interviewing and observation, as well as related legal, ethical, and cultural issues. Students gain practice in conducting interviews, making behavioral observations, collecting and interpreting data during an interview, and developing written reports of findings. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) core curricular courses.

### MHC 674 Children and Adolescent Counseling and Therapy

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 605, MHC 670

Catalog Description of Course: This course will emphasize utilizing developmentally appropriate counseling and therapy techniques for children and adolescents who are experiencing social, behavioral or affective problems. The course is designed to help graduate students to focus on the knowledge base, skills, theories, research, models, and critical issues of contemporary Children and Adolescent counseling and therapy. Future clinicians will learn to help children and adolescents in a variety of ways by receiving emotional support, resolving conflicts with people, understanding feelings and problems, and trying out new solutions to old problems. Intervention goals for therapy may be specific (change in behavior, improved relations with friends or family), or more general (less anxiety, better self-esteem) will be explored. Current issues facing youth in the contemporary world will also be explored.

### MHC 677 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620, MHC 605, MHC 630, MHC 649, MHC 652, MHC 640, MHC 622, MHC 669

Catalog Description of Course: A 10 week supervised practicum in a mental health/psychiatric agency provides the experiences for the student-intern to increase professional competence for a minimum of 100 hours (40 hours of which are direct face to face). Through the practicum experience, the student is challenged to apply and integrate the knowledge, theories and concepts of counseling practice, and to build on previous life and work experience, as well as to develop new areas of professional competence. This process allows the student to bring together and to integrate for professional use cognitive learning, professional competence, values and ethics, life experiences, and activities which will enhance skill and critical analysis of counseling practice. There is a weekly supervision requirement and a biweekly group supervision requirement for this course in addition to other assignments. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Professional Practice.

### MHC 678 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling I

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620, MHC 605, MHC 630, MHC 649, MHC 652, MHC 640, MHC 622, MHC 669, MHC 677

Catalog Description of Course: An 8 month supervised internship in a mental health/psychiatric agency provides the experiences for the student-intern to increase professional competence for a minimum of 600 hours (240 hours of which are direct face to face individual and group counseling). When you have finished internship 1 and 2 you will have completed 600 hours with 240 face to face in individual and group counseling. Through the internship experience, the student is challenged to apply and integrate the knowledge, theories and concepts of counseling practice, and to build on previous life and work experience, as well as to develop new areas of professional competence. This process allows the student to bring together and to integrate for professional use cognitive learning, professional competence, values and ethics, life experiences, and activities which will enhance skill and critical analysis of counseling practice. There is a weekly supervision requirement and a biweekly group supervision requirement for this course in addition to other assignments. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Professional Practice.

### MHC 679 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling II

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 631, MHC 600, MHC 620, MHC 605, MHC 630, MHC 649, MHC 652, MHC 640, MHC 622, MHC 669, MHC 677

Catalog Description of Course: An 8 month supervised internship in a mental health/psychiatric agency provides the experiences for the student-intern to increase professional competence for a minimum of 600 hours (240 hours of which are direct face to face individual and group counseling). When you have finished internship 1 and 2 you will have completed 600 hours with 240 face to face in individual and group counseling. Through the internship experience, the student is challenged to apply and integrate the knowledge, theories and concepts of counseling practice, and to build on previous life and work experience, as well as to develop new areas of professional competence. This process allows the student to bring together and to integrate for professional use cognitive learning, professional competence, values and ethics, life experiences, and activities which will enhance skill and critical analysis of counseling practice. There is a weekly supervision requirement and a biweekly group supervision requirement for this course in addition to other assignments. This course is considered one of Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) Professional Practice.

### MHC 680 Family Counseling and Therapy

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 605, MHC 670

Catalog Description of Course: This course presents a survey of the leading theorists and concepts in the field of family therapy. Students will become better acquainted with this field of counseling and will acquire skills necessary to work with families. The primary focus will be on models family and mental health counseling in general. The course is designed for mental health counselors. This course will cover the (1) history of family therapy; (2) philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of models of family therapy; (3) recent advances in the field of family therapy; and (4) current emergent topics relevant to the field.

### MHC 720 Advanced Family Counseling and Therapy

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: Elective

Catalog Description of Course: This course provides an advanced survey of the theoretical concepts and intervention techniques in the field of family therapy. The impact of cultural and its effects on the family are examined. Students will develop knowledge of the concepts of family systems theory as well as explore and develop hypothetical treatment plans for families. Empirically validated family therapy interventions are also addressed with particular emphasis on communications, structural, milan, cognitive-behavioral and strategic family therapy concepts and methods

### MHC 727 Counseling Supervision and Practice

Number of Credits: 3 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: MHC 650, MHC 605, MHC 670

Catalog Description of Course: This course will provide students with an understanding of the purpose and process of clinical supervision, as well as, the importance of professional growth. This course will also present a review of currently accepted supervision models. This will course will assist students in developing knowledge and skills related to the supervisory role and relationship. Issues related to the ethical dilemmas, cultural diversity, power and boundary issues will also be addressed.

### MHC 800 Clinical Counseling Comprehensive Examination

Number of Credits: 0 credits

Prerequisites and/or Special Considerations: None

Catalog Description of Course: This exam prepares students to analyze, diagnose and provide treatment plans for cases similar to real world experience. This exam is designed to help students understand the need to accurately define presenting problems, account for any underlying problems and provide relief to ameliorate coping mechanisms and reduce mental health symptoms through an appropriate treatment plan. NOTE: Passing the comprehensive evaluation satisfies one of the requirements needed for a degree in mental health counseling.

## Admissions

All applicants should keep in mind that the admission decisions are based on the merit of each individual applicant, taking into account each applicant's motivation, maturity, and ability as well as the academic record. Consideration is given to academic background, life experience as it pertains to the program that the student is applying to, and standardized test scores. In conformance with Title IX, 1972

Education Amendments, the College does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, handicap, national and ethnic origin or age in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and local programs, and athletic and other institutionally administered programs.

Medaille College has a rolling admissions policy and students may be admitted for the Fall, Spring, or, for some programs, the Summer semester. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program admits students in the Fall and Spring semesters only. However, to ensure adequate time for Financial Aid and to secure space within the program of study, students are encouraged to apply at least 1 month prior to the start of the semester. See the College's Academic Calendar: <http://www.medaille.edu/academics/academic-calendars/2015-2015> to find out when each semester and module begins. Contact the SAGE Office of Admissions to find out the application deadline for each semester and module. You can find more information on the CMHC Admissions webpage at <http://www.medaille.edu/sage/admissions-requirements/master-mental-health-counseling>

### Full Standing Admission

Full Standing Admission is available to students who meet all the requirements and are determined to excel in the Graduate Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. These students have a 3.0 or higher GPA, three excellent references, and impressive resume or CV, a well-written professional statement, and a successful interview with faculty.

### Provisional Admission

At times due to enrollment availability and/ or admissions criteria, some students may be admitted provisionally to the CMHC Program pending receipt of credentials such as original transcripts from previous colleges attended or scores or proof that student will obtain passing grades. Students admitted as provisional students may take no more than 12 semester hours of credit (four courses) prior to formal admission.

Full standing is attained automatically upon completion of at least 12 hours of course work for graduate credit with a grade of B or better, and upon the removal of any deficiency/issue which was specified at the time of the admission. Students admitted on a provisional basis might be denied continued enrollment if they do not achieve full standing within the specified time period. Students admitted on provisional status, who are unable to fulfill the terms of the provisional contract, may be dismissed from the Program. Those students on provisional status will be expected to meet the Program Director/Advisor after each course until provision is lifted and full admission is given.

### Probationary Admission

Probationary admission may be granted for those do not meet the criteria for full admission into a graduate program, provided there is other evidence that the applicant has the ability to do satisfactory graduate work. Students who fail to satisfactorily meet the criteria for full admission into the CMHC Program (if determined by Program Director) may be admitted with probationary status. Students admitted with this status are required to meet with the Program Director/Advisor prior to the start of

classes to discuss the terms of the probation and to sign a mandatory probationary contract. Students admitted on probationary status, who are unable to fulfill the terms of the probationary contract, may be dismissed from the Program. Those students on probationary status will be expected to meet the Program Director/Advisor after each course until probation is lifted and full admission is given.

Full standing is attained automatically upon completion of at least 12 hours of course work for graduate credit with a grade of B or better, and upon the removal of any deficiency which was specified at the time of the admission. Students admitted on probation might be denied continued enrollment if they do not achieve full standing within the specified time period.

### Non-Matriculated Admission

At times Medaille may accept individuals who wish to take courses as a non-matriculated student. Students must go through the Admissions process and may take no more than 12 semester hours of credit (four courses) prior to formal admission.

### Registering for Courses

Students in the CMHC Program are “block registered” with their cohort for each class by the Registrar’s Office. If the student has a hold on their account (for financial, business or health office reasons), the Registrar will not be able to register the student for the term. It is the student’s responsibility to work with the appropriate office to remove the hold, and then contact the Registrar’s Office at 716.932.2582 to ensure they are registered for classes. On occasion, there are conflicts with the scheduled courses. Students may switch out of one cohort into another only with the approval of their advisor and Program Director, and only twice during the program.

### Transfer of Coursework Taken at Other Institutions

Transfer courses must carry the same/or similar title and have covered the same/similar objectives and goals as the course the student wishes to waive at Medaille College. Students must be aware that since this is a New York State licensure-qualifying Program, very strict criteria are followed when transferring in courses. A maximum of six (6) credit hours of graduate level coursework earned from regionally accredited institutions prior to, or after matriculation, to Medaille’s School of Adult and Graduate Education may be applied towards a master’s degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. All transfer credits must meet the following criteria:

- Courses must have been offered at the graduate level.
- Courses may not have been used to meet degree requirements for previously earned graduate degrees.
- Courses must have been completed within the last five years of matriculation in the Department.
- Courses must receive approval from the Registrar, the Program Director, and the Division Head or Vice President of Academic Affairs.
- A grade of "B" or above must have been earned in the requested transfer courses.
- A copy of the transfer course syllabus and textbook table of contents is required for both New York State and the Program.

Please note: Transfer students may be subject to final examination in all coursework transferred into the Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling.

- No credit is granted for correspondence courses or for "credit-by- examination" courses.

## Clinical Placement

Students are required to complete the courses MHC 669 Prepracticum and MHC 670 Helping Relationships to prepare and reinforce your with the skills and training for clinical work out in the field. Anyone who does not pass MHC 669 will not be permitted to take MHC 670.

MHC 670 Helping Relationships is taken with your first clinical course MHC 677 Practicum, which is held over the course of 1 semester and includes 100 hours of clinical practice on site in an approved community setting; 40 of those hours must be direct contact hours with clients. You must pass this course and finish the hours to receive a grade in BOTH MHC 670 and MHC 677 and to move on to the next phase.

In the next phase of your clinical hours, you are required to complete over the course of 2 full semesters a minimum of 600 total hours between MHC 678 Internship 1 and MHC 679 Internship 2 (240 of which must be direct contact hours, including both individual and group counseling). Your campus supervisor will evaluate your hours completed by the end of the year. If you need more time, you will register for a third section of Internship to finish. On average, to finish within the year, you will need to carve out approximately 14 hours per week toward your practicum and internship.

Practicum and Internship placements will be chosen in a collaborative effort between students and the Clinical Coordinator, Advisor, and/ or their campus supervisor. Each placement is considered on an individual basis and must first meet the approval of the Director of Clinical Training and/ or Clinical Coordinator.

Students are expected to complete their Practicum (100) hours and are strongly encouraged to start their Internship 1 and 2 immediately after finishing the Practicum. Students are expected to complete at least half (300) of their 600 internship hours in MHC 678 Internship 1, and the remaining (300 hours) in MHC 679 Internship 2. Your campus supervisor will evaluate your hours completed by the end of the year and if you need more time you will register for a third section of Internship to finish.

If a student does not meet the required hours in any term of MHC 677, MHC 678, or MHC 679 she/he will receive an Incomplete (I) grade for that term. If the student does not complete the full requirements of Practicum and Internship by the end of the third term, she/he must register for again for MHC 679 in order to complete the requirements. Students who do not complete their Practicum and Internship requirements by the end of the fourth term may be terminated from the Program and will not be recommended for graduation. Guidelines for the Clinical Placement can be found in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Clinical Placement Manual.

## Attendance

Attendance is a critical and mandatory part of your education and clinical training. In the event of a serious illness or family emergency that will result in an absence, students must immediately contact their instructor and the Program Director/Advisor to notify them of their absence. Students who miss more than 3 instructional hours may be at risk of receiving a lower grade; an incomplete (in rare circumstances) and/or needing to retake the course the next time the course is offered; or failing the course. Students who miss a significant amount of class time and fail to contact their instructor in a

timely manner, or who do not have an excused absence, will be given an F for the course. Should an emergency arise and you need to miss class for any reason, you must automatically bring in proof of your emergency so that the document may be placed in your file.

### Email Policy Within the Program

Upon registration into the program, all students are given a Medaille College email address. It is the student's responsibility to check this account every day. Important Program and College information will be sent to this address, (NOT to a personal email account). Students may decide to forward their Medaille email to a personal account. Students should contact [helpdesk@medaille.edu](mailto:helpdesk@medaille.edu) or the IT Department on campus if they need assistance setting up their Medaille email account.

### Academic Review/Probation/Dismissal

Any graduate student who receives a grade of F in any course required for completion of the CMHC degree, or who indicates a lack of ability as determined by the Program faculty, will receive an immediate academic review by the CMHC Program faculty. Upon completion of the academic review, the CMHC Program faculty may place the student on academic probation. Such notice will be made in writing by the Program Director/Advisor prior to the end of the drop/add period of the next semester and will indicate the terms of the probation and its removal. Any student placed on academic probation is required to sign and adhere to a prescribed probationary contract and will be reviewed after each course while on probation to determine continuation in the Program. Any graduate student not meeting the written terms of their academic probation may be academically dismissed from the College.

Students will not be allowed to begin or continue internship placements if they are placed on academic probation. Further, students placed on probation or suspension for violations of the CMHC Student Handbook or the SAGE Handbook will not be allowed to begin or continue internship placements and depending on the severity of the offense, a student may be dismissed from the College.

### Concerns or Questions about a Course or a Grade

In the event that a student has a concern or question about a course or a grade, the instructor of the course should be consulted before bringing concerns to the Program Director/Advisor. If the situation is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, concerns and/or questions should be brought in writing to the attention of Program Director/Advisor. The Program Director/Advisor will respond to the student within 21 days of receipt of the concern. If the student is dissatisfied with the Program Director's decision, he/she may petition the decision, in writing, to the Division Head or Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA). The Division Head or VPAA's decision is final.

### Grade Point Average Requirements

The School of Adult and Graduate Education at Medaille College requires that all graduate students maintain a grade point average of 3.0 or above. A student whose grade point average falls below 3.0 after the completion of 9 credits will be placed on academic probation for the following semester. A student whose grade point average falls below 3.0 for a second and successive semester may be allowed (with the recommendation of the Program Director/Advisor and the consent of the Division Head or Vice President of Academic Affairs) a third semester in which to raise his or her grade point average to 3.0 or above. A student whose grade point average falls below 3.0 after three successive semesters will

be required to withdraw from the College. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 will not be recommended for graduation.

Likewise, any graduate student who receives a grade of F in any course required for completion of the CMHC degree, or who indicates a lack of ability as determined by the Program Director/Advisor, will receive an immediate academic review by the graduate Program faculty. Upon completion of the academic review, the graduate Program faculty may place the student on academic probation. Such notice will be made in writing by the Program Director or designee prior to the end of the drop/add period of the next semester and will indicate the terms of the probation and its removal. Any student placed on academic probation is required to sign and adhere to a prescribed probationary contract. The student will be reviewed after each course while on probation to determine continuation in the Program. Any graduate student not meeting the written terms of their academic probation may be academically dismissed from the College.

A student earning a C-or lower in any course is required to repeat the course; a student may carry a maximum of two C grades on their transcript during the Program EXCEPT in the following core courses, where a B-or better MUST be achieved: MHC 669 Prepracticum, MHC 670 Helping Relationships, MHC 605 Group Work, MHC 650 Professional Orientation, MHC 620 Psychopathologies and MHC 630

Professional, Ethical, & Legal Issues. A student may repeat any course in an effort to earn a higher grade, however, both grades will remain on the student's official transcript and the latter grade will be used in computing the student's cumulative grade point average.

### Repeating a Failing Course

Graduate students must repeat a course in which they received a failing grade. The student may retake the course the next time it is offered in the CMHC Program as long as it does not conflict with the student's current cohort schedule. If the course the student is repeating conflicts with the student's schedule, the student may be required to extend their anticipated graduation date and repeat the failing course the following semester in which the course is offered. The student may be required to retake the course as a Directed Study but only with permission from the Program Director/Advisor. The directed study option would require an approved Academic Policy Waiver as the directed study policy states that students may not retake failed courses as a directed study. This should only be granted once during the program. Any time a student is required to repeat a course, he/she must receive permission from both the Program Director and the course instructor.

If a student fails MHC 669 Prepracticum, MHC 670 Helping Relationships, MHC 605 Group Work, MHC 650 Professional Orientation, MHC 620 Psychopathologies or MHC 630 Professional, Ethical, & Legal Issues, he/she may not begin MHC 677 Practicum. Students who fail these core clinical cores will be required to meet with the Program Director/Advisor and/or the Clinical Coordinator to develop a remediation plan. Once the student successfully completes the remediation plan, retakes and receives a passing grade in the failed clinical course, and has met with both the Program Director/Advisor and the Internship Coordinator, the student will be allowed to begin MHC 677 Practicum. If the student fails a clinical course a second time or fails to fulfill the requirements of the remediation plan, the student may be automatically dismissed from the Program. It should be noted that delaying MHC 677 Practicum might also delay a student's graduation date.

## Incompletes

Students may request an Incomplete (I) for a course if (1) they have a passing grade in the course; and (2) uncontrollable circumstances (i.e., major illness, childbirth, death in the family) prevent them from completing the coursework. The decision to grant an Incomplete is up to the Instructor in consultation with the Program Director. Students have one semester after the semester in which the Incomplete was issued to make up the work, with the possibility of 1 additional semester under extreme circumstances. After this period, the incomplete grade will be converted to an F and the student will need to retake the course. Should an emergency arise and you need to miss class, you must automatically bring in proof of your emergency so that the document may be placed in your file.

## Academic Integrity

Medaille's faculty and administration expect all students to complete their academic assignments with honesty and integrity. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on a test, forging a signature or an entire college document) will be dealt with severely, with penalties ranging from an F on a given assignment to failing a course or even academic suspension or dismissal from the Program. It is important to note that the School of Adult and Graduate Education at Medaille College interprets the submission of the same paper, or substantially the same paper, to more than one instructor to be a violation of this code. Students found guilty of such offenses risk expulsion from the College.

## Professional and Behavioral Decorum

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program expects students to maintain their integrity and professionalism as both students and prospective counselors. Students are required to abide by the Student Professionalism Agreement, which they sign at the beginning of the Program. Students are expected to be psychologically sound, interpersonally effective, and able to engage with peers, faculty, colleagues, clients, and professionals in a healthy and responsible manner. Students are expected to give and receive feedback as a part of their training and growth.

Students are not only expected to achieve academically at the graduate level, but also to manage themselves throughout the Program as ethical professionals-in-training. Issues of ethical misconduct, behavioral misconduct, impairment, and incompetence will be dealt with swiftly and fairly as they might arise.

Because the CMHC Program runs in a cohorted, lockstep sequence, and because students are professionals in-training, the standards of behavior in the classroom and clinical sites are especially high. To support a respectful, meaningful and appropriate learning environment, students are expected to:

- arrive on time and be prepared to participate in class discussions
- conduct themselves in a polite, mature, and professional manner during all interactions with peer, students, and faculty
- maintain a respectful silence when a faculty member or fellow student is talking, and be respectful of others' opinions
- refrain from acting in a disruptive, disrespectful, intimidating, or rude manner
- refrain from working on assignments, surfing the web, answering texts or phone calls during class

Issues with students who are unable to demonstrate appropriate behavioral decorum will be brought to the attention of the Program Director/Advisor and the Dean of the School of Adult and Graduate Education. A first offense normally results in a formal warning, but may also result in the student being placed on Behavioral Probation. Terms of the Probation will vary depending on the specific issue at hand.

Consequences of a second offense will be outlined in the formal warning, and in the Behavioral Probation contract (if one is issued). The College takes the sanctity of the learning environment and the safety and comfort of its students very seriously. Students who are unable to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner (as defined by this Handbook, by Student Professionalism Agreement and by the American Counseling Association Ethical Codes and Standards of Practice), will be dealt with and, if necessary, dismissed from the Program. See below for additional details.

Professional behavior is expected at all times and in all settings and activities related to Medaille College and to the field of Counseling. These settings include the classroom, other on campus meetings, and in off campus settings (out of classroom projects, on/off-campus professional activities or gatherings, internship settings, and other school-related events).

### Program Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the Program for academic reasons and/or behavioral concerns (for example, three semesters of a GPA below a 3.0; plagiarism; verbal, non-verbal, or behavioral or written communication problems or behaviors listed below). Students may be dismissed for overt violations of the current ACA Ethical Codes and Standards of Practice (as per signed Professionalism Agreement). Students may be dismissed for “personal unsuitability for the profession”:

- consistent inability to assess/identify problem situations in a mental health or educational settings and inability to negotiate/compromise in difficult or conflicting situations;
- consistent inability to recognize personal boundary/power issues which inhibit or prevent the student from learning appropriate professional behavior/counseling skills;
- consistent inability to work as a team member in a group setting;
- consistent inability or refusal to participate in learning activities designed to promote and improve the student’s self-understanding, self-analysis skills and interpersonal skills;
- consistent inability to receive constructive feedback about one's progress, skills, abilities, effectiveness and professional behavior;
- consistent inability to respect or tolerate differences in perspectives, opinion, thought process, belief systems, value systems or ideologies;
- consistent inability to understand the negative impact that one's behavior has on others.
- “consistent” is equivalent to two observable behaviors by faculty or students

### Rescheduling Classes in the Event of Inclement Weather

In the event that the College cancels one day out of the weekend schedule due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, the Instructor will contact the cohort to inform them of how missed work/time will be made up. If, however, two or more days out of the weekend schedule are cancelled by the College, the Instructor and cohort should anticipate that cancelled class days will automatically be rescheduled for the following weekend. Additionally, your instructor will likely place assignments and

discussions through Blackboard and all students will be responsible for the assignments posted. Students are encouraged to sign up for weather closure notices at [www.medaille.edu/alert](http://www.medaille.edu/alert)

### Emergency Facilities Closure

In the case of an emergency facilities closure (i.e., due to natural disaster or pandemic flu), classes will continue online using Blackboard. The link for Blackboard courses can be found at [www.medaille.edu](http://www.medaille.edu) and information regarding this can be found on the class syllabus.

### Professional Portfolio and Comprehensive Exam

#### Professional Portfolio Evaluation

Professional Evaluations are conducted on each student throughout the program as needed. This evaluation at very least consists three major points in the counselor in training’s program. Three major components will be collected. This evaluation will be conducted by the student Advisor and evaluated for developmental growth and maturity of the student. Those components are: 1) a resume or CV 2) reflective writing sample 3) Academic Paper/Case Conceptualization. Below is the table in which the above materials will be collected:

| Item to be collected                   | Timeframe #1  | Timeframe #2                                       | Timeframe #3  |
|--|---|--|---|
| Resume or CV                           | Collect resume at admissions                        | Collect CV or resume prior to clinical placement   | Collect final CV with all clinical experiences noted    |
| Reflective Writing Sample              | Collected at admissions                             | Collect writing sample prior to clinical placement | Collect writing sample                                  |
| Academic Paper/ Case Conceptualization | Collect APA style paper in Professional Orientation | Collect Case Conceptualization in Practicum Class  | Collect Case Conceptualization with supporting evidence |

#### Evaluation of Professional Portfolio

Students are required to pass their Portfolio review.

- The student's ability to show maturity and professional development through these documents will be assessed by their Advisor. Performance is graded as “Pass,” “Revisions Needed,” or “Fail.”
- When the student’s performance is graded “Fail” by Advisor, then the Program Director must evaluate the student's portfolio.
- A student who receives a grade of “Revisions needed” on any of their submitted writing samples may take 10 days to complete revisions. If revisions are not made, the student will receive a grade of “fail” for this section.

#### Written Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive exam will be administered during the last day of Clinical Supervision class. The comprehensive examination consists of five case simulations in which students must correctly diagnosis

clients, use proper treatment plans for diagnosis, and provide any adjunct services that would be beneficial for the client. The comprehensive examination is not intended to test the recall of detailed facts; rather it is the test of the student comfort level in the requirements that are expected of beginning counselors in the field. In each case scenario, students will be given a series of answers. Some of these answers are correct (or the best fit) and others are incorrect given the case scenario. In other words, students (beginning counselors) will not have to independently come up with answers; rather they will be guided with answers that are best choices, good choices, or inappropriate/incorrect choices.

The comprehensive examination is based on the clinical decision-making model which expects counselors to gather information presented, including diagnosis, and demonstrate an appropriate treatment plan including goals, technique and appropriate adjunct services.

**Decision Making Model:** To prepare for the examination, the student is encouraged to review the material from their coursework (Counseling Theory & Practice; Psychopathologies; Professional, Ethical, & Legal Issues; Group Work; Helping Relationships; Human Growth and Development; Research Methods and Program Evaluation; Prepracticum; Practicum; Internship 1; and Internship 2) beginning at least one semester prior to the semester in which the exam will be given. It is also recommended that the student be familiar with material that has been covered in each class, current research in books and journals in the field, and participate in study groups that may be organized by fellow students prior to the exam.

### **Evaluation of Master's Comprehensive Exams**

- Students are required to receive a score of 70% or higher to pass the exam.
- The student's response to the examination is reviewed by two faculty members from the team who prepared the question(s). Performance is graded as "Pass" or "Fail."
- When the student's performance is graded "Fail" by both readers, then one additional faculty member from the team who prepared the question(s) for the core area being examined will independently read and score the student's response.
- A student who receives a grade of "Fail" from all three readers on one or both parts of the exam receives a failing grade. Likewise, a student who receives a grade of "Pass" from two readers receives a grade of "Pass" on the comprehensive examination.

**Student Feedback:** After all examination results have been summarized, the Program Director conveys the results to each student by e-mail. Students usually receive the e-mail about one to two weeks after the examination date. Should students fail the examination, they MUST confer with the Program director about options available to them.

**Failure of the Master's Comprehensive Examination:** Students who fail may retake the exam within 6 months of failing the exam. Extenuating circumstances, such as personal health or residency at great distance from Medaille College, may warrant special arrangements by the Program Director/Advisor and be subsequently approved by the Division Head or Vice President of Academic Affairs. Exams are updated on a yearly basis in order to keep the content of the exam current.

### **Program Time Limits**

All requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling must be completed within five years of the date of admission to the Program. All graduate students must be

registered for a minimum of six credit hours during each fall, spring and summer semester. Graduate students in good academic standing who cannot maintain continuous registration should apply for a leave of absence by the beginning of the semester in which the leave is to begin. Students are only permitted two leave of absences during the program.

### Waiver of a Course Requirement

In certain circumstances, a waiver of a course requirement may be requested based on coursework taken at Medaille College or at another institution. To petition for a course waiver, the student must submit a formal written letter requesting a Waiver of a Course Requirement and a syllabus from the institution where the course was taken. This letter must be approved by the Registrar, the Program Director, and Division Head or Vice President of Academic Affairs.

### Letters of Recommendation policies and procedures

In the counseling field it is expected that you will need letters of recommendation for seeking employment. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling policy regarding letters of recommendation is to 1) set up a professional reference file with Medaille's Career Planning and Placement department; 2) ask your instructors, site supervisors, and other for a recommendation letter at least one month in advance using Medaille's Career Planning and Placement forms, and 3) If additional forms are needed, you may ask the instructor to fill out the forms but be sure to have a self addressed stamped envelope with the address where it must be mailed.

### Commonly Asked Questions

#### *What is a Mental Health Counselor?*

The American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) defines mental health counseling as the provision of professional counseling services involving the application of principles of psychotherapy, human development, learning theory, group dynamics, and the etiology of mental illnesses and dysfunctional behavior to individuals, couples, families, and groups for the purposes of treating psychopathology and promoting optimal mental health.

Mental Health Counseling is a distinct profession with national standards for education and clinical practice. The American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) is the primary organization representing Mental Health Counselors. A licensed Mental Health Counselor has met or exceeded the following professional standards: an earned master's degree in Mental Health Counseling or the equivalent (as approved by the New York State Education Department); completion of a minimum of 3000 hours of clinical work at an NYS approved site or with a temporary permit issued by NYS; and a passing score on the NYS required licensure exam.

#### *What is mental health counseling?*

Mental health counseling is the evaluation, assessment, amelioration, treatment, modification or adjustment to a disability, problem, or disorder of behavior, character, development, emotion, personality or relationship by the use of verbal or behavioral methods.

Practitioners, called mental health counselors, are trained in counseling and psychotherapy to treat individuals with mental and emotional disorders and other behavioral challenges. Mental health counselors address mental health, human relationship, education and career concerns within ethical, developmental, preventive and treatment contexts. Mental health counselors demonstrate a concern for the short-term and long-term well-being of individuals, couples, families, groups and organizations.

Mental health counselors are dedicated to the optimal functioning of individuals, families and organizations. The mental health counselor uses standard mental health assessment and evaluation protocols, develops patient psychosocial histories, writes treatment plans, documents patient progress, facilitates consultation and referral with other providers, and implements discharge plans.

#### *What services do licensed mental health counselors provide?*

Mental health counselors use assessment instruments; provide mental health counseling and psychotherapy, clinical assessment and evaluation, treatment planning and case management, prevention, discharge, and aftercare services. After identifying and evaluating mental health problems and related human development challenges, mental health counselors employ effective methods of counseling and psychotherapy to treat individuals with conditions that may include mood disorders including depression, anxiety disorders, substance abuse, sexual dysfunction, eating disorders, personality disorders, dementia, and adjustment disorders.

Mental health counselors assist patients to develop skills and strategies to address issues such as parenting and career skills; problems in adolescent and family communication and functioning; couples, marital and relationship problems; and preventing the occurrence or re-occurrence of alcohol and substance abuse.

#### *How do licensees provide these services?*

Mental health counselors are trained in counseling, psychotherapy and prevention. They work with individuals, couples, families, groups and organizations using brief techniques, such as crisis intervention and solution-focused approaches, or longer term approaches when treating chronic mental health disorders or disabilities. Mental health counselors provide services such as:

- Helping patients identify goals and solutions to problems causing emotional problems and the use of psychotherapy to address mental disorders and substance abuse.
- Assessing the patient's disability and developing a treatment plan that may include counseling, job training and access to technology and services that assist the patient in achieving maximum participation in work and social activities.
- Supervising counseling interns and graduates of counseling Programs to develop skills necessary to practice as a mental health counselor.
- Engaging in Program development, advocacy, research and program evaluation to improve mental health treatment and prevention services.
- Assisting new and displaced workers to identify vocational and career interests based on the patient's knowledge, skills and abilities.
- Collaborating with students, teachers and families from elementary school through college to eliminate barriers to learning and provide students with the skills necessary for healthy, successful lives.

#### *Where do licensed mental health counselors practice?*

Mental health counselors may work individually or as part of a team of professionals who establish and implement a treatment plans to address the patient's needs. They may work in a private practice or practice with other licensed mental health counselors or in other settings authorized to provide professional services.

In cases of sustained treatment of a serious mental illness (schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism), the patient shall be evaluated by a physician. The physician shall consult with the mental health counselor regarding the illness and advise whether any medical care is needed.

#### *What credentials do licensed mental health counselors have?*

Other than those mental health counselors licensed under the special provisions established in law for those already practicing when the new law came into effect, each New York licensed mental health counselor has a master's or higher degree in counseling, or its equivalent, with required coursework in mental health counseling theory and practice, assessment, psychopathology, ethical practice and a supervised internship, has passed a State-approved exam, and has completed at least 3,000 hours of post-degree clinical experience under supervision of a qualified, licensed mental health professional. Those licensed under the special provisions for those practicing when the licensing law took effect meet other standards specified in law and regulation.

Individuals who have completed their education requirements may hold a limited permit to practice the profession while they work to complete the exam and/or experience required for full licensure. These individuals practice under supervision at a specific site.

#### *Who may practice mental health counseling?*

Only licensed mental health counselors, and certain others exempt under the licensing law, may practice the profession. None of these exempt individuals, however, may use the title of licensed mental health counselor unless they are also licensed in mental health counseling.

#### *In what settings do Mental Health Counselors work?*

- Mental Health Counselors work in many settings including:
- Mental Health Clinics
- Drug and alcohol Programs
- Hospitals
- Psychiatric centers
- College and University counseling centers
- Pastoral counseling centers
- Crisis services
- Hospice and Palliative care services
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)
- Private Practice

### Professional Associations

#### *American Counseling Association (ACA)*

The American Counseling Association is the flagship organization and the largest counseling organization in the world with some 45,000 members and 18 divisional affiliate organizations. ACA has written a comprehensive Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice that all professional counselors are expected to read and understand. There are currently 19 Divisions comprising ACA. ACA was founded in 1952. You can find more information on ACA at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org).

*American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA)*

The American Mental Health Counselors Association was founded in 1978 and is the ACA Division representing the profession of Mental Health Counselors. The AMHCA also has a separate Code of Ethics from ACA, though the two Codes are consistent on major issues. You may find more information about AMHCA at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org).

*The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC)*

The National Board for Certified Counselors is the national credentialing board for professional counselors. Mental Health Counselors seeking national certification may take the National Counselor Examination (NCE) in order to become a Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC). While national certification differs from state licensure, New York State uses the NCMHCE as their counselor licensure examination. (Counselor licensure is explained below) NBCC's web site is [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org).

*Web resources for additional information on Mental Health Counselors:*

American Counseling Association (ACA) [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)

American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)

National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC) [www.nbcc.org](http://www.nbcc.org)

New York Counseling Association (NCA) [www.nyca.org](http://www.nyca.org)

New York Mental Health Counselors Association (NYMHCA) [www.nymhca.org](http://www.nymhca.org)