



"Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on earth."

-Muhammad Ali

THE ROLE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook describes policies and procedures relevant to students in the Master of Science degree program in Mental Health Counseling at St. John Fisher University. It is the responsibility of every student, whether full- or part-time, to know and observe the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, as well as any updates that are made available. Students are likewise expected to be familiar with policies and procedures outlined in the St. John Fish

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

M.S. in Mental Health Counseling

The following program mission statement was adopted by the faculty of the Mental Health Counseling program at St. John Fisher University and endorsed by the Advisory Board of the program in Spring 2015.

Mission

Building on the mission of St. John Fisher University, the Mental Health Counseling program's mission is to deliver personalized instruction to a diverse student body regarding essential counseling knowledge and skills, as well as facilitating the development and enhancement of personal qualities and characteristics necessary to become an outstanding professional mental health counselor.

Program Overview*

The Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling program at St. John Fisher University educates students to provide therapeutic mental health interventions in the community. This program prepares students for work in community agencies, clinics, hospitals, managed behavioral healthcare organizations, outpatient mental health programs, residential treatment and rehabilitation settings, employee assistance programs, substance abuse treatment programs, colleges, and private practice. The Mental Health Counseling program is designed to emphasize the strengths of individuals and families in order

ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

The M. S. degree program in Mental Health Counseling admitted its first entering class in Fall 2004,

MHC FACULTY AND STAFF

The MHC Program has six and a half full-time faculty and one part-time administrative assistant. Adjunct faculty serve in a part-time capacity as needed. We

Scott McGuinness, Ph.D., LMHC, Master CASAC

Assistant Professor

Office phone: 585-385-7222

email: Vmccguinness@sf.edu

Clinical and Professional Interests: Addiction counseling, harm reduction, clinical supervision, complimentary treatment methods.

Courses Taught:

GMHC 540 - Group Theory & Process/Group Activity

GMHC 550- Counseling Practicum

GMHC 650 - Counseling Internship

GMHC 510 – Counseling Theories

Gail H. Begley, MA, CPRP, LMHC, Master CASAC

Assistant Professor

Office phone: 585-385-5329

email: gbegley@sjf.edu

Clinical and Professional Interests: Mental Health screening, prevention and intervention, chemical dependency screening, prevention and intervention, and vocational rehabilitation.

Courses Taught:

GMHC 520 – Assessment in Counseling

GMHC 610 - Adult Lifestyle and Career Counseling

GMHC 630 – Substance Use Counseling

GMHC 575 – Research Methods and Program Review

Denise Curlee, Ph.D., LMHC

Director of Clinical Internships and Visiting Assistant Professor

email: dcurlee@sjf.edu

Clinical and Professional Interests: Mental Health skills, Sexual behavior treatment, Crisis and trauma counseling, family and couples counseling.

Courses Taught:

GMHC 500 – Mental Health Counseling as a Profession

GMHC 510 – Counseling Theories

GMHC 515 – Social and Cultural Diversity

GMHC 600 – Family and Partner Counseling

GMHC 620 – Crisis and Trauma Counseling

Elizabeth Shannon, MS, MS

PMHNP

PT Visiting Assistant Professor

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Courses Taught:

GMHC 525-Psychopathology and Differential Diagnosis

GMHC 585-Biological Foundations of Behavior and Psychopharmacological Interventions

ethical guidelines of the profession, the laws of New York State and the policies of St. John Fisher University.

Non-Matriculated

Students with baccalaureate degrees from accredited undergraduate colleges may register for graduate coursework on a space available basis. These individuals must submit a transcript from the undergraduate institution indicating completion of a bachelor's degree and must complete a Non-Matriculated Form. Non-matriculated status does not indicate acceptance into a graduate program at Fisher. Students may be non-matriculated for only one semester and enroll in no more than six credits, after which they must submit an application for admission. Financial aid is not available to non-matriculated students.

Continuous Matriculation

Maintenance of matriculation requires the successful completion of at least one graduate-level course at Fisher during the calendar year. Pre-approved transfer credit may be used to meet this requirement for continuous matriculation. Degree requirements existing at the time of admission will remain in force if the student maintains continuous matriculation. A student who discontinues enrollment for more than two semesters must apply for readmission. The student must meet any new requirements for admission, as well as any new requirements for the degree.

Personal Development

It is strongly recommended that, during the course of this program, students engage in a personal counseling experience as a client for a minimum of six individual sessions. Students may avail themselves of the free counseling services offered through the St. John Fisher University Wellness Center, or may choose to seek services for a fee off-campus.

Program Objectives

Upon graduation, the successful student in the Mental Health Counseling program will be able to:

Demonstrate professional skills and personal qualities required for working as an effective counselor in an interdisciplinary mental health setting.

Demonstrate a variety of differential diagnostic assessment skills consistent with the most current diagnostic manual.

Demonstrate the ability to use a diverse range of evidence-based intervention strategies.

Develop appropriate intervention plans based upon knowledge of culturally relevant variables in client care, including ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic levels, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status.

Demonstrate professional behavior consistent with ethical guidelines of Mental Health Counseling professional organizations and regulatory agencies.

PROGRAM CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS AND COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Curriculum

It is recommended, but not required, that students have completed undergraduate courses in Abnormal Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Research Methods, Theories of Personality, Statistics, and Tests and Measurement.

Required Courses

Course #	Course Name	Credits
GMHC 500	Mental Health Counseling as a Profession	3
GMHC 510	Counseling Theories and Strategies	3
GMHC 515	Social and Cultural Diversity	3
GMHC 520	Assessment in Counseling	3
GMHC 525	Psychopathology and Differential Diagnosis	3
GMHC 530	Treatment Planning and Intervention	3
GMHC 540	Group Theory and Process	3
GMHC 550	Counseling Practicum	3
GMHC 575	Research and Program Evaluation	3
GMHC 585	Biological Foundations of Behavior and Psychopharmacological Interventions	3
GMHC 590	Child and Adolescent Disorders	3
GMHC 600	Family and Partner Counseling	3
GMHC 603	Human Development in Counseling	3
GMHC 610	Adult Lifestyle and Career Counseling	3
GMHC 620	Crisis and Trauma Counseling	3
GMHC 630	Substance Use Counseling	3
GMHC 650	Counseling Internship	9

One elective:

ATOD Topics in Counseling (Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs)
Complimentary Treatment Methods
Thesis

When students fail to adequately exhibit one or more of the above-noted essential behaviors, counselor educators have an ethical obligation to address these circumstances (see American Counseling Association [ACA] Code of Ethics, sections F.6-F.9).

3. **Grievance Procedure:** The student has one week from issuance of the MHC Academic Appeals Committee's decision to appeal this decision. This appeal must be in writing and be directed to the Dean of the School of Nursing. In accordance with the appeals process outlined in the St. John Fisher University Graduate Catalog, should a student wish to appeal the Dean of the School of Nursing's decision, the student may submit subsequent appeals to the Provost and the Academic Standing Committee of the Graduate Program Council. See the Graduate Catalog for further information.

Should a referral for services be deemed appropriate, students may access campus resources including:

1. SJF Counseling Center- found in the Health and Wellness Center- 385-8280;
2. Academic skills enhancement is available through the Writing Center- (385-8185) and the Math Center (385-8407);
3. Career Services- 385-8050;
4. Campus Ministry- 385-8368

SPECIALIZED FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT, INSURANCE, AND TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

MHC Training Lab Policies

next person can come in. (If you check the sign-up calendars, you'll know if someone is immediately before or after you.)

3. Please remember to keep the main light switch in the control room OFF – otherwise people in the meeting rooms can see you, and this is very distracting.

4. Be aware that if you wear white when you're in the control room; the light reflects off of white clothing and again, the "clients" can see you moving around in the control room.

5. If other people are recording sessions in other meeting rooms at the same time, please turn the volume all the way down on the video monitor (NOT the control deck), or plug in the headphones to video monitor. OtherrefaL4 (ont)(1h (he)4 7a0.05T0 1 Tf, (vi)- (s)-1 (1ve)4 (r)-o(dow)2(opl)-2 (e)4 (i)-2 (n t)-2

Devices

Unless a student's site has required recording equipment, all student recordings must be:

1. Digital (this includes phones, tablets, computers, digital recorders, and flash drives)
2. Password Protected
3. Of good audio and/or video quality (preferably more than 6 megapixels)

Data Storage and Transfer

The *ACA Code of Ethics* and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) require that all devices with client data be:

1. Password protected
2. Never posted online at any sites or uploaded to cloud sites
3. Properly deleted and disposed of in the appropriate time frame relevant to the nature of the recorded materials

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CLINICAL INSTRUCTION

1. Overview

Clinical instruction refers to 700 clock hours (a total of 12 of the 60 credit hours required to graduate from the program) of supervised experiences that are part of a student's practicum and internship. Often called "field work," these experiences constitute the professional practice component of the Mental Health Counseling Program for students who have met

doing case conceptualization to demonstrate understanding of clients from a theoretical perspective, and beginning to identify one's own theoretical orientation. Students in practicum will typically work with a small number of clients selected by their site supervisor and they will do both individual and group work. Clinical observation and co-counseling will dominate the early part of the student's practicum. Independent counseling experiences will occur more frequently toward the end of practicum. Site and faculty supervision will be consistent and extensive during practicum. The faculty will supervise each student during 90 minutes of group supervision and 1 hour of individual or triadic supervision throughout practicum. Students are also expected to have one hour of supervision at their practicum site.

b) Requirements. In order to be placed in a clinical setting for practicum, a student must have earned a GPA of 3.0 or higher in all course work and have completed the following core courses:

- GMHC 500 - Mental Health Counseling as a Profession
- GMHC 510 - Counseling Theories and Strategies
- GMHC 515 – Social and Cultural Diversity
- GMHC 520 - Assessment in Counseling
- GMHC 525 - Psychopathology and Differential Diagnosis
- GMHC 530 - Treatment Planning and Intervention
- GMHC 540 - Group Theory and Process

In addition to this academic requirement, readiness for placement in practicum will be based on a determination by faculty members that the student demonstrates personal qualities and characteristics that are widely accepted in the counseling profession as the foundation of effective counseling. These qualities include, but are not limited to, flexibility, respectfulness, receptivity to feedback, capacity to listen, appropriate self-disclosure, organization, reliability, commitment to excellence and wellness and professional integrity. These qualities and characteristics are observable in the attitudes and behaviors that students demonstrate in written assignments, classroom discussions, peer group projects, role plays, and other interactions with faculty, staff and other students. These qualities and characteristics have been defined in behavioral terms and organized into a measurement instrument, Personal Qualities Assessment

students. The Counseling Practicum is a three credit hour course with a maximum of **six** students in each section. Students are expected to spend a minimum of 100 clock hours to fulfill the requirements of the practicum. This includes time spent being oriented to agency policies and procedures, observing the provision of clinical services, providing clinical services and engaging in other activities such as record-keeping, case conferences, in-service trainings and supervision with site supervisor and faculty instructor. A minimum of 40 hours must be spent providing “direct service” which is defined as “interactions with clients that includes the application of counseling, consultation or human development skills.”

4. The Counseling Internship Experience (GMHC 650)

- a) Description.** As the capstone experience of mental health counselor training, the

experience is 9 credit hours of coursework that extends over three semesters. Students register for three credit hours of internship per semester. The minimum

6. Agreement between St. John Fisher University and Affiliated Organization

A formal agreement is established with all organizations and programs before any student is allowed to enter a field experience at that facility. The Agreement details the purpose and mutual responsibilities and expectations of the University and Organization. It is signed by the Vice President for Financial Affairs of the University and the Director of Clinical Internships for the Mental Health Counseling Program. The Organization's Executive Director or the person responsible for contracts will sign on behalf of the Organization. This Agreement covers most of the essential elements that are contained in this section of the Student Handbook.

Once an agreement is reached between the student, the site supervisor, and the Director of Clinical Internships regarding a placement, including start and end dates and other logistical details of the field work, the student may not make any changes to that agreement without the approval of both the Director of Clinical Internships and the assigned site supervisor. Thus, communication between students, faculty and site supervisors, and the Director of Clinical Internships is essential.

7. Coordination of Placements

The program has designated a faculty member to serve as the Director of Clinical Internships (DCI). In this role, the faculty member will establish a formal relationship (see Agreement) with the organization. Discussions with key organization staff will determine that the organization is able to provide students with supervised clinical experiences that meet the learning objectives of practicum or internship. A key responsibility of the DCI is ensuring that the organization is able to assign site supervisors who meet education and experience requirements that are consistent with the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This is described below.

Students are not expected to locate their own placements and are prohibited from initiating contact with organization staff to set up a practicum or internship. The Director of Clinical Internships (DCI) is responsible for meeting with students to assess their preference for placement options (type of setting, population and clinical orientation of organization) and recommending appropriate organizations. However, if a student has a preference for placement in a particular organization or wishes to be supervised by a specific staff person in an organization, the student is invited to make this known to the DCI and this will be seriously considered in the student's placement decision. Similarly, if a student is interested in an organization or program with which there is not an existing formal agreement, the student should make that fact known and the establishment of a field placement site will be explored. The DCI will coordinate connections between sites and students and will make every effort to ensure that students have an opportunity to interview at a setting of preference, however, if a student refuses settings offered their options will be limited. Additionally, a student may only interview at one placement at a time and no others until a decision

8. Expectations of Students

These expectations apply to students who have met the academic prerequisites for practicum or internship and have consistently demonstrated the personal qualities and characteristics that are widely accepted in the profession as the foundation of effective counseling. The procedures for assessing these characteristics have been described earlier in this Handbook.

a) Pre-placement activities

Meet with the DCI or other Internship placement organization during or having

b)

Meet with the DCI or other Internship placement organization during or having

Provide students with the opportunity to videotape or audiotape a sample of their counseling sessions for critique by them and by the faculty instructor. (see “Alternatives to Taping” – pg. 30)

Meet with students individually (or with one other student) for the equivalent of one hour of supervision each week to hear about and critique the student’s clinical work, address ethical and professional issues, assess readiness for assignment of more clients or more difficult clients and give feedback on the quality of record-keeping. The bases for supervisory feedback will include direct observation, critique of tapes, reports from other staff and review of chart notes.

Work cooperatively with students in an effort to help them meet the established requirements for total clock hours and minimum direct care hours as indicated on

10. Requirements, Orientation and Responsibilities of Faculty Instructors

- a) **Requirements and Orientation.** Each regular or adjunct program faculty member who provides individual or group supervision in the practicum or internship component of clinical instruction must have:

a doctoral degree and/or appropriate clinical preparation, preferably from an accredited counselor education program;
relevant professional experience and competence in counseling; and
relevant training and supervision.

It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Internships to meet with all adjunct faculty members to orient them to their role of faculty instructor of practicum and internship students and provide on-going support and supervision.

- b) **Responsibilities.** The responsibilities vary based on whether the student is in a practicum or internship. These differences are noted.

Prepare and disseminate, each semester, a course syllabus for practicum or internship that includes a description and learning objectives, assignments and due dates, evaluation and grading and other course requirements as stipulated by the University.

Provide individual (or triadic*) supervision for one hour per week. This is required during practicum and is optional during internship. It is the time and place to review and critique tapes and to help the student tie together theory and practice. Faculty supervision should complement the supervision occurring at the agency site.

(*Triadic supervision consists of one faculty instructor meeting with two students at one time.)

Provide group supervision for one and one-half hours per week with up to 10 students. This is required throughout the time the student is in the field placement (practicum and internship). The faculty instructor is expected to facilitate peer learning as well as provide didactic instruction when appropriate.

Critique audio and/or video tapes and documentation of clinical services. The student will be provided with oral and/or written feedback about areas of strength and areas that need improvement or further development.

Provide an orientation and regularly communicate with site supervisors. This includes describing the core learning objectives for the placement each semester and any specific goals for the assigned student. Additionally, the faculty instructor will establish with the site supervisor a plan for communication about the progress of the student. This will include scheduled visits to the site to meet with the



program of the organization) cannot be a setting in the organization in which the student was a regular employee prior to the beginning of the student's placement in that setting; (c) the site supervisor cannot be the student's employment supervisor.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

We encourage students to participate in professional associations relevant to the work of a mental health counselor. There are a number of helpful national, regional, state-wide, and local organizations which may be of interest. Student membership rates are often quite affordable, and this is a great way to expand your training options in areas of specialization and also to begin networking for future career opportunities. A few of these organizations, with their web address, mission statements and student membership fees (accurate as of July 2009⁶), are outlined below.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

ACA - American Counseling Association

The American Counseling Association is a not-for-profit, professional and educational organization

NYMHCA is the advocacy organization representing the clinical counselors of New York State. We worked to obtain licensure, and our continuing role is to protect and enhance the rights of counselors to practice our profession.

NYACES – state affiliate of ACES (see above)

NYASGW – affiliate of ASGW (see above)

REGIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

Mental Health Counselors of Greater Rochester (affiliate of NYMHCA)

<http://www.mentalhealthcounselors.org/>

Mental Health Counselors of Greater Rochester (affiliate of NYMHCA) exists to advance the profession of Mental Health Counseling and clinical excellence through education, networking and peer support. We are committed to enhancing interdisciplinary relationships and wellness.

NARACES – North Atlantic Regional affiliate of ACES (See above)

www.naraces.org

The purpose of the Association, in accordance with the purposes of ACES, shall be: to advance counselor education and supervision in order to improve guidance, counseling, and student personnel services in various settings of society; to be concerned with matters relevant to the training and supervision of counselors in all settings including schools, agencies, colleges, universities, and government settings; to be actively supportive of the accreditation of counselor education programs in an effort to improve the education and credentialing of counselors in the North Atlantic region; to be dedicated to the continuing professional development and renewal of its members through a regional conference which includes presentations designed to appeal to a broad spectrum of supervisors, practitioners and counselor educators.

RAGPS – Rochester Area Group Psychotherapy Society www.ragps.org

The Rochester Area Group Psychotherapy Society (RAGPS) is a community-based professional organization devoted to providing a forum for the expression of ideas and sharing of knowledge related to the theory and practice of group psychotherapy.

LICENSURE AS A MENTAL

COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVISING

Communications

MHC Program faculty and staff use 2 primary methods to contact students outside of class: email, and telephone. Please check

Appendix A

THE FINE PRINT: RULES AND OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF ABOUT HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THIS COURSE

A. Academic Integrity

All students, regardless of level or school, are responsible for following the St. John Fisher University Academic

Appendix B

Faculty Evaluation of Student for Readiness for Fieldwork: Personal Qualities Assessment

Purpose and Process

Faculty members of the Mental Health Counseling Program will have the opportunity to observe many personal qualities and characteristics of students that create a foundation for being a caring and effective counselor. These qualities are manifested in a student's attitudes and behaviors that are demonstrated in classroom discussions, peer group projects, reflective writings and other written assignments and in individual interactions with other students, faculty and staff. Moreover, faculty members have the responsibility to help students recognize and enhance the qualities and characteristics that facilitate effective counseling and to encourage and support them in making needed changes in attitudes and behaviors in order to become more effective helpers. Faculty members are in a unique position of noticing when personal growth and development is occurring, when students are making efforts to recognize and change their attitudes and behaviors and when they are struggling to change.

Therefore, in addition to evaluating a student's academic performance for readiness to engage in fieldwork, faculty members are also expected to evaluate each student's personal qualities as a basis for recommending placement in a fieldwork site. Faculty members who are familiar with the student will evaluate the student on a core set of personal qualities. The qualities that have been selected for evaluation are considered relevant to the practice of counseling regardless of one's theoretical orientation or preferred clinical population or practice setting. These qualities are defined in behavioral terms to allow for rating on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high). Students who consistently demonstrate attitudes and behaviors that meet the criteria of a specific quality will merit high ratings (4 or 5) in that area. Students who behave in ways that do not consistently reflect a specific quality, as defined, will merit low ratings (1 and 2).

Those students who earn faculty ratings of 4 or 5 on most personal qualities (with no rating lower than a 3) will be considered ready for placement. Those students who are rated less than 3 in two or fewer personal qualities categories, but have demonstrated improvement, will need to show further improvement by way of a remediation plan in order to be recommended for a fieldwork placement (see Appendix C for Plan format). Those students who earn faculty ratings of less than 3 in three or more areas are not considered ready for placement and the faculty may initiate dismissal procedures at their discretion. Any student who earns faculty ratings of 1 and 2 in most areas will not be considered appro9 (a)-1.6 (nd 2 Td[(i)8.3 (n (i)-4.7 (r)]TJ0 Tc 0 Tw 2.076 0

Personal Qualities Assessment – Self A

Respectfulness of Others including Diverse Populations

This quality is most evident when you consistently convey an attitude of respect, in both verbal and non-verbal communication, for the capability and worth of others and seek to understand them in terms of what makes them different. It means honoring individual differences such as culture, race, ethnicity, family structure, gender, age, socioeconomic status, and other individual differences without needing to always agree with what others do or say based on these differences. This quality is least evident when you are judgmental and critical of others in words and actions (e.g., gestures) or reject or minimize the capability and worth of others or attempt to impose your views and values on others.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
never sometimes usually mostly consistently
(<10%)

Capacity to Listen and Attend

Reliability and Follow Through

This quality is most evident when you are consistently dependable, reliable, and follow through with tasks and assignments in a timely and thorough manner. This includes meeting deadlines, being punctual with meeting

Empathy, Warmth and Caring

This quality is most evident when you consistently communicate, in words and actions, an accurate understanding of what others around you are feeling or thinking; when you are truly “in tune” with others by verbal and nonverbal actions and reactions, and make an effort to know what it is like to be in the other

Commitment to Excellence

This quality is most evident when you are open to new learning and examining your own values and use all avenues of learning (classroom, readings, assignments, peer and faculty input, etc.) to grow and develop professionally. When a gap in knowledge is discovered or a deficit in a personal quality is uncovered, you will take the initiative to acquire new information, improve and change. This quality is least evident when you do the minimum amount of work to get by; when gaps in knowledge or deficits in personal qualities come mostly from the repeated feedback of others rather than from an honest self-appraisal; and when any meaningful change in the acquisition of knowledge or the demonstration of skills requires repeated

Ability to Balance Multiple Life Expectations and Commitment to Wellness

This quality is most evident when you recognize and accept your capacity to handle multiple life responsibilities such as family, school, work, and avocational pursuits. This includes being realistic in setting limits on time spent in various roles, adjusting your schedule to accommodate changes in responsibilities, eating healthily, and getting adequate sleep and exercise in order to function effectively. This quality is least evident when you typically engage in multiple activities without considering the time or energy needed to accomplish tasks, fail to recognize your limits, push yourself to the neglect of health and well-being and get frustrated with yourself because the quality and/or timeliness in completing tasks are inferior to your own standards.

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
never sometimes usually mostly consistently
(<10%) (~25%) (~50%) (~75%) (>90%)

**poor time management
overextended
frenzied**

**organized
attentive to self-care
balanced**

Comments:

Sense of Humor

T

Appendix C

Writing a Remediation Plan using the S.M.A.R.T Model

As part of the Remediation/Action Plan development process, students will utilize the S.M.A.R.T approach to demonstrate that their plan offers specific, measurable, realistic, and time-limited goals and benchmarks. SMART stands for:

Specific: the student will state what exactly they are going to do, what changes will take place as a result of their proposed plan, and how, and how the student intends to implement the proposed plan.

Measurable: the student's proposed goals/objectives must be quantifiable or measurable.

Attainable/Achievable: The student's proposed goals must be attainable within the proposed time