

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY (WCU)
Program Information for Counseling Program Interviewees
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING (M.S.) and
SCHOOL COUNSELING (M.A.Ed.)

Both master's degrees in counseling are CACREP-Accredited
The WCU Counseling Program is part of the Department of Human Services,
College of Education and Allied Professions, and
Housed at WCU-Biltmore Park (in Asheville)

PROGRAM FACULTY

The counseling program faculty include:

- Dr. Christine Berger
- Dr. Russ Curtis
- Dr. Melodie Frick, Counseling Program Director
- Dr. Loidaly González-Rosario
- Dr. Melissa Mecadon-Mann
- Dr. Lisen Roberts
- Dr. Nancy Valverde

PROGRAM CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The WCU counseling program specialty areas of clinical mental health counseling and school counseling are accredited by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Each specialty area is 60-credit-hours. CACREP establishes a core curriculum for all students and sets standards for field placement requirements.

SCHOOL/CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING REQUIRED CORE COURSES:

- COUN 602: Professional Orientation and Ethics
- COUN 605: The Helping Relationship
- COUN 610: Family Counseling
- COUN 615: Cross Cultural Counseling
- COUN 617: Addictions Counseling
- COUN 625: Developmental Perspectives in Counseling
- COUN 630: Theories and Techniques of Counseling
- COUN 633: Crisis Intervention and Trauma Therapy
- COUN 635: Group Methods in Counseling
- COUN 640: Assessment in Counseling
- COUN 650: Career Development
- COUN 667: The DSM and

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING ALSO REQUIRES:

- COUN 623: Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- Three counseling electives
- COUN 686: Practicum in Counseling, a one-semester 150-hour field placement
- COUN 687: Internship in Counseling, a one-semester 600-hour field placement.

SCHOOL COUNSELING ALSO REQUIRES:

- COUN 620: Counseling Children and Adolescents
- COUN 645: Consultation and Collaboration
- COUN 660: School Counseling Program Development
- One counseling elective
- COUN 686: Practicum in Counseling, a one-semester 150-hour field placement
- COUN 687: Internship in counseling, a one-semester 600-hour field placement
- The Professional School Counseling subtest of the PRAXIS II exam is also required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for NC state licensure as a school counselor.

Graduating students in either specialty area qualify to pursue the post-master's Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor (LCMHC) credential in North Carolina, and post-licensure counseling degrees with similar titles in other states. Note: Beginning July 1, 2025, the NC LCMHC licensing board will require anyone with a school counseling master's degree to also have completed an Introduction to Clinical Mental Health Counseling course and a 600-hour Internship in a clinical site, both of which can be completed while a current student or post-graduation. The National Counselor Exam (NCE) is required for NC licensure as LCMHC-Associate (initial level) and LCMHC (full licensure) and may be taken during students' final semester because of our accreditation.

A limit of 6-hours of graduate counseling course credits can be transferred into the counseling program with the approval of program faculty. It is not recommended to transfer coursework within the counseling core as all students are required to complete comprehensive exams based on WCU's core counseling curriculum.

FIELD PLACEMENTS

Practicum requires a minimum of 8-10 hours weekly at a mental health or school site for one semester. Practicum requires 1-hour of individual supervision per week and 3-hours of group supervision every other week, both at Biltmore Park. Practicum is a 3-hour credit course and limited to six students per course section. Sour au(co)-TT0 1 Tf0.0w T(F)4o3 (s)-1 (w)2 (e)-6 (e)4 (.)-4 (r)-

the faculty. Typically, internship is an unpaid experience. Professional liability insurance is required for all students enrolled in internship. It is possible for students to complete a split internship at 20-hours weekly for two semesters.

LOCATION AND TIMING OF CLASSES

All WCU counseling courses (and program events) are at the WCU Biltmore Park instructional site in Asheville, except for graduation which is held on the main campus in Cullowhee. Counseling classes are taught in 3-hour blocks typically in the evening, 5:30 - 8:20 p.m. When a

to student learning outcomes, academic performance, clinical skill development, and professional and personal development throughout the program. Typical points of review for students are during the admission process, near the end of each Fall and Spring semesters, and at the point of application to practicum and internship.

A comprehensive exam that covers designated core counseling courses is required. Students take the comprehensive exam as they have completed, or are completing, core courses, and typically with internship. Most students take the National Counselor Exam (NCE) the same semester of the comprehensive exam.

FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available in the form of graduate assistantships, Graduate School awards, scholarships, and student loans. Applicants interested in financial aid assume responsibility for applying for financial assistance, and may find more information here:

<https://www.wcu.edu/apply/graduate-school/tuition-and-funding/index.aspx>

Graduate Assistantships in Counseling

A limited number of graduate assistantships (GAs) are available for full-time counseling students who maintain a 3.0 GPA. **Graduate assistantships may require 1-2 days per week on WCU's main campus in Cullowhee.** GA applications will be provided to candidates invited to interview with us.

Graduate assistantships are awarded for Fall and Spring annually; assistantships are not available during the semester in which a student is enrolled in internship. There are three general types of graduate assistantships: Teaching-focused; Office-work-focused; and Faculty/Research-focused.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships. The counseling program is responsible for COUN 140: Skills for College, a 1-credit course for first-year WCU undergraduates. Graduate teaching assistants in counseling are independent instructors for these courses. COUN 140 meets for 1 hour, 1 - 2 days per week in the Fall semester on the WCU main campus in Cullowhee.

