



Graduate Student Handbook

Western Kentucky University Department of Counseling & Student Affairs

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INTRODUCTION TO THE DEPARTMENT

Welcome to Western Kentucky University and to the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs (CSA). The purpose of this student handbook is to provide the information necessary for students to proceed successfully through their academic programs in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs. This handbook is subject to revision at any time, at the discretion of the University, College and / or Department. Students should stay informed of the contents of this handbook as essential revisions are completed. Below are some important facts about the department and a few vital procedures.

Location of Course Offerings

All courses are offered at the main campus in Bowling Green, Kentucky and currently *not* at the regional campuses.

Course Enrollment and Registration: Advising and Program Planning

Students can begin to register for courses on their own after having (a) being accepted into the Department of CSA; (b) completing the New Student Orientation online course and; (c) meeting with their advisor to review their Program Plan, as well as complete the Program of Study Form.

In conjunction with advising, students should always follow their respective Planned Program. See Program Planning guides from the left menu of the [department main webpage](#). Veering from the plan can delay graduation, as well as create other scheduling conflicts, all of which are not the responsibility of the Department. Students are responsible for registering for courses in a timely fashion. Enrollment in capped courses is at the instructor's discretion.

Other Enrollment Considerations

- Students should always contact their assigned advisor (a faculty member in the Department) regarding program planning and course enrollment. Relying on staff or fellow students for direction is not appropriate.
- Some courses require prerequisites. Students are responsible for those noted in the course descriptions.
- Faculty typically only have scheduled office hours during the fall and spring (except for finals weeks). Students should reach out to faculty and schedule appointments with this in mind.
- Enrollment in the Practicum (CNS 590/591) and Internship courses (CNS 595/596) must be approved by the Clinical Coordinators and enrollment is capped. Students are responsible for noting when they will be scheduled to enroll in practicum and/or internship as according to their Planned Program and contacting the Clinical Coordinator within the first couple of weeks of the semester **before** the semester of the practicum or internship course. Requirements for enrolling in practicum and internship vary depending on the program and may require the following to be completed the semester **before**: A Practicum and Internship Orientation; an application; and/or approval of a new site. Not completing the preparatory requirements could delay the completion of the program for a year.

MISSION & OBJECTIVES

Mission of the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs (CSA)

The mission of the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs is to provide graduate education, conduct research, and offer service in the fields of Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; Clinical Mental Health Counseling; School Counseling; and Student Affairs. Faculty members are committed to social action and advocacy, preparing graduates to provide highly competent and culturally aware services, providing clinical and educational experiences that meet or exceed national accreditation standards, ensuring that graduates have credentials necessary to qualify for certification and licensure, and promoting the continued education of counselors and student affairs personnel. The Department of Counseling and Student Affairs faculty are committed to educating students to apply theory, knowledge, skills, and research in culturally diverse environments and work settings locally and globally.

CSA Objectives

1. Be visible and serve as a resource to the community and region. As part of their programs of study, students will obtain academic course work and supervised clinical experiences necessary to seek appropriate state or national credentialing in their chosen profession.
2. Ensure academic and clinical education reflects national standards
3. Ensure support for faculty development
4. Provide sought-after and effective academic programs for students of all backgrounds

PROGRAMS OFFERED

The Department of Counseling and Student Affairs offers master's degrees (MAE), graduate certificates, and school counseling certification programs in the following areas:

Master's Degree Programs

School Counseling (SC)

Program Coordinator, Dr. Loretia Dye

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)

Program Coordinator, Dr. Andrea Jenkins

Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling (MCFC)

Program Coordinator, Dr. Jill Duba Sauerheber

Student Affairs in Higher Education

Program Coordinator, Dr. Aaron Hughey

Certificate Programs

Addictions Education (AE)

Program Coordinator, Dr. Andrea Jenkins

College and Career Readiness (CCR)

Program Coordinators, Dr. Jill Duba Sauerheber and Dr. Cheryl Wolf

International Student Services (ISS)

Program Coordinator, Dr. Aaron Hughey

Career Services

Program Coordinator, Dr. Aaron Hughey

School Counseling Certifications

Planned Sixth-Year/Rank I: Standard Guidance

Rank 1 Coordinator, Dr. Cynthia Mason

Certification Only (Extending the Counseling Certificate)

Certifications Coordinator, Dr. Cynthia Mason

ACCREDITATION

The Counseling and Student Affairs School Counseling Program is housed in the WKU College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. The professional education unit is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board. WKU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Accreditation is the process by which an association or agency grants public recognition to a university, college, or academic program that has met certain established qualifications or standards. Accreditation is both a process and a condition. The criteria for evaluation are the result of extensive input from educators and practitioners.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling; Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling, and the 48-hour School Counseling programs are fully accredited by CACREP until 2021. View the [benefits of enrolling in and completing a nationally accredited program](#).



INTROSPECTION & SELF AWARENESS

The faculty members in the Department firmly believe in the value of personal reflection and self-awareness for counselors and student affairs professionals. Understanding one's own perspectives, interpretations, beliefs, experiences, and emotions is a crucial step towards understanding others and enhancing one's professional counseling and helping skills.

The existence of self-awareness is a fundamental skill needed to relate to diverse individuals, groups, and classrooms. As such, the personal qualities, characteristics, experiences, and reactions of counselors and student affairs practitioners are critical to counseling and helping processes. The emphasis on personal development is a vital aspect of our graduate programs.

Our program's faculty members engage students in activities that promote the development of self-awareness and are committed to creating an atmosphere of safety. However, it is important to recognize that an atmosphere of safety is not synonymous with an atmosphere of comfort. In numerous classes in the program, students will be asked to take necessary emotional risks and actively engage in personal growth and self-reflection. For example, students will have opportunities to explore their own family of origin issues and identify biases and assumptions. This is considered essential to professional development as a counselor and student affairs professional because these fields are based on the process of self-growth and exploration on the part of clients/students. Engaging in self-awareness and personal development is essential to encouraging such a process in others. Consistent with this is the expectation that students will be open to and exchange honest and direct interpersonal feedback with their peers. Feedback is a crucial aspect of students learning from each other, from faculty, and from supervisors. This is especially true in clinical courses such as Techniques, Group Counseling, Practicum, and Internship.

In order to advocate for the professional development of our students and prepare students with the skills necessary to become competent professionals, educational experiences in some courses may be distressing for some students. If students are exhibiting distress, faculty will refer those who are in need of personal counseling to the WKU Counseling and Testing Center. In addition, during the course of study it may become clear to students, faculty, or both, that the counseling and student affairs professions are not a suitable match for them. In such cases, faculty will help students, as needed, to explore more appropriate career choices and assist students with exiting the program in a committed and caring manner. Students who are participating in their own personal counseling should inform their counselor, course instructor, and program advisor about distressing course experiences.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The Department of Counseling and Student Affairs admits students twice each year for the fall and spring semesters. The application deadline is October 15 for spring admission; and March 15 for fall admission. Review of completed applications begins shortly after those deadlines for spring and fall respectively. Reviews employ a holistic approach to evaluate each applicant's potential to be successful as students and, upon graduation, counseling or student affairs professionals. This approach involves the submission of materials that allows department faculty members to develop a more complete picture of applicants in terms of academic aptitude for graduate-level study, potential success in forming effective counseling relationships, respect for cultural differences, and relevance of career goals to their prospective programs of interest. Faculty rate application materials and rank the applications according to these categories. Highly ranked applicants are invited to interview with faculty and current students in an individual or group setting.

After the completion of the interview, admissions decisions are made based on application ratings and interview evaluations collectively. The application process is competitive with a limited number of openings.

Please visit the departmental website for the current admissions application deadlines and procedures. *Be advised that completing courses offered by the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs as a non-degree student prior to program admission implies no guarantee of admission and will not necessarily influence admissions decisions. Understand also that a maximum of 12 semester hours of approved courses completed prior to admission can apply towards degree requirements.*

The Department of Counseling and Student Affairs is subject to the policies specified in the current Graduate School Catalog. Visit the WKU Graduate School for more information.

International applicants will follow the Department admissions processes *and* comply with WKU's policies regarding the admission of international students. Visit the WKU Graduate School for more information.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

There are a variety of ways to secure financial assistance. It may be helpful to start on our funding opportunities webpage for suggestions.

For general information regarding loans, grants, and scholarships and up-to-date information regarding financial assistance, visit WKU Student Financial Assistance.

Western Kentucky University awards graduate assistantships (GA) to select graduate students in programs across campus. For information, visit the GA opportunities webpage. Applications for assistantships in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs are reviewed near the conclusion of the spring semester each year. Contact the Department for the assistantship application form.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Graduate Advising

Upon admission, each student is assigned a faculty advisor from the student's program area in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs. All students are expected to initiate contact with their advisors in order to plan their programs and be cleared to enroll in classes. After their initial enrollment, prior to enrolling in classes near the end of each semester, students should consult with their advisors to select classes for the next semester, discuss progress towards degree completion, share program experiences, and process their ongoing development as counselors and student affairs professionals.

Incoming students will be notified of the scheduling of a required orientation meeting by the coordinator of their program the summer after admission. If attendance is impossible students are expected to contact their advisor to make alternative arrangements to cover the information provided and complete the tasks performed during the orientation

meeting. (Since many announcements are shared via e-mail, students are responsible for regularly checking their WKU e-mail upon receiving a university e-mail address.)

Although student advising in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs is designed to assist students as they progress through their programs, it is the responsibility of all students to be thoroughly familiar with all rules, regulations and requirements pertaining to graduate studies. This includes becoming familiar with the contents of this handbook and regulations related to degree progression in the Graduate School Catalog.

Required Grades and GPA

Candidates for graduate degrees and certificates are required to maintain a B average (3.0 GPA) in all course work. A grade of C or lower may not be used in meeting requirements for any of the designated practice preparation sequence courses. In the Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling those courses include: CNS 554 Group Counseling; CNS 555 Social and Cultural Diversity; CNS 558 Counseling Theories; CNS 559 Techniques in Counseling; and CNS 560 Professional Studies in Clinical, Family, and School Counseling. Students who earn a C in a clinical preparation course will be required to repeat that course to earn a B or better. View the [practicum policies](#). Graduate students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA in their graduate courses are automatically placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. Once on academic probation students have the equivalent of one full time semester (9 hours for graduate students) to obtain a 3.0 GPA. Students who do not achieve a 3.0 at the end of this time, are automatically placed on academic dismissal. Students on academic dismissal cannot register for additional classes and are dismissed from their program. Those dismissed may appeal for readmission. This process is described in the current Graduate School Catalog. For additional information and the most recent policies please visit the [WKU Graduate School Catalog](#).

Department Policies Regarding Grades in Clinical Courses

All students must earn a grade of B or better to enroll in practicum or internship. View the [internship grading](#) and [practicum](#) policies for more details.

Transfer of Credit

According to the WKU Graduate School Catalog, a maximum of 12 transfer credits may be used in any master's program. The following requirements must be met:

1. The credit(s) must have been earned at an accredited graduate institution.
2. The course work to be transferred must be properly designated as having been taken for graduate credit.
3. The grade point average must be at least 3.0 (4.0 scale) on all graduate course work appearing on the transcript before specific courses can be transferred.
4. Additionally, the courses to be transferred must carry a grade of 3.0 (4.0 scale) or better.
5. Credits earned during a given term must not exceed the number of weeks of instruction and must have been earned within the six-year time limit for degree completion.
6. Any course(s) to be transferred must be appropriate for degree completion.
7. At least 12 hours in the major area and at least 6 hours in the minor area must be taken at WKU.

The “Transfer Credit Practices” report published by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers is the reference used in evaluating credits. Transfer credits taken during the final semester of a program will delay program completion until official transcripts have been received in the Graduate School. In cooperative or joint programs with other universities, credits earned in the program at these institutions are not considered transfer credits. A majority of credits applied toward certificate requirements must be earned at WKU.

In cases where a student wants to complete a course from another institution for the purpose of transferring credit after their initial enrollment in any degree, certificate, or certification program in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs, the following process is used.

1. Students must supply the syllabus and, in programs that are not CACREP accredited, the curriculum vita of the instructor for the course they would like to substitute for a required course. The syllabus will be evaluated to determine if the course meets the same CACREP standards covered in the similar course offered in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs and the curriculum vita is used to assess the instructor’s qualifications. *Students must obtain approval from the Counseling and Student Affairs department head, advisor, and instructor **PRIOR** to enrolling in the course they would like to use for transfer of credit.*
2. Clinical courses (i.e., group, techniques, practicum, and internship) are not considered for transfer credit.
3. Students must supply an official transcript showing a grade of B or better in the course before a course substitution form is filed by their advisor. All regulations presented in the Graduate School Catalog apply.
3. Students must ensure that the course they intend to use for transfer of credit has at least 3 semester credit hours. In programs that offer quarter hour courses, courses must be at least 5 quarter hours of credit to satisfy transfer of credit conditions for one 3-credit semester course.

Policies for Resolution of Student Concerns

Student Complaint Procedure

At WKU, student concerns are addressed following a four-step process which include:

1. addressing the complaint with the faculty member involved;
2. if the student and the faculty member are unable to resolve the complaint, the student can take the complaint to the faculty member’s Department Head;
3. if the student is unable to reach a satisfactory resolution at the departmental level, the complaint can be taken to the college level;
4. should the student want to appeal the decision made at the college level, a formal written notice of appeal can be submitted.

Specific guidelines and directions for this process are located in the WKU Graduate School Handbook under [Academic Complaint](#).

Student Grievance Procedure

Western Kentucky University is firmly committed to providing a working and learning environment that is free from all forms of harassment, intimidation, and exploitation and that is respectful of free inquiry and academic freedom. The Grievance Procedure outlines the course of action afforded students who have reason to believe their working and learning environment is not free from one or more of the aforementioned acts. A student grievance is a University related problem or condition which a student believes to be unfair, inequitable, discriminatory, or a hindrance to the educational process. A grievance also includes discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or status.

On occasion students may have a personal grievance regarding an alleged violation, misinterpretation or improper application of university policies and procedures, or alleged improper treatment. A student may present a formal disagreement/complaint without fear of retaliation or reprisal. For the specific procedures and steps please refer to the [Student Handbook](#) for additional information.

Procedure for Appeal of Disciplinary Decision

Procedures for appeal of a disciplinary decision may be found in the [Student Handbook](#).

Procedure for Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

The steps for filing a formal complaint of sexual harassment are found in the [Student Handbook](#).

Student Academic Offenses

According to the WKU Graduate Catalog, there are four categories of academic offenses, listed below.

Academic Dishonesty

Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in a course without possibility of withdrawal. The faculty member may also present the case to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary sanctions. A student who believes a faculty member has dealt unfairly with him/her in a course involving academic dishonesty may seek relief through the Student Complaint Procedure.

Plagiarism

To represent written work taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of a student must be his/her own. One must give any author credit for source material borrowed from him/her. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage without reference to the source after having changed a few words is also plagiarism.

Cheating

No student shall receive or give assistance not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or in the preparation of an essay, laboratory report, problem assignment or other project which is submitted for purposes of grade determination.

Other Types of Academic Dishonesty

Other types of academic offenses, such as the theft or sale of tests, should be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary sanction.

Plagiarism and Academic Requirements, Policies, and Procedures

The Department of Counseling and Student Affairs has specific policies regarding academic integrity. All incoming students are required to successfully complete an [online tutorial on plagiarism](#). View information on plagiarism and [suggestions for avoiding plagiarism](#) in papers.

Students are also expected to read and understand Departmental academic integrity policies, and sign a statement during new student orientation confirming that they have completed the tutorial and have read and understand the Departmental policies contained in this handbook and the content associated with the links contained in the handbook. View the current [Departmental policies](#).

PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP

Enrolling in practicum and internship involves an application process that must be initiated well before the end of the semester prior to the semester they become eligible to enroll in practicum or internship. For example, students in the counseling programs (CMHC and MCFC) must complete [certain courses](#) in order to begin practicum. Students should review the respective program practicum and internship manuals and contact the clinical coordinator for their respective program early in the semester prior to the semester in which they are eligible to enroll in practicum or internship.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling & Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling

Clinical Coordinator, Dr. Cheryl Wolf

School Counseling

Clinical Coordinator, Dr. Loretia Dye

Student Affairs

Clinical Coordinator, Dr. Aaron Hughey

Addictions Education Graduate Certificate Practicum

Program Coordinator, Dr. Andrea Jenkins

College and Career Readiness Graduate Certificate Practicum

Program Coordinator, Dr. Cheryl Wolf

TALLEY FAMILY COUNSELING CENTER (TFCC)

The TFCC is housed within the Department and is sustained through an endowment from Betty Talley, and her late husband, Dr. Page Talley. Students from the Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Marriage and Family Counseling programs apply for year-long internship placements in the TFCC and provide clinical counseling and support services to community members as well as WKU students, faculty, and staff. Under Todd Noffsinger's leadership as Clinical Director, interns provide over 1,200 direct hours of therapy, education, and outreach on campus and within the community during each academic year. For example, through a partnership with Warren County Public Schools, the interns provide in-school education and mentoring as well as groups to develop social skills, communication, and wellness. They also engaged in other outreach efforts related to MASTER Plan - Green Dot program, the Intercultural Student Engagement Center, partnering with the Counseling and Testing Center, Greek Life, WKU Healthy Days, and promoting mental health awareness at the South Campus and SKYCTC. View the [TFCC website](#) for more information.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Students who enroll in programs in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs will attest that they understand the following:

1. [Departmental policies](#) including the Policy on Security of Media; Comprehensive Exams; Internship Grading; Master's Degree Graduates Seeking to Enroll in Additional Courses; Plagiarism and Academic Integrity; Practice Preparation Sequence; Weekend Classes Attendance Policy; and Transfer of Credit Policies.
2. Students may be advised or may elect to withdraw from their program at any time during their enrollment. Students may apply for admission to another degree program at the university and, if admitted, transfer into that program the number of credit hours allowed by the university. In such cases, the student's advisor will work with the student to assist the student in choosing an appropriate course of study.
3. Upon admission to the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs, students are assigned a faculty advisor. Students are responsible to discuss their career goals, suitability of the program for their needs, academic difficulties and progress, scheduling, program planning, credentialing, and other professional concerns with their assigned program advisor. In addition, advisors will initiate these discussions should faculty concerns or program progression issues develop.
4. Students are evaluated during and after each course by their course instructor and by the entire faculty each semester. Student progression will also be discussed in faculty meetings on an as required basis and all students will be evaluated once each semester during a faculty meeting.
5. Students desiring to change programs within the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs must apply for and be admitted to the program they want to pursue using Departmental and Graduate School admissions procedures during the next admissions cycle.
6. Graduation is contingent in part upon maintenance of a B average and a passing score on the comprehensive exam. View information regarding the [comprehensive exams](#). In addition, graduation is contingent upon a grade of B or better in each of the required clinical courses in the student's program of study as stated in the [practicum policy](#).

Please note: Academic performance alone is no guarantee of retention in the program or of graduation from the program.

Students Enrolled in the Counseling Programs

The Department of Counseling and Student Affairs is responsible for preparing candidates with the requisite knowledge, skills and dispositions to become competent professionals according to the ethical code of the American Counseling Association. Faculty members are gatekeepers as defined in sections F.6. through F.9. (pages 13-15) of the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) as follows:

- **F.9.b. Limitations.** Counselor educators, through ongoing evaluation, are aware of and address the inability of some students to achieve counseling competencies. Counselor educators do the following (1) assist students in securing remedial assistance when needed, (2) seek professional consultation and document their decision to dismiss or refer students for assistance, and (3) ensure that students have recourse in a timely manner to address decisions requiring them to seek assistance or to dismiss them and provide students with due process according to institutional policies and procedures.
- **F.9.c. Counseling for Students.** If students request counseling, or if counseling services are suggested as part of a remediation process, counselor educators assist students in identifying appropriate services. Further, faculty members recognize that some individuals may not be suited for the various counseling and student affairs professions. Counseling and student affairs professionals have a critical responsibility to clients and students; therefore, it is essential that students graduating from our program demonstrate certain requisite competencies: a sufficient knowledge base, essential counseling skills for working with a diverse population, the ability to function effectively in interpersonal relationships, and a value system rooted in an appreciation for personal growth and goals of the counseling profession. In addition, students are expected to behave in an ethical, conscientious and professional manner. Students shall be knowledgeable of the general standards and professional ethics set forth by their respective professional organization(s) (i.e., ACA, ACPA, AMHCA, ASCA, and IAMFC).

Professional Performance Standards

Faculty members make informal observation of each student's fitness and performance in every course, as well as in extracurricular activities. Every semester, faculty members collectively conduct a formal Professional Performance Review of each counseling student enrolled in courses during that semester. Discussion of student progress will also be discussed in faculty meetings as needed when concerns emerge. Students in the counseling programs will receive formal letters at the end of each semester which outline the faculty's assessment of how they are meeting the professional performance standards Professional Performance Standards for students in counseling and student affairs include:

- Respects divergent points of view
- Awareness of diversity and non-discrimination
- Academic performance (coursework participation)
- Appropriate in-class behavior
- Collaboration, contribution to positive environment
- Reflective practice
- Accepts personal responsibility
- Personal & professional growth
- Receives, gives, and integrates feedback
- Ethical and legal boundaries

DEPARTMENT REMEDIATION AND DISMISSAL PROCESS

When faculty members have identified a student as having problematic student behaviors or deficient professional performance, the department will implement the remediation and dismissal process. The observation of these problematic behaviors can be the result of patterns developing in a student's Professional Performance Reviews and/or from observations of student behaviors during classes and supervision. The remediation and dismissal process consists of three levels.

Level One

The student will meet with the Department Head, the student's advisor, and faculty who have concerns to discuss the identified concerns. During this meeting the student will be helped to identify steps s/he can implement to address the identified concerns in consultation with the concerned faculty members and the Department Head. The student will prepare and submit a written remediation plan, along with a review date(s), to the concerned faculty and the Department Head to address the concerns explored during the meeting. Once the plan is approved by the Department Head and the concerned faculty, the student and concerned faculty will receive written communication from the Department Head that document faculty concerns and the remediation plan. The student will implement the approved plan, with departmental support as needed. A copy of the plan will be placed in the student's file.

Failure to meet the goals of a Level One remediation plan may result in further Level Two remediation. This occurs when, in the judgment of the concerned faculty and Department Head, substantial progress towards remediation goals has not been observed and meeting the goals appears unlikely. Level Three is implemented when student progress toward remediation goals is minimal or when concerned faculty and the Department Head believe achieving remediation goals is unlikely. Students who successfully meet the requirements of their Level One remediation plan will have completed the remediation process. A new process can be initiated if similar or new concerns arise.

Level Two

When the identified student concerns are substantial, or when the initial Level One remediation plan fails, the student will meet with the Department Head and the concerned faculty to discuss the identified concerns. The student will be presented with a remediation plan created by members of the faculty and the Department Head to

remediate the student's inadequacies. Remediation plans may include any number of proposed actions, including but not limited to:

- Additional clinical work, such as an additional practicum or internship
- Personal mental health counseling
- Oral examination
- Additional academic course work
- Additional supervision
- Additional practice of and assessment in certain skills

The plan will be presented to the student in written format, which will include a completion date. A copy of the plan will be placed in the student's file.

Level Three

Please note certain student behaviors can be judged as unacceptable by Departmental faculty. These behaviors can result in the student's immediate dismissal from their program without any remediation rights. In addition, when a student's behaviors and/or professional performances are judged as inappropriate for the fields of counseling or student affairs, that student will require Level Three remediation. Level Three is dismissal from the student's program and the Department. If either Level One or Level Two student remediation plans do not achieve the necessary improvement, students also may be formally dismissed from the program. Appeals of dismissal from the program and Department can be submitted to the Dean's Office in the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences. School Counseling students' dismissals are also reviewed by the college's Professional Education Council.

APPLICATION FOR GRADUATION & DIPLOMAS

Students who will be graduating are required to submit the Application for Graduation on time. Students are responsible to check on the due dates for this application the semester prior to the semester in which they plan to graduate.

Candidates for graduate degrees must complete the Application for Graduation available through TopNet under Student Services and pay the appropriate fee. This fee will cover the cost of cap, gown and hood, diploma and other necessary expenses. The Application for Graduation should be submitted according to the dates established by the Registrar for each semester. Applications not received by the Registrar's Office by the due date will result in the omission of the student's name from the graduate ceremony bulletin.

Degrees are conferred for fall graduates in December, for spring graduates in May, and for summer graduates in August. Any degree requirements completed in the May/June/July summer sessions will result in the student receiving the degree in August. Any degree requirements completed during the Winter term will result in the student receiving the degree in May. Commencement ceremonies are held in May and December. August graduates may participate in either the preceding May or following December commencement ceremony.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION

Students are responsible to monitor their progress towards graduation. The following requirements require students' attention. Also see section IV regarding the comprehensive examinations.

The following requirements must be met before a student may receive a Graduate Degree from Western Kentucky University:

1. Approved degree program (Form B/C) on file.
2. Approved for admission to candidacy (Form D).
3. Successful completion of all course-work for the program.
4. Any and all course changes made to the degree program.
5. All transcripts for transfer credit received and approved.
6. Application for graduation and fee received.
7. Successful completion of the comprehensive examination or capstone experience (see section IV).
8. Report on comprehensive exam/capstone (Form E) received by the Graduate School.
9. All grades posted on transcript.

The Registrar's Office has 6 to 8 weeks after the end of the semester to post degrees and mail diplomas to all graduate students. If a student did not have all of the above requirements met at this time, their diploma will be awarded and mailed 6 to 8 weeks following the time of completion of all requirements. The Registrar's Office sets conferment deadlines at 6 weeks after the end of the semester. If graduation requirements are completed after this deadline, the degree will be awarded in the following semester.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS

Successful completion of comprehensive examinations is a graduation requirement for all students completing programs in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs. Students should learn and follow the necessary procedures for registering for comprehensive examinations.

College Comprehensive Exam Information

View the [college comprehensive examination information, application, dates, and deadlines](#) for details. The application deadline is strictly enforced. Late applications will delay when students are eligible to take their comprehensive examinations and will delay their graduation until the semester they have passed their comprehensive examinations. Students should review the information at these links during their penultimate semester. To be eligible to take comprehensive examinations, students must have completed all academic courses or be in their final academic courses.

Departmental Policy

The Departmental [comp exam policies](#) include more information on the application process, other essential forms to complete, and eligibility requirements. Comprehensive examinations are offered during the fall, spring, and summer terms on the dates specified by the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

Comprehensive Examinations for the Counseling Programs

View the [Graduation, Comprehensive Exams, and Certification](#) website for information specific to the counseling graduates in the CMHC, MCFC, and SC programs. The comprehensive examination for counseling students is the [Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination \(CPCE\)](#). Test preparation information is available on our website. Also, the Department has purchased test preparation books which can be found in the Educational Resource Center on the first floor of Ransdell Hall.

Comprehensive Examinations for the Student Affairs Program

[Comprehensive examinations](#) for the Student Affairs program include a multiple-choice examination and a two-question essay examination. The multiple-choice examination has been developed by the Student Affairs faculty in the department.

GRADUATE RESEARCH AT WKU

Students interested in participating in graduate research are encouraged to reach out to faculty to join them in their research projects. There are additional support opportunities to participate and present research as a graduate student:

- **Graduate Student Research Grants:** Funding may be available for students conducting research. Contact the Graduate School for information.
- **Travel Awards for Conferences and Research:** Funding may be available for graduate students to attend professional meetings and conferences and to support research project travel. Contact the Graduate School for information.
- **Office of Sponsored Programs:** If students are interested in conducting research, they must gain research compliance for research projects, theses, specialist projects and dissertations. To find more information about the Human Subjects Review Board and the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee please contact the Office of Sponsored Programs for information.
- **TopSCHOLAR:** Students can browse WKU student theses, specialist projects and dissertations in the online university repository.

CREDENTIALING & LICENSURE IN COUNSELING

This section is designed to provide information relevant to developing a professional identity and career as a counselor. Counseling professionals are responsible for maintaining a working knowledge of best practices, legal, ethical, and professional standards. Licensure and professional certification are hallmarks of demonstrating completion of minimal professional standards required of the counseling profession.

Endorsement Policy

Faculty will routinely endorse (i.e., provide recommendations or serve as references) students for credentialing, employment, or further education. However, faculty can only endorse students for whom they have had considerable contact through courses, supervision or mentoring. Students may seek endorsements from faculty by approaching them individually and requesting specific recommendations.

National Credentials

National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC)

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's certification program recognizes counselors who have met predetermined standards in their training, experience, and performance on the National Counselor Examination for Licensure and Certification (NCE), the most portable credentialing examination in counseling. NBCC has more than 44,000 certified counselors. These counselors live and work in the U.S. and more than 40 countries. NBCC examinations (the National Counselor Examination) are used by 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam to license counselors on a state level. Visit the [NBCC Directory](#) for a list of state board contact information.

What is National Certification?

National counselor certification from NBCC indicates 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 counselors wherever they may go including outside the US. The basic national certification offered by NBCC is the NCC (National Certified Counselor). NBCC is the largest national counselor certification program in the world. Please see below for more information on the NCC and NBCC specialty certifications.

The American Counseling Association and NBCC have strong historical ties and work together to further the profession of counseling. However, the two organizations are completely separate entities with different goals.

- ACA concentrates on membership association activities such as conferences, professional development, publications, and government relations.
- NBCC focuses on promoting quality counseling through certification. In addition, NBCC promotes professional counseling to private and government organizations.

National Certified Counselor (NCC) and Other Specialty Credentials

NBCC's flagship credential is the National Certified Counselor (NCC). NBCC also offers specialty certification in several areas:

- School counseling - The National Certified School Counselor (NCSC)
- Clinical mental health counseling - The Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC)
- Addictions counseling - The Master Addictions Counselor (MAC)

The NCC is a prerequisite or co-requisite for the specialty credentials.

Note: The NCC credential is the only master's-level, professional counselor certification that students can apply for while enrolled in CACREP accredited programs. Visit the [NBCC website](#) for more information.

What the NCC Credential Does for You

- Generates client referrals for you through CounselorFind, NBCC's referral service linking potential clients to nearby NCCs.
- Travels with you when you relocate in or outside the US.
- Keeps you in touch with current professional credentialing issues and events through *The National Certified Counselor*, NBCC's newsletter.
- Advances your professional accountability and visibility.
- Ensures a national standard developed by counselors, not legislators.
- Supports the rights of NCCs to use testing instruments in practice through NBCC's participation in the National Fair Access Coalition on Testing (FACT).
- Offers, through Lockton Affinity, liability insurance to NCCs at bargain rates.
- Allows online access to verification of national certification through the NBCC Registry

The National Counselor Examination (NCE) is used for two purposes: national counselor certification and state counselor licensure. The NCE is a composition of 200 multiple-choice questions and is scheduled for a four-hour period. 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.

The NCE is administered at WKU (if there are a sufficient number of test takers). View the [NCE exam dates](#).

For more information about the exam, visit the [NCE website](#). If you are interested in taking the exam or have any questions, please contact Belinda Wisdom at 270.745.4953 or belinda.wisdom@wku.edu.

For more information about the National Board for Certified Counselors and what it has to offer, visit the [NBCC website](#).

Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC)

Applicants for the Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor (CCMHC) must complete the required course work, supervision and examination. Upon passing the examination, the applicant is given the designation NCC and Board Eligible CCMHC. Certification as a CCMHC has become the standard in the field of Mental Health Counseling for regulatory boards establishing state standards and insurance companies and other third-party payers evaluating service providers (*KCA News*, Vol. 5, No. 4).

Equivalent Entry Option-Applicants who have fewer than 60 graduate semester hours (90 quarter hours) in counseling, but a minimum of 48 semester hours (72 quarter hours), and coursework in ALL required areas, may substitute documented training and/or supervised clinical experience for the additional 12 semester hours (18 quarter hours). To be considered for equivalent entry, the applicant may submit to NBCC:

- Documentation of completion of clinically relevant workshops. One hour of semester credit will be granted for every 15 clock hours of workshop participation.
- Documentation of additional supervised client contact above the required 3,000 hours. Forty hours of client contact may be substituted for one hour of semester credit.

NOTE: *All coursework must have been completed for graduate credit at regionally accredited colleges or universities.*

State Credentialing & Licensure

What is a State License?

A state license in counseling is permission from a particular state for a person to practice counseling and /or use the title licensed counselor. Some states have a single license and some have a two-tiered system. In a two-tier system there is an entry level and an advanced level that signifies the state has endorsed the license holder for independent practice. The names of state licenses vary from state to state. They include: LPC, LCPC, LPCC, LMHC, LPCMH, LCMHC, LPC-MH. Please note that they all begin with the L for "Licensure."

Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC)

The Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC) credential is required by the state of Kentucky in order to function as an independent clinical counselor. Kentucky law regarding the practice of professional clinical counseling can be found in *KRS 335*. The minimum requirements for this credential include a master's degree in counseling or a closely related field that includes nine specified curricular areas. To become a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor (LPCC), the following requirements must be met:

1. You must have a masters, specialist, or doctorate degree in counseling or related field from a regionally-accredited institution;
2. You must have completed a minimum of sixty (60) graduate semester hours in the following areas:
 - The helping relationship, including counseling theory and practice;
 - Human growth and development;
 - Lifestyle and career development;
 - Group dynamics, process, counseling, and consulting
 - Assessment, appraisal, and testing of individuals;
 - Social and cultural foundations, including multicultural issues;
 - Principles of etiology, diagnosis, treatment, planning, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders and dysfunctional behavior;
 - Research and evaluation;
 - Professional orientation and ethics; and
 - Completion of an organized internship consisting of at least 600 hours.

Upon completion of the degree, application may be made to the Kentucky Board of Licensure for Professional Counselors for credentialing as a Licensed Professional Counselor Associate (LPCA). An LPCA is required to maintain clinical supervision. After completion of the master's degree, passing the National Counselor Exam (NCE) and 4,000 hours of supervised experience, application may be made to the Board for

independent practice as a LPCC. For further information about state licensure, contact the Kentucky Board of Licensure for Professional Counselors at the following address: Kentucky Board of Licensure for Professional Counselors, P.O. Box 1360, Frankfort, KY 40602. 502-564-3296, ext. 226. View the [application for licensure](#) at the official [LPC website](#).

All applications and documentation must be received in the Board office 10 business days prior to the board meeting date to be put on the agenda. If this deadline is not met, consideration of the applicant's materials will automatically be added to the next month's agenda. Following board meetings, please allow up to two weeks for follow-up correspondence. Applicants, who have not received written correspondence from the board two weeks after the meeting, should feel free to call the board office. Please be advised that application and test results will not be given over the phone.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

All students in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs at Western Kentucky University are encouraged to join at least one professional organization before graduation from the program.

Counseling Associations

Within the American Counseling Association there are 19 divisions that enhance professional identity and are organized around specific interest and practice areas. The divisions provide specialized knowledge and satisfy the diverse needs of the counseling community. In addition, there are state or other counseling-related associations that provide counseling conferences, website information, and other supportive resources.

- **American Counseling Association (ACA).** The American Counseling Association is an organization of counselors, students, faculty and related members interested in, or working in, the counseling profession. The American Counseling Association is a not-for-profit, professional and educational organization that is dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession. Founded in 1952, ACA is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in various practice settings. By providing leadership training, publications, continuing education opportunities, and advocacy services to nearly 45,000 members, ACA helps counseling professionals develop their skills and expand their knowledge base. More information about ACA is available at their [official website](#).
- **Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education (AACE).** The Association for Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance, AAC was chartered in 1965. The purpose of AAC is to promote the effective use of assessment in the counseling profession.
- **Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA).** Chartered in 1986, AADA serves as a focal point for information sharing, professional development, and advocacy related to adult development and aging issues; addresses counseling concerns across the lifespan.

- **The Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC).** ACC is a forum for counselors, counselor educators, creative arts therapists and counselors in training to explore unique and diverse approaches to counseling. ACC's goal is to promote greater awareness, advocacy, and understanding of diverse and creative approaches to counseling.
- **American College Counseling Association (ACCA).** The American College Counseling Association is a national organization for persons in higher education settings whose professional identity is counseling and whose purpose is fostering student development. ACCA strives to support and enhance the practice of college counseling, to promote ethical and responsible professional practice, to promote communication and exchange among college counselors across service areas and institutional settings, to encourage cooperation with other organizations related to higher education and college student development, and to provide leadership and advocacy for the professional of Higher Education. The preceding was taken from the official [ACCA website](#).
- **Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG).** Originally the Military Educators and Counselors Association, ACEG was chartered in 1984. ACEG is dedicated to counseling clients and their families in local, state, and federal government or in military-related agencies.
- **Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES).** Originally the National Association of Guidance and Counselor Trainers, ACES was a founding association of ACA in 1952. ACES emphasizes the need for quality education and supervision of counselors for all work settings.
- **Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC).** ALGBTIC educates counselors to the unique needs of client identity development; and a non-threatening counseling environment by aiding in the reduction of stereotypical thinking and homophobia.
- **Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD).** Originally the Association of Non-White Concerns in Personnel and Guidance, AMCD was chartered in 1972. AMCD strives to improve cultural, ethnic and racial empathy and understanding by programs to advance and sustain personal growth.
- **American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA).** This association works to enhance mental health counseling through licensing, advocacy, education and professional development. The American Mental Health Counselors Association is the national organization representing licensed mental health counselors and state chapters with consistent standards of education, training, licensing, practice, advocacy and ethics. Mental health counseling is a distinct profession with national standards for education, training and clinical practice. View the official [AMHCA website](#).

- **Association for Play Therapy (APT).** The association was established in 1982 to promote the value of play and play therapy. Play therapy is becoming an increasingly popular modality with which mental health professionals apply the therapeutic powers of play to help clients of all ages resolve their psychological problems or achieve optimum mental health. The association sponsors research, continuing education, and credentialing programs to advance the professional knowledge and skills of its 4,500 member psychologists, social workers, counselors, and marriage and family therapists in 20 nations. APT promotes the value of play, play therapy, and credentialed play therapists by advancing the psychosocial development and mental health of all people and sponsoring and supporting those programs, services, and related activities that promote the:
 - Public understanding and appreciation of play and play therapy
 - Effective practice of play therapy through research, education and training, and support
 - Recognition, incorporation, and preservation of diversity in play and play therapy
 - Development and maintenance of a strong professional organization that satisfies this mission

The preceding was taken from the official [APT website](#).

- **American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA).** ARCA is an organization of rehabilitation counseling practitioners, educators, and students who are concerned with enhancing the development of people with disabilities throughout their life span and in promoting excellence in the rehabilitation counseling profession's practice, research, consultation, and professional development.
- **American School Counselors Association (ASCA).** ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. It provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to more than 27,000 professional school counselors around the globe. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a worldwide nonprofit organization based in Alexandria, VA. Founded in 1952, ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, personal/social and career development so they not only achieve success in school but are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. The association provides professional development, publications and other resources, research and advocacy to more than 15,000 professional school counselors around the globe. The preceding was taken from the official [ASCA website](#).
- **Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC).** Originally the National Catholic Guidance Conference, ASERVIC was chartered in 1974. ASERVIC is devoted to professionals who believe that spiritual, ethical, religious, and other human values are essential to the full development of the person and to the discipline of counseling.

- **Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW).** Chartered in 1973, ASGW provides professional leadership in the field of group work, establishes standards for professional training, and supports research and the dissemination of knowledge.
- **Counseling Association for Humanistic Education and Development (C-AHEAD).** C-AHEAD, a founding association of ACA in 1952, provides a forum for the exchange of information about humanistically-oriented counseling practices and promotes changes that reflect the growing body of knowledge about humanistic principles applied to human development and potential.
- **Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ).** CSJ is a community of counselors, counselor educators, graduate students, and school and community leaders who seek equity and an end to oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, counselors, families, communities, schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems.
- **International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC).** Originally the Public Offender Counselor Association, IAAOC was chartered in 1972. Members of IAAOC advocate the development of effective counseling and rehabilitation programs for people with substance abuse problems, other addictions, and adult and/or juvenile public offenders.
- **International Association of Marriage & Family Counselors (IAMFC).** IAMFC is an organization that promotes excellence in the practice of couples and family counseling by creating and disseminating first-class publications and media products, providing a forum for exploration of family-related issues, involving a diverse group of dedicated professionals in its activities, and emphasizing collaborative efforts. One of the most fruitful collaborations is with the National Academy for Certified Family Therapists. IAMFC also encourages counselors to think systemically and to advocate for the worth and dignity of all families. The preceding was taken from the official [IAMFC website](#).
- **Kentucky Counseling Association (KCA).** The Kentucky Counseling Association is an organization of counseling professionals who work in educational, health care, residential, private practice, community agency, government, business, and industry settings. KCA is a state branch of the American Counseling Association. The preceding was taken from the official [KCA website](#).
- **Kentucky Mental Health Counselors Association (KMHC).** The purpose of this organization is to address the mental health needs of the Commonwealth by promoting Professional Clinical Counseling through public education, professional development and political activism. The KMHC is dedicated to the growth and development of Mental Health Counseling, networking with other counseling professionals, providing continuing education opportunities, promoting standards of excellence in the profession through effective licensure and advocating for the profession and mental health issues. The preceding was taken from the official [KMHC website](#).

- **Kentucky School Counselor Association (KSCA).** The Kentucky School Counseling Association is a branch of the American School Counselor Association. The KSCA Conference is held annually in March. View the official [KSCA website](#).
- **National Career Development Association (NCDA).** Originally the National Vocational Guidance Association, NCDA was one of the founding associations of ACA in 1952. The mission of NCDA is to promote career development for all people across the lifespan through public information, member services, conferences, and publications.
- **National Employment Counseling Association (NECA).** NECA was originally the National Employment Counselors Association and was chartered in 1966. The commitment of NECA is to offer professional leadership to people who counsel in employment and/or career development settings.
- **North American Society of Adlerian Psychology (NASAP).** The North American Society of Adlerian Psychology's mission is to foster and promote the research, knowledge, training, and application of Adlerian Psychology, maintaining its principles and encouraging its growth. Founded in 1952, NASAP thrives today as a society for a broad spectrum of professionals in the fields of education, psychology, psychiatry, counseling, social work, pastoral care, business, and family education. View the [NASAP website](#) for more information. In 2015, an affiliate of NASAP was formed, the Kentucky Tennessee Society of Adlerian Psychology (KTSAP). It is comprised of professionals across the region, as well as WKU students and graduates. Students whom are interested can contact Dr. Jill Duba Sauerheber, past-president of NASAP.

**All above information taken directly from the [ACA website](#)- unless otherwise noted*

Student Affairs Associations

- **American Association of Community Colleges (AACC).** The American Association of Community Colleges is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The Association represents more than 1,100 associate degree-granting institutions and some 10 million students. Formed in 1920, AACC is a national voice for community colleges, which marked their 100th year of service to the nation in 2001. AACC is leading the celebration of the colleges as they provide learning opportunities to their students and communities and the nation. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's community colleges. The association represents almost 1,200 two-year, associate degree-granting institutions and more than 11 million students. The preceding was taken from the official [AACC website](#).
- **American Association for Higher Education and Accreditation (AAHEA).** AAHE is an independent, membership-based, nonprofit organization dedicated to building human capital for higher education. AAHE is the source of choice for information about higher education on issues that matter in a democratic multi-racial society. AAHE promotes and disseminates examples of effective educational practice to address those issues. AAHE members are a national talent pool willing and ready to

share their expertise with colleagues in higher education, policymakers, media professionals and the public at large. AAHEA is an independent, membership-based, non-profit organization dedicated to building human capital for higher education. AAHEA is the source of choice for information about higher education on issues that matter in a democratic multi-racial society; and AAHEA promotes and disseminates examples of effective educational practice to address those issues. AAHEA members are an international talent pool willing and ready to share their expertise with colleagues in higher education, policymakers, media professionals, and the public at large. The preceding was taken from the official [AAHEA website](#).

- **American College Personnel Association (ACPA).** Headquartered in Washington, D.C. at the National Center for Higher Education, ACPA is the leading comprehensive student affairs association that advances student affairs and engages students for a lifetime of learning and discovery.
- **Association of College Administration Professionals (ACAP).** The majority of ACAP's college administration members are the vice presidents of business, student services, or academic affairs. The large numbers of members are controllers, directors of housing, physical plant, human resources, student activities, admissions, financial aid, security and safety, purchasing, college unions, food services, bookstores, auxiliary services, and many other college operations. The preceding was taken from the official [ACAP website](#).
- **Association of College and University Housing Officials International (ACUHOI).** The ACUHO-I is the preeminent professional association dedicated to supporting and promoting the collegiate residential experience by: creating value through services, information, and collegial relationships that are indispensable to its members; and continually changing and adapting in ways that assist members in meeting the needs of dynamic campus environments. We do this with the constant purpose of making a positive difference in the lives of members and those they serve. The Association of College and University Housing Officers - International is the preeminent professional association that supports and promotes the collegiate residential experience. We create value through education, avocation, and network connections. We help housing professionals meet the needs of dynamic campus environments. And we do this to help make a positive difference in the lives of our members and the students they serve. The preceding was taken from the official [ACUHOI website](#).
- **College Student Personnel Association of Kentucky (CPAK).** Formed in 1976, the College Personnel Association of Kentucky (CPAK) is a state division of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA). CPAK concerns itself with the professionals in the varied areas of student affairs, student services, campus life, academic support, and higher education administration throughout the state of Kentucky. Visit the [CPAK website](#) for more information.

- **College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR).** Founded more than 50 years ago, CUPA-HR serves more than 6,300 human resource (HR) administrators at nearly 1,600 colleges and universities as well as others interested in the advancement of human resources in higher education, including students and HR service providers. Committed to promoting the effective management and development of human resources in higher education, CUPA-HR offers many professional development opportunities. CUPA-HR provides dynamic leadership to the higher education human resources profession and the higher education community by delivering essential knowledge, resources and connections that enhance individual and institutional capacity and effectiveness. CUPA-HR members are higher education HR. Our membership is institution-based and includes close to 90 percent of all U.S. doctoral institutions, around 70 percent of all master's institutions, over 50 percent of all bachelor's institutions, and almost 500 two-year and specialized institutions. The preceding was taken from the official [CUPA-HR website](#).
- **National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA).** NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education is the leading voice for student affairs administration, policy, and practice, and affirms the commitment of the student affairs profession to educating the whole student and integrating student life and learning. With over 11,000 members at 1,400 campuses, and representing 29 countries, NASPA is the foremost professional association for student affairs administrators, faculty, and graduate and undergraduate students. NASPA members are committed to serving college students by embracing the core values of diversity, learning, integrity, collaboration, access, service, fellowship, and the spirit of inquiry. NASPA provides professional development, promotes exemplary practices, and is a leader in policy development. NASPA helps senior student affairs officers and administrators, student affairs professionals, faculty, and other educators enhance student learning and development. NASPA promotes quality and high expectations; advocates for students; encourages diversity; and excels in research and publication. The preceding was taken from the official [NASPA website](#).
- **Southern Association for College Student Affairs (SACSA).** As an independent, regional association, SACSA has as its mission to be an exemplary organization for practitioners, educators, and students engaged in the student profession. Founded in 1949, SACSA is a unique regional association with a specific niche in our 15-state service area. SACSA strives to meet the needs of a wide variety of student affairs professionals from graduate students, new practitioners and mid-managers to senior student affairs officers and graduate faculty. Throughout the year, SACSA members are able to benefit from a variety of professional development opportunities, networking, and subscription to our peer-reviewed journal. This mission will be accomplished by: providing accessible, on-going, comprehensive professional development activities and services of the highest quality for persons in all areas and levels in the student affairs profession, encouraging and recruiting a diverse group of promising individuals to enter the student affairs profession and addressing the career development needs of new and established professional in our membership, maintaining and strengthening our traditions of inclusiveness, diversity, collegiality, to member involvement, mentoring, and fostering professional networks as hallmarks of the Association, fostering the growth of the student affairs profession

by: a) offering opportunities for continuing professional education; b) articulating the role of student affairs in higher education; c) ensuring faculty and graduate student involvement in the Association; d) facilitating the integration of scholarship and practice; e) promoting professional standards; f) engaging in cooperative efforts with other professional organizations; and g) encouraging and supporting research. Identifying and analyzing issues concerning students, higher education, and the student affairs profession, and communicating student perspectives to various constituencies through media and other forums. The preceding was taken from the official [SACSA website](#).

GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Chi Sigma Iota

Chi Sigma Iota is the international honor society for students, professional counselors and counselor educators established at Ohio University in 1985. Our mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. Visit the [WKU chapter of Chi Sigma Iota \(Omega Kappa Upsilon\) website](#).

Student Affairs Graduate Association (SAGA)

The purpose of the Student Affairs Graduate Association (SAGA) is to promote the individual professional development of current and past students as well as alumni of Western's Student Affairs and student personnel services programs. In order to accomplish this purpose, SAGA sponsors professional networking opportunities, conferences, training workshops, an organizational newsletter, and other activities oriented toward career development. An ancillary purpose of SAGA is to promote Western's student affairs programs through sponsorship of various informational and recruitment activities. It is also a way to have fun! Visit the [SAGA webpage](#) for more information.

DEPARTMENT EXPECTATIONS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The major goals of graduate education in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs at WKU are to instill in each student an understanding of and a capacity for scholarship, critical thinking, academic rigor, and intellectual integrity. Faculty and graduate students have a shared obligation to work together to foster these goals through relationships that advance judicious inquiry, demonstrate individual and professional integrity, and encourage common respect. The following section outlines the expectations of graduate students in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs.

Communication with Faculty & Faculty Advisors

Graduate students must:

- Communicate regularly with faculty advisors about their progress in their programs.
- Initiate inquiry to advance understanding of the academic subjects and advances in the field.
- Speak regularly with the faculty advisor, particularly with concerns associated with progression in the graduate program.

Policies and Procedures

Graduate students must learn and act in accordance with the Graduate School and Departmental policies and procedures, specific program requirements, and standards of performance established by faculty articulated in the Department Graduate Student Handbook and their respective professional associations or organizations.

Assistantship Obligations

Graduate assistants are expected to fulfill the responsibilities and requirements of their appointments as stated in their contractual agreements with the University and the Department. They are responsible for understanding the content covered in the Department's Graduate Assistant Orientation held at the beginning of each year. Graduate Assistants must maintain a GPA of 3.0. If their GPA falls short of this at any time, their contract will be suspended.

Staying Informed

Graduate students enrolled in any of our graduate programs:

- Must review and understand the Graduate Handbook and ask questions that will promote their understanding of the academic requirements and financial particulars of their specific graduate program.
- Should accept the primary responsibility to be knowledgeable of the rules and regulations for the College of Education & Behavioral Sciences, the Department, and their degree program.
- Are expected to take responsibility for keeping informed of and completing all required paperwork and other degree obligations in a timely fashion.
- Must use their WKU email address. Instructors correspond with students throughout a course via their WKU email address. Begin using and accessing your WKU email on a consistent basis *now*.

Timeliness

Graduate students:

- Are expected to fulfill the requirements of their programs in a timely manner.
- Should set aside any intentions to "speed through the program." Depending on work schedules, family commitments, and other responsibilities, most will be able to complete their program in 2 to 4 years.
- Should consult with their advisor as they schedule courses for each semester.
- Should enroll in the coursework agreed to on their form C's to complete the degree plan.

Professional Behavior

Graduate students are expected to:

- Act in accordance with the American Counseling Association Ethical Standards.
- Exercise the utmost integrity in all facets of the graduate program.
- Behave in a professional and mature nature in all interactions with faculty, staff, and fellow students.
- Use personal laptops in class only for course-related work and taking notes.
- To turn off cell phones during classes.
- Maintain the appropriate standards to continue graduate studies.
- Submit documents that are the original work of the student. Plagiarism is not tolerated.

Graduate Student Development

Graduate students are expected to:

- Be open to personal growth and feedback.
- Develop competencies on which they will be evaluated. These include a commitment to personal growth and professional development; proficient communication skills; an ability to receive and utilize feedback, engage in reflective practice and accept personal responsibility; flexibility; and demonstration of ethical and legal behavior, as well as demonstration of a consideration of how their behaviors impact others.
- Treat all others with respect.

Academic Performance

Graduate studies should be viewed as professional development. Graduate students should learn how to apply what they have learned not only to their respective area of study but to social problems. The Department shares a commitment to social justice and advocacy. All graduate students are expected to develop standards of professional performance (see [Rubric](#) on pages 46-49).

Courses will include a statement on attendance in their syllabi. Students should be aware of the policy for each course and of the consequences for not following it. If there is no statement on attendance in the course syllabus, students should assume that attendance is required for all class meetings and ask the professor for a formal statement of the policy. Some courses have a policy about late or missing assignments. Students are responsible for understanding the policy, including the consequences for not following it. Specific directions for assignments might not always be concrete and may require personal reflection. For example, some of instructors may not provide specific rubrics for particular assignments. This is to encourage creativity, as well as to generate reflective thought and some degree of ownership in the final product of the assignment. Students should invest about 3-4 hours outside of class each week for each unit or credit of coursework they are enrolled in. For example, students can expect to invest approximately 9 hours a week outside the meeting time of a 3-credit hour course. During this time they can spend time studying the required reading and researching additional sources to help improve their knowledge and skill base.

Graduate Writing Standards

Graduate-level academic and professional writing is expected of all students in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs. All writing should be original thought, include appropriate depth of inquiry, and demonstrate both breadth and depth of understanding of the materials presented as well as the field of study. The writing standards used to judge students' professional writing are those included in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)*, Sixth Edition. It provides guidance on all aspects of the writing process and outlines specific information on how to format and write a paper including headings, quotations, spacing, and language. Your assignments must use APA format and writing style as presented in the current edition of the *Publication Manual American Psychological Association*.

Leaves of Absence

Graduate students must inform their faculty advisor of any leaves of absence that may be needed and discuss any implications a leave of absence will have on their program progression.

* Some information was adapted from TAMU's Distance Learning's *Orientation: Expectations for Graduate Study* and Virginia Tech Graduate School's *Building Graduate Community: Expectations for Graduate Study*.

PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Rubric for Professional Performance Review

EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. Respects divergent points of view

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not display openness to divergent points of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates openness to divergent points of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates openness to divergent points of view by engaging in conversations in which divergent points of view are being addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates defensiveness, frustration or other negative emotions when engaging in discussions in which different views from one's own are presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appears to listen openly to divergent points of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appears curious in learning about other points of view

2. Awareness of diversity and non-discrimination

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not appear to understand or engage in competencies in knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and often demonstrates competence in knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates competence in knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to diversity through observable behavior and interactions with others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not consistently seek opportunities to grow in multicultural awareness or competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appears open to engaging in opportunities that will build multicultural competencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages in opportunities to build multicultural competencies

3. Academic performance (coursework, participation)

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative grade does not meet graduate college standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative grade does meet graduate college standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cumulative grade exceeds graduate college standards
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignments are often of poor academic quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets minimal expectations for assigned work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets or exceeds academic expectations for assigned work

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments are often turned in late or not at all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assignments are usually turned in by due date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek faculty assistance early in the semester. Is proactive about academic performance
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4. Appropriate in-class behavior

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to listen to others without interrupting frequently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can listen to others but may have occasional difficulty tracking complex content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows ability to listen to others with patience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to glean themes and primary elements from listening to other students, clients or professors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to articulate primary content after listening to others but synthesis sometimes lacks complexity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to extract salient content after listening to others and offer complex analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone of voice, verbal sharing and nonverbals are often inappropriate for the setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone of voice, verbal sharing and nonverbals are adequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tone of voice, verbal sharing and nonverbals are appropriate and facilitative

5. Collaboration, contribution to positive environment

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not participate in class discussions; shows little evidence of having prepared for class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically comes to class prepared to discuss required reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always comes to class prepared to take part in rich discussion about the required reading and/or homework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May engage in disrespectful or unthoughtful ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in class discussions; maintains a positive demeanor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always participates; and does so respectfully of others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not appear to work well with others; other students have voiced concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically works well with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives good feedback from others related to how s/he collaborates

6. Reflective practice

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows little or no effort to reflect on past academic or clinical work outside of class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to reflect on past academic or clinical performance, however not consistently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a thoughtful commitment to reflecting on past academic or clinical work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to offer insights on the success of or improvement to past academic or clinical performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to glean some insights on their previous successes or need for improvement after reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently reveals insights regarding personal successes and areas for improvement after reflection ideas for

		improvement after engaging in reflective practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays little or no awareness of the value of reflective practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some awareness of the value of reflective practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates awareness of the value of reflective practice

7. Accepts personal responsibility

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwilling to admit mistakes or examine own contribution to the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to examine personal responsibility with an issue with some direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in dialectic thought when
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues with others in order to remove themselves from the problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was accurate and honest in reviewing their role and others roles in problematic situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting of personal mistakes and responded to them as an opportunity for personal growth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently blames others for or avoids self-examination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially defensive but with time, open to self-examination regarding concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoids blaming others in favor of self-examination

8. Personal & professional growth

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardly engages or shows little interest in personal development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is willing to engage in some personal development opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks and attends additional personal development opportunities (i.e., counseling, supervision)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardly engages or shows little interest in professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is willing to engage in some professional development opportunities outside of the classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks and attends additional professional development opportunities outside of the classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardly engages faculty or instructors regarding academic growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodically seeks consultation with faculty regarding academic growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks and meets with faculty regularly regarding academic development

9. Receive, give, and integrate feedback

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discourages feedback from others through defensive or manipulative behavior 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally receptive to receiving feedback from others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invites and welcomed feedback from others frequently

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to demonstrate ability to incorporate feedback successfully 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some indication they had incorporated feedback into views and behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows evidence of commitment to incorporating feedback into own view and behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fails to acknowledged the value of feedback in their personal and professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to verbalize the value of feedback but not always behaviorally invested in the practice of giving and receiving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly demonstrates appreciation for the value of giving and receiving feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates more eagerness to give rather than receive feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates more eagerness to receive rather than give feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates eagerness to both give and receive feedback

10. Ethical & legal boundaries

DOES NOT MEET CONSISTENTLY MEET CRITERIA	MEETS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY	EXCEEDS CRITERIA CONSISTENTLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardly follows the ethical code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows the ethical code 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of, understands and follows the ethical code
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior is not consistent with moral principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adheres to basic professional moral principles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of, understands and follows professional moral principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavior is not consistent with legal statues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains practice within the law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of, understands and follows related legal statues

Adapted from William and Mary (2010) *Criteria for Professional Performance Evaluation*
DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING & STUDENT AFFAIRS
Western Kentucky University

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY FORM

I understand that I am responsible for reading and comprehending the information in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs Graduate Program Handbook.

I have reviewed these materials carefully, and if I have questions concerning these materials, I will ask for clarification in the orientation meeting or from my advisor. I also understand that I am responsible for asking any questions or acquiring any clarification about the contents of the handbook.

I have downloaded a copy of the Department of Counseling & Student Affairs Graduate Program Handbook and understand that I am responsible for the information presented therein. By signing below, I verify that I have read and now understand the information and policies included in the Graduate Student Handbook. I also verify that I have successfully completed the plagiarism tutorial and now understand its content.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

(Signed form will be filed in student record.)

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