

COUNSELING PROGRAM MISSION & OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Counselor Education Program at the University of South Dakota is to graduate competent and ethical professional counselors. Master's and doctoral graduates serve diverse populations and the profession locally, nationally, and internationally as counselors, counselor educators, and clinical supervisors. The doctoral program prepares graduates to become the profession's next generation of leaders. Located in the city of Vermillion, the Counselor Education Program is housed within the School of Education and maintains a special commitment to preparing professional counselors to work in rural settings.

The Counselor Education Program is designed to graduate counselors who see themselves first and foremost as professional counselors, regardless of chosen specialization or degree program. Thus, graduate students are expected to demonstrate a commitment to professional and personal development. Moreover, graduate students demonstrate leadership by advocating for the profession, embracing diversity, and offering service to others. Graduate students will be engaged learners who meet and aspire to exceed the CACREP-based professional competencies and performance standards.

As role models, Counseling Program faculty members dedicate themselves to excellence and ethical practice in teaching, research, scholarship, clinical practice, leadership, and service. The curriculum adheres to a reflective decision-making model of training. Professional and personal growth are interrelated and encouraged through experiences that promote awareness of self and one's impact on others. The curriculum underscores the importance of supervised clinical experiences. To ensure excellence throughout the curriculum and our identity as professional counselors, the program maintains CACREP accreditation.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The mission of the Counselor Education Program informs our program objectives. Collectively, the intent and purpose of the program objectives is to graduate competent and ethical professional counselors.

1. Foster a learning community where students can develop professionally and personally, one respectful of their rights, responsibilities, dignity, and inherent worth by emphasizing excellence in teaching.
2. Create a culture of accountability where students are expected to maintain high professional standards for ethical behavior, clinical skill development, academic performance, interpersonal relationships, professional attitudes, and professional character through publishing program expectations and by reviewing student progress and providing feedback.
3. Deliver curricular experiences for students to learn and demonstrate knowledge of the eight-core areas common designated by CACREP Standards: (a) professional counseling orientation and ethical practice; (b) social and cultural diversity; (c) human growth and development; (d) career development; (e) helping relationships; (f) group work; (g) assessment; and (h) research and program evaluation.

4. Engage students in cycles of thought and action based on theoretical, ethical, and current bases of knowledge in order to become reflective decision-makers throughout the curriculum.
5. Engage students in experiences emphasizing that professional and personal growth are interrelated and encouraged through experiences that promote awareness of self and one's impact on others.
6. Communicate curricular and extracurricular experiences that encourage students to engage in leadership roles by advocating for the profession, embracing diversity, and offering service to others.
7. Deliver supervised clinical experiences that are grounded in theoretical perspectives that guide professional and personal development throughout the clinical course sequence.
8. Develop effective oral and written communication skills in students consistent with those used in professional settings through regular evaluation and feedback.
9. Develop skills students need to effectively use technology in counseling settings through curricular experiences.

SPECIALTY AREA OBJECTIVES

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH

In addition to the overarching Counselor Education Program mission, the mission of the master's program with a specialization in clinical mental health counseling is to educate and train entry-level professional counselors to work in agency/community mental health centers, private practice, correctional facilities, career centers, hospitals, government/military entities, college campuses, and crisis centers. The USD Counseling Program, in accordance with its mission to ensure excellence throughout the curriculum, is accredited under the 2009 standards through March 2024. However, the program is structured to meet the 2016 standards.

The 60 credit hour specialization provides curricular and extracurricular experiences, as well as, supervised practica and internships, to educate and train professional clinical mental counselors. Clinical mental health counselors must demonstrate proficiencies related to the mental health environment such as etiology, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and the prevention of mental and emotional disorders. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will be eligible to apply for the

Professional Counseling Specialty:

A Professional Counseling Specialty is narrowly focused, requiring advanced knowledge in the field founded on the premise that all Professional Counselors must first meet the requirements for the general practice of professional counseling.

Adopted by the ACA Governing Council, October 17-19, 1997

The Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling specialty areas are currently CACREP accredited under 2009 standards until March 2024. However, the program is structured to meet the 2016 standards.

South Dakota professional counseling licenses (Licensed Professional Counselor and/or Licensed Professional Counselor-Mental Health) and as a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC). The South Dakota professional counseling licensure process requires at least 2000 hours post masters of supervised counseling experience.

The clinical mental health counseling specialization objectives incorporate those for the Counseling Program. Consistent with 2009 CACREP Standards for Clinical Mental Health Counseling Programs, the following program objectives have been established:

- Identify and apply the knowledge, skills, and professional competencies identified in the CACREP standards for **foundations** of clinical mental health counseling. Students will:
 - Summarize the history and philosophy of clinical mental health counseling efforts, present configurations of clinical mental health intervention, and anticipated trends;
 - Identify, interpret, and apply the relevant ethical and legal guidelines, as well as engage in the ethical and legal practice of counseling in a clinical mental health setting;
 - Identify the roles and functions of clinical mental health counselors in various clinical mental health counseling agencies.
 - Demonstrate proficiency in maintaining professional relationships between and among counselors and other professionals, including interdisciplinary treatment teams;
 - Describe preparation standards, licensing, credentialing, and the professional identity of clinical mental health counselors;
 - Distinguish among a variety of models, theories, and principles related to clinical mental health counseling and supervision;
 - Discuss the potential for substance abuse disorders to mimic or coexist with a various medical and psychological disorders;
 - Identify professional issues affecting clinical mental health counselors, including the need to advocate for the profession;
 - Discuss the policies, laws, legislation, right to practice, management of clinical mental health services, accountability, and other issues relevant to clinical mental health counseling;
 - Identify financing and regulatory processes that affect and improve service delivery of clinical mental health counseling;
 - Recognize the impact of and develop responses to crisis, disasters, and other trauma-causing events; and
 - Describe the operation of an emergency management system within clinical mental health counseling agencies and within the community

- Provide curricular experiences for students in the clinical mental health counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for **counseling, prevention, and intervention** in clinical mental health counseling. These curricular experiences include:
 - principles of mental health, including prevention, intervention, consultation, education, and advocacy, as well as the operation of programs and networks that promote mental health in a multicultural society;
 - etiology, the diagnostic process and nomenclature, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders;
 - models, methods, and principles of program development and service delivery (e.g., support groups, peer facilitation training, parent education, self-help);
 - disease concept and etiology of addiction and co-occurring disorders;
 - range of mental health service delivery such as inpatient, outpatient, partial treatment and aftercare including the clinical mental health counseling services network;
 - use of appropriate counseling strategies when working with clients with addiction and co-occurring disorders
 - principles of crisis intervention for people during crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events;
 - principles, models, and documentation formats of Biopsychosocial case conceptualization and treatment planning;
 - principles and practices of diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders to initiate, maintain, and terminate counseling;
 - recognizing the importance of family, social networks, and community systems in the treatment of mental and emotional disorders;
 - applying multicultural competencies to clinical mental health counseling involving case conceptualization, diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention of mental and emotional disorders;
 - promoting human development, wellness, and mental health through prevention, education, and advocacy activities;
 - use of appropriate, culturally responsive individual, couple, family, group, and systems modalities for initiating, maintaining, and terminating counseling;
 - ability to use procedures for assessing and managing suicide risk;
 - current record-keeping standards related to clinical mental health counseling; and
 - ability to recognize his or her own limitations as a clinical mental health counselor and to seek supervision or refer clients when appropriate

- Provide curricular experiences for students in the clinical mental health counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for **diversity and advocacy** for clinical mental health counselors. These curricular experiences include:
 - understanding how living in a multicultural society affects clients who are seeking clinical mental health counseling services;
 - effects of racism, discrimination, sexism, power, privilege, and oppression on one's own life and career and those of the client;
 - current literature that outlines effective theories, approaches, strategies, and techniques when working with specific populations of clients with mental and emotional disorders;
 - knowledge of local, state, and national policies that impact the quality and delivery of mental health services;
 - effective strategies for client advocacy and how to influence public policy and government relations on local, state, and national levels to enhance equity, increase funding, and promote programs that affect the practice of clinical mental health counseling;
 - implications of internalized oppression and institutional racism, as well as the historical and current political climate regarding immigration, poverty, and welfare;
 - knowing of and utilizing community resources to make appropriate referrals; and
 - demonstrates the ability to adapt to and modify counseling systems, theories, techniques, and interventions to be culturally appropriate for diverse populations
- Provide curricular experiences for students in the clinical mental health counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for **assessment** for clinical mental health counselors. These curricular experiences include:
 - principles and models of assessment, case conceptualization, theories of human development, and concepts of normalcy and psychopathology leading to diagnoses and appropriate counseling treatment plans;
 - models and approaches to clinical evaluation and their appropriate uses, including diagnostic interviews, mental status examinations, symptom inventories, and psychoeducational and personality assessments;
 - basic classifications, indications, and contraindications of commonly prescribed psychopharmacological medications so that appropriate referrals can be made for medication evaluations and so that the side effects of such medications can be identified;
 - screening and assessment instruments for substance use disorders;

- practical application of levels of care based on assessment of dependence for appropriate placement in services relating to continuum of care;
 - comprehensive assessment interventions for diagnosis and treatment planning, with an awareness of cultural bias in the implementation and interpretation of assessment protocols;
 - demonstration of skill in conducting an intake interview, a mental status evaluation, a Biopsychosocial history, a mental health history, and a psychological assessment for treatment planning and caseload management; and
 - demonstration of skill in screening for aggression, and danger to self and/or others, as well as co-occurring mental disorders
- Provide curricular experiences for students in the clinical mental health counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for **research and evaluation** for clinical mental health counselors. These curricular experiences include:
 - understanding how to critically evaluate research relevant to the practice of clinical mental health counseling;
 - models of program evaluation for clinical mental health programs;
 - knowledge and application of relevant research, evidence-based treatments, and basic strategies for evaluating counseling outcomes in clinical mental health counseling;
 - developing measurable outcomes for clinical mental health counseling programs, interventions, and treatments; and
 - demonstrating an ability to analyze data to increase the effectiveness of clinical mental health counseling interventions and programs
 - Provide students an opportunity for a supervised counseling experience in clinical situations to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for **diagnosing** mental, emotional, and pathological disorders, including a supervised internship in a clinical mental health setting. These curricular experiences include:
 - Learning and understanding how to successfully navigate the diagnostic process including the decision process of determining a responsible diagnosis and understanding differential diagnosis using current diagnostic tools such as the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*;
 - describe the symptoms and clinical presentation of clients with mental and emotional impairments;

- actively evaluating diagnostic criteria for mental and emotional disorders and describing appropriate treatment modalities and goals within the continuum of care;
- understanding biases and irresponsible use of diagnostic criteria among multicultural populations;
- demonstrating the appropriate use of diagnostic criteria in relation to co-occurring disorders, crisis/disaster/trauma situations, and pathological impairments; and
- ability to conceptualize an accurate multi-axial diagnosis of disorders presented by a client in order to discuss with collaborating professionals.

SCHOOL COUNSELING

In addition to the overarching Counselor Education Program mission, the mission of the master's program with a specialization in school counseling is to educate and train entry-level professional school counselors to work in K-12 settings. The specialization in school counseling is accredited by CACREP and approved by the South Dakota Department of Education (DoE). While the program is accredited under 2009 standards, in Fall 2017 the program moved to 60 credit hours to meet 2016 standards. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates are eligible for certification as a South Dakota school counselor. Graduates are also eligible to apply for the Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC).

The school counseling specialization objectives incorporate those for the Counseling Program. Consistent with 2009 CACREP Standards for School Counseling Programs, the following program objectives have been established.

- Provide curricular experiences for students in the school counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for foundations of school counseling. These curricular experiences include:
 - history, philosophy, and trends of school counseling and educational systems;
 - components of a comprehensive school counseling program, including the ASCA model;
 - role, function, and professional identity of school counselors and ethical and legal issues related to counseling in a school setting, including leadership to enhance the learning environment;
 - role of multiculturalism, cultural sensitivity, gender sensitivity, sensitivity to special needs students and pluralism in the development and application of comprehensive guidance programs; and
 - state regulations regarding pre-K-12 counseling in South Dakota and in surrounding states in which graduates seek career positions in pre-K-12 educational settings.

- Provide curricular experiences for students in the school counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for contextual dimensions of school counseling. These curricular experiences include:
 - components of a comprehensive school counseling program and demonstrate the ability to plan activities consistent with the curriculum;
 - the relationship of classroom activities and methods to developmental levels as well as the academic, personal, social, and career needs of the students served;
 - ways to establish and maintain interpersonal relationships with other professional educators and referral sources characterized by a spirit of cooperation and a commitment to the well-being of students;
 - development of public relations and informational materials appropriate for use in educational settings; and
 - primary prevention, remediation, and crisis management strategies and programming.
 - Provide curricular experiences for students in the school counseling specialization to learn and demonstrate knowledge, skill, and professional competency in the CACREP standards for knowledge and skill requirements for school counselors. These curricular experiences include:
 - program development, implementation, and evaluation of comprehensive school counseling programs to improve effectiveness through results-based accountability measures;
 - counseling and guidance classroom activities; and
 - consultation within the school and larger community.
 - Provide students an opportunity for a supervised counseling experience in a school setting to more effectively meet the personal, social, educational, and vocational needs of children and adolescents, including a supervised internship in a school setting.
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