



TARLETON  
STATE UNIVERSITY®

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Counseling

STUDENT HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELING  
2023/2024

## Welcome to the Tarleton State University Department of Counseling!

Dear Students:

We welcome you to Tarleton State University and the Department of Counseling! We are one program delivered in multiple locations.

The information presented in this handbook details the official departmental procedures and policies governing graduate work in the Department of Counseling at Tarleton State University. We expect you to utilize and become familiar with this material, as well as Tarleton State University's Catalog and Student Handbook. This handbook supersedes any previous guidelines, handouts, and/or brochures.

The Department of Counseling Faculty believe it is important to build relationships with us for feedback and guidance throughout your graduate career. Please know questions pertaining to the information contained herein can be processed with your Faculty Advisor. We are glad to welcome you as a member of the Tarleton State University community and look forward to your development as a graduate student, professional counselor, and productive member of the counseling profession.

Sincerely,

Department of Counseling Faculty and Staff

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## Introduction

The Department of Counseling is comprised of a community of scholars with expertise in both clinical mental health and school counseling. We are one program delivered in multiple locations. Students are free to take classes at any of the locations. Please contact your faculty advisor about taking a course at a different location.

As faculty, we hold our students to very high standards. As such, the faculty want you to know that it is **your responsibility** to read and become familiar with the information in this student handbook. This information is paramount to your success as a student in the Department of Counseling.

## Mission Statement

The Department of Counseling seeks to prepare professional counselors who have developed sound counseling skills through a diversity of experiential learning, acquired a comprehensive theoretical knowledge base, and developed a strong professional counselor identity. The Department's intent is for graduates to be moral and ethical thinkers, culturally competent professionals, scholars, and leaders who demonstrate civility and integrity, while contributing meaningfully and responsibly to the counseling profession.

## Vision Statement

The Department of Counseling seeks local, state, regional, national, and international prominence as a collaborative and transformative community engaged in exemplary research, education, and service that benefit the profession of counseling and the public it serves.

## **Programs Offered**

### **M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

The Department of Counseling offers a Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) degree. The M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree includes academic coursework that satisfies the academic course requirements for Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Texas.

The Department of Counseling's emphasis is on the development of counseling competencies in such areas as:

- human growth and development,
- professional orientation and ethics,
- career theory,
- appraisal,
- counseling theories,
- individual and group counseling,
- multicultural, research, and
- practical skills related to counseling practice.

Graduates are equipped with entry-level skills to work as counselors in a variety of positions in mental health agencies, such as:

- counseling centers,
- drug and substance abuse centers,
- career counseling centers,
- employee assistance programs in business and industry,
- adult probation offices and corrections,
- MHMR agencies,
- education settings,
- private counseling practice.

### **Certification in Professional School Counselor**

Dr Christopher Wilder is the School Counseling Coordinator. His contact information [wilder@tarleton.edu](mailto:wilder@tarleton.edu) (254-299-8321). Also, please download the School Counseling Handbook for more information.



## Introduction of the CMHC Program

### CACREP Accreditation

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) accreditation provides and meets standards set by the profession. “The student, as a consumer, can be assured that appropriate knowledge and skill areas are included and that the program is stable, professionally and financially” (<https://www.cacrep.org/for-students/why-should-i-choose-an-accredited-program/>). Tarleton’s Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is a CACREP accredited program and meets the requirements for the state of Texas Licensed Professional Counseling course requirements.

### Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Curriculum Objectives

The CMHC curriculum is based on objectives that provide students with a structured sequence of curricular and clinical experiences reflecting the present and projected needs of a pluralistic society for which specialized counseling and human development activities have been developed. The objectives are consistent with state licensing and national educational requirements of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The stated objectives are evidenced in course objectives and assignments embedded in course syllabi. These objectives reflect input from the Department faculty, Advisory Board, and former students of the Department.

The CMHC curriculum is organized around the following set of objectives:

1. **Professional Identity:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional functioning including history, roles, technological competence, organizations, credentialing, advocacy process, and ethical standards in professional counseling.
2. **Social and Cultural Diversity:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends in a multicultural and diverse society as they relate to factors such as age, ethnicity, nationality, culture, gender, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, education, family values, spiritual values, socioeconomic status, and other unique characteristics.
3. **Human Growth and Development:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of individuals at all developmental levels, including theories of development across the life span, theories of learning and personality development, human behavior including environmental factors effecting both normal and abnormal behavior, ethical and legal considerations, and strategies for facilitating development over the life span.
4. **Career Development:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of career development and related life factors including theories and developmental models, career development program planning, educational and occupational information as well as computer-based career information systems, diversity issues in career development, career planning, placement and evaluation including assessment instruments, ethical and legal considerations, and career counseling techniques.
5. **Helping Relationships:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of counseling and consultation processes including basic interviewing and counseling skills as well as knowledge and application of counseling theories. An understanding of family and other systems theories in family assessment and counseling is included. Other helping considerations include knowledge of self, consultation and ethical and legal considerations.

6. **Group Work:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods, and skills and other group work approaches.
7. **Assessment:** The program will expect the student to demonstrate an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.
8. **Research and Program Evaluation:** Students will demonstrate an understanding of research, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation.

## Course Delivery

Course delivery for the Department of Counseling, one program delivered in multiple locations, is comprised of the following:

- Students are required to attend fall, spring, and summer semesters.
- Students are required to follow published [course rotations](#).
- All core courses are offered on each location where the program is delivered. Some courses may be combined into online sections to meet enrollment requirements.
- Electives are not offered on each campus site and you may be required to travel to another campus to complete your electives.
- Courses are primarily offered in the evenings with a limited number offered online, earlier in the day, and/or weekends.

## Potential Students

### Recruitment

The Department of Counseling recruits students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Faculty members attend conferences, professional meetings, local organizations, and regularly scheduled graduate fairs to attract potential students.

### Admissions Procedure (Two-Step Process)

#### Step 1: Apply to College of Graduate Studies

\*Admission to the College of Graduate Studies does not automatically admit you to a graduate degree program. \*

1. Complete and submit the College of Graduate Studies Application. Link below:  
<https://www.tarleton.edu/graduate/future/masters/#application>
2. Submit official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate academic coursework must have a cumulative GPA 2.75 or higher; and 3.0 GPA or higher on last sixty hours of undergraduate or masters course work.
3. All documents listed above must be submitted and processed by:  
**Priority Deadline is December 1**  
**Regular Deadline is April 1**
4. College of Graduate Studies will process your documents and application. Once you have met their requirements and deadlines, then the Department of Counseling will reach out through your email with information regarding the interview process.

#### Step 2: Department of Counseling - Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

1. Attend Admissions Interview.
2. Complete Application to the Department of Counseling at interview.
3. Attend Program Orientation (Mandatory), only if pass interview.
4. Students will be charged \$50 program fee, after the first day of class.

## Admissions Interviews

The following discusses the Admission Interview process. Applicants must attend Admission Interviews and achieve a passing score in order to be invited to the Department's mandatory Program Orientation.

1. The Department must receive an acceptance notice for the applicant from COGS for applicant to be scheduled for an interview.
2. All applicants must attend and participate in the interview process in person.

## Interview Process

The following outlines the Interview process for the Department:

1. Applicants meet with one or two faculty members for an interview.
2. Applicants participate in a group exercise.
3. An applicant must meet a passing score to be considered for admission.
4. All applicants are notified of status after interviews are done for all campuses (usually within two weeks after interview).
5. If an applicant is denied to move further in the process, they may reapply the next semester the program accepts applicants.
6. If an applicant is placed on the waitlist, applicant will be notified before the first day of the Fall semester of status. Note-waitlist does not mean acceptance into the program.

## Accepted from Interviews

Applicants are accepted for preadmission to the Department of Counseling for the fall semester. Applicants are only permitted to enroll in six hours their first semester: CNSL 5350 Foundations of Counseling and CNSL 5353 Counseling Theories and Applications. This is a year-round program requiring students to attend in the fall, spring, and summer semesters.

## Mandatory Program Orientation

Applicants must attend the mandatory Program Orientation prior to the beginning of the Fall semester. It is important for our new students to understand all the components of the CMHC Program Student Handbook. If you have a university excused absence the day of the Program Orientation, you will need to get approval from the department head, provide documentation, and make up the program orientation before the start of the Fall semester. Otherwise, if an applicant does not attend the Program Orientation, then they will be asked to unenroll in Fall courses.

## First Semester Review

All applicants are classified as Pre-CMHC or PMHC students until they pass the first semester review. All applicants in CNSL 5350 and CNSL 5353 will receive an email of their admission status after final grades are submitted. Students **MUST** receive a grade of “B” or better in all CNSL prerequisite courses and receive faculty vote of their status into the program. Faculty vote on each student’s professional disposition. Failure to receive a grade of “B” or better will result in not being offered full admission to the program and the student may reapply for the following admission cycle. Upon readmission the student will repeat the course in which they received a grade below “B”. The course in question may only be repeated **ONCE**.

Again, the courses may only be repeated once. No applicant will be permitted to enroll in additional coursework (CNSL) in the Department of Counseling, if not admitted.

Faculty will review all students in a faculty meeting (at the end of the term) dedicated to all first semester students. At the faculty meeting, faculty will hold a formal vote regarding students’ admissions status.

## End of the First Semester

Based on results of the *First Semester Faculty Meeting* and grades, your admission status may be as follows:

- Fully Admitted,
- Admitted with Conditions,
- Not Admitted.

### *Fully Admitted*

The applicant has full admission to the Department and a degree plan is developed and filed with the College of Graduate Studies. There are no conditions and students have made an “A or B” in both CNSL 5350 and CNSL 5353. Faculty have voted in this first semester the student has performed academically and professionally.

### *Admitted with Conditions*

The applicant is **NOT** fully admitted. The applicant needs to meet certain conditions in order to be fully admitted. The applicant will not receive a Degree Plan until conditions have been satisfied. These conditions are considered on a case-by-case basis. An applicant with the status of “admitted with conditions” receives a written, detailed remediation plan and due date. The applicant has **ONE** semester to satisfy conditions. If the student satisfied all the conditions, they will receive a degree plan after their second semester. If the applicant fails to satisfy the conditions, the admissions status will change to “not admitted.” In this case, the applicant is referred to the College of Graduate Studies and Career Services for assistance in finding a more suitable academic program of study.

Applicant's admitted with conditions will not be allowed to take more than six hours of course work in the Spring semester. This is to give applicants additional time to follow their remediation plan and to set them up for success.

Applicants with admitted with condition status, will schedule a meeting with each of their course faculty for the Spring semester. In each of these meetings the applicant is to discuss the conditions related to course work and have a plan to satisfy conditions. It is the applicant(s) responsibility to contact their faculty advisor at the end of the Spring semester to discuss admission to the program and if they will be able to continue in the program.

*Remediation can include: (not an exhaustive list):*

- Being encouraged to seek personal counseling at the applicant's expense
- Writing essays
- Volunteer work
- Attending a writing lab
- Setting up check-in meetings with advisor
- Participating in class, especially with group activities

*Not Admitted*

The applicant is not admitted to the program/department and will not receive a Degree Plan. The applicant is referred to the College of Graduate Studies and Career Services for assistance in finding a more suitable academic program of study. One reason not admitted can be because a student received a "C or below" in either CNSL 5350 or CNSL 5353. Professional comportment is also part of the assessment process considered for full admission to the program. The applicant must unenroll from classes.

Applicants will receive written notification of status.

## PMHC versus CMHC Student

All new applicants for the M.S. Clinical Mental Health Counseling program will be classified as PMHC until they are fully admitted into the program. In order to change classifications a student must:

1. Pass CNSL 5350 and CNSL 5353 with a “B” or better
2. Receive a vote from faculty of “fully admitted” at the end of the Fall semester
3. Faculty Advisor completes a degree plan in DegreeWorks
4. Classification will change to CMHC Student

OR

1. Pass CNSL 5350 and CNSL 5353 with a “B” or better
2. Receive a vote from faculty of “continue with conditions” at the end of the Fall Semester
3. During the Spring semester complete all the conditions
4. At the end of the Spring semester have a 3.0 GPA
5. Meet with faculty advisor (this may include documentation of meeting conditions)
6. Faculty Advisor completes a degree plan in DegreeWorks
7. Classification will change to CMHC Student

## Class Registration Information

The following link is for registration: <https://www.tarleton.edu/registrar/registration/index.html>

- Students must follow the course rotation schedule.
- If students have changes to their course rotations, they need to meet with their advisors for approval.
- When students are directed to specific course sections, they must enroll in those particular sections. Failure to do so may result in being dropped and a delay in graduation.
- Students may need to travel to various locations to take a class on occasion especially electives.
- **A note of caution!** If payment is not made on time, the University will drop a student's registration. It is the student's responsibility to ensure payment is made on time. The academic calendar on the Tarleton State University homepage includes payment deadlines for your convenience: <http://www.tarleton.edu/calendar/>
- The Department may require the student to re-enroll in a specific section.

## Course Rotations

- **Students are required to take classes in fall, spring, and summer.** Students are required to follow published course rotations. Failure to do so may result in a delay in graduation or a Professional Disposition Review.
- Not following course rotations may impact enrollment in future semesters, enrollment in practicum and internship, and registering in comprehensive exams.

## Registration after First Day of Class or Changing Classes

Under no circumstance will a student be allowed to register for a class or change a class after the first day of classes for which the semester has occurred.

## Semester Course Load

A full course load in the Department of Counseling is nine semester hours. A student must seek permission from Faculty Advisor and Department Head to enroll in more than nine hours in a semester; this includes courses from another department at the university. Under no circumstance will a semester load of more than twelve hours be considered, including courses from another department at the university.

## Non-Degree Seeking Students and Other Majors

Only students seeking the Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree are permitted to take core CACREP classes in the department.



## Faculty Advisement

Students are encouraged to seek advising every semester by Faculty Advisors regarding coursework, program policies and procedures, and assistance with other educational or career needs.

- Faculty Advisors are assigned via student last name and location.
- Demonstrate respect for your Faculty Advisor's time by setting an appointment and being prepared.
- Faculty Advisors are your first go to about course rotations, discussions about the different tracks, needing to leave for a semester, moving to a different location, etc.
- Faculty Advisors are to support you while you are in the program and can be an advocate for your needs

## Moving to a Different Location or Name Change

If a student moves to a different location or changes names, they must alert the Faculty Advisor to start the approval process. Based upon enrollment numbers, a student may not be able to change campus locations right away, they may have to wait a semester to a year. A student has fourteen days once the change has occurred to submit this form. It is the student's responsibility to follow this process:

1. Download Campus Update Request Form from website and complete as instructed.  
<https://www.tarleton.edu/registrar/wp-content/uploads/sites/183/2022/07/campus-update-request-form.pdf>.
2. Download Permanent Record Update Form from website and complete as instructed (for name change).  
<https://www.tarleton.edu/registrar/wp-content/uploads/sites/183/2022/07/permanent-record-update-form.pdf>.
3. Make appointment with current Faculty Advisor for signature on form.
4. Email new Faculty Advisor of the change
5. Submit signed form to Department of Counseling Administrative Associate.
6. The Faculty Advisor of Record will be changed on the Faculty Advisor master list.
7. Repetitive move requests may be denied.

## Degree Plan

Students are required to have a degree plan on file with the College of Graduate Studies. Students will not be permitted to make application for graduation without a degree plan. A student receives a degree plan upon full admission to the program. The Department highly recommends students check with the College of Graduate Studies **prior** to attempting to register for graduation to assure a degree plan is on file.

## Leaving Program for a Semester or More

If a student needs to miss a semester due to health issues or other life emergencies, the student must meet with their Faculty Advisor to develop a plan. This will be handled on a case-by-case

basis. This will be granted **only once** during the program. Leaving the program for any period of time will result in a delay in graduation. If the student fails to register during any one-year period, the student will be required to apply for re-admission to the College of Graduate Studies, which would result in a cohort change and the Student handbook they must follow.

If the student is enrolled in classes, then the Registrar's Office will make the student withdraw from the University. This does not mean they cannot come back; however, the student may have to pay fees associated with re-admissions to the College of Graduate Studies. Please see the section on [Withdrawing from the Program](#).

### **Transfer Hours**

Students may be permitted to transfer six semester hours from another CACREP university or department pending departmental approval. CNSL 5350, CNSL 5353, and clinical courses (Pre-Practicum, Practicum, and Internships) will not be considered for transfer hours. If students take courses outside of a CACREP program, the Counseling Faculty cannot guarantee the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors will accept these hours on your transcript for licensure.

### **Expired Graduate Credit Appeal Request**

Course credit that will be more than six years old at the anticipated time for degree completion may not be counted towards a degree. Course credits are considered to be earned when they are recorded on the official transcript. A student in this situation can appeal to the College of Graduate Studies (COGS) to request the expired credits be considered towards the degree. The student is responsible for completing the Expired Graduate Credit Appeal Request Form and writing an essay describing the "highly extenuating circumstances" warranting the request. Students need to contact COGS to request the Expired Graduate Credit Appeal Request Form.

### **Non-Degree Seeking Students and Other Majors**

Only students seeking the Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree are permitted to take core CACREP classes in the department. It is possible for non-degree seeking alumni to enroll in an elective course depending on space and instructor approval.

## Department of Counseling Policies

### Go.Tarleton.edu Email and Listserv

Students' go.tarleton.edu email account is the official email account for the university and the ONLY email account the Department will use. Students must set up this account. Failure to do so will result in failing to receive imperative information from the University and the Department.

- The following is the link for setting up your student email account: <https://www.tarleton.edu/technology/email/>

The department utilizes a Listserv to communicate with students. This Listserv is sent to the go.tarleton.edu account only. Information shared ranges from deadlines to job opportunities.

### Texas Counseling Association Membership

Students are required to join and maintain membership in the Texas Counseling Association (TCA) for the duration of enrollment in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. Students are required to show proof of membership each year and send to their advisor. Students are also encouraged to join the American Counseling Association (ACA) and other professional organizations.

To join TCA:

<https://www.memberleap.com/members/newmem/registration.php?orgcode=TXCA&hd=X&>

### Liability Insurance

Students are required to carry student liability insurance for the duration of enrollment in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. Students are required to show proof of liability insurance during their first semester in CNSL 5350 Foundations. Students will have to submit proof of liability insurance for the duration of enrollment in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. This may be done through an assignment in Canvas or apart of application requirements (i.e. application for CNSL 5397 Practicum).

Students can acquire liability insurance through the Texas Counseling Association, the American Counseling Association, American Mental Health Counselor Association, or the Texas School Counseling Association. These organizations provide students with low-cost liability insurance. In addition, during Practicum and Internship, students may be required to provide health certificates or evidence of immunization to work with clients. Some field placement sites may require background checks.

### Ethical Standards

**Department of Counseling Student Demeanor:** Students are expected to maintain professional demeanor and protocol such as:

- Personal integrity;
- Responsibility for one's own behavior, tasks, assignments, and life lessons;
- Consideration, caring, and sensitivity to peers;

- Maturity, including the capacity to accept "no;"
- Evidence of a continuous process of self-exploration, resulting in enhanced self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stable mental health that is conducive to participating in the educational and clinical activities of the CMHC program;
- Practice of ethical and moral professional behavior;
- Maintaining confidentiality of classmates, case examples, and clients;
- Openness to constructive feedback and willingness to make suggested changes;
- Respectful communication with peers, faculty, and supervisors, despite personal feelings and biases; and
- Cultural competence.

Further, students are expected to understand and adhere to the ethical codes and standards of conduct of the following:

- Policies and Procedures of the Department of Counseling, as stated in the handbook;
- American Counseling Association 2014 Code of Ethics (<http://www.counseling.org/>);
- American School Counselor Association Code of Ethics (<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>);
- American Mental Health Counselors Association (<http://www.amhca.org/>);
- Behavioral Health Executive Council (<https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html>); and
- TSU Student Rules <https://www.tarleton.edu/studentrules/index.html>.

Violations of any of these policies, ethics, or rules could deem a student unfit to continue studies in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program in the Department of Counseling. Faculty of the Department of Counseling are the gatekeepers to the counseling profession (reference ACA Code of Ethics, 2014), thus, have an obligation to respond when a student is in violation of any of these rules. Further, it is the student's responsibility to download these codes and rules, place them in a notebook, read them, and refer to them if a situation should arise.

## Sexual Harassment

The Department of Counseling faculty support and endorse the Sexual Harassment Policy adopted by Tarleton State University. A copy of the policy is available in the TSU Student Rules and at these links: <https://www.tarleton.edu/studentrules/index.html>

## Students with History of Felony or Misdemeanor Convictions

Applicants with any history of felony or misdemeanor convictions may be denied licensure. It is the applicant's sole responsibility to check with the Texas LPC Board by going to their website at <https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html> The Department bears no responsibility in this matter.

**If a student admitted to the counseling program is arrested and/or convicted of a crime during the course of their enrollment, the student may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.**

## Statement of Informed Consent

The Department of Counseling's coursework includes the requirement to practice counseling skills with peers and practicing advanced skills with actual clients at field sites. Important components of evaluation will include receptivity to the giving and receiving of feedback (from peers, program faculty, and site supervisors) and the ability to integrate such feedback into counseling and interpersonal behaviors (academic and professional responsibility). Feedback will include faculty and site supervisors' observations of any limitations in counseling skills, professional practice, and personal qualities/behaviors that may inhibit therapeutic abilities. Both oral and written feedback will be given.

Due to the nature of counseling, and the faculty's responsibility to educate effective counselors, students will participate in the following activities at their own expense:

- Group counseling
- Individual counseling

It is important for the student to understand they are subject to the conditions of the Department of Counseling's retention policy and procedure included in the *Department of Counseling Performance Standards* in this handbook.

## Counseling

Students are expected to embrace the idea of participating in counseling. One cannot learn to be a counselor without utilizing the product. Ideally, a student is evolved enough to seek counseling of their own fruition. However, faculty will encourage a student to seek counseling, as this is a common and necessary remediation and is the culture of the counseling profession. Seeking counseling is not a punitive measure. It is a measure utilized by counselor educators to help students become better counselors.

Students can find qualified counselors by accessing such search engines as Psychology Today or other reputable sites that list counselors. A student may also seek a referral from their personal physician. The counseling faculty are always available to assist a student in this process.

## Student's Responsibility

A student is responsible for their own learning. Other responsibilities include:

- Knowing and adhering to the contents of the Department of Counseling Student Handbook and the Clinical Handbook.
- Attending counseling and embracing the process.
- Being open to faculty feedback and possible Professional Disposition Review Meetings.

- Acknowledging that the CMHC program requires the student to attend fall, spring, and summer semesters.
- Continuously checking the Department's website and go.tarleton.edu email accounts and the listserv for deadlines and information.
- Reading and adhering to the Catalog, Student Handbook, and Clinical Handbook each year to determine if changes impact the student.
- Reading and adhering to the Department of Counseling policies and procedures, Tarleton Student Rules, and professional ethical standards.
- Meeting registration and payment deadlines.
- Participating in activities and projects, internal or external to the University, which will enhance learning experiences.
- Following course rotations.
- Being aware of and adhering to all course prerequisites.
- Preparing for courses by making arrangements to attend regularly scheduled classes, allowing for adequate study time, completing assignments on a timely basis, and taking the final exam as scheduled.
- Identifying skill strengths and working toward development of skills that need improvement.
- Asking questions to obtain information regarding topics a student does not understand.
- Selecting and developing a theoretical orientation.
- Becoming identified with the professional community by joining a professional counseling association (ACA, TCA, AMHCA, TMHCA).

## **Faculty and Limits to Confidentiality**

The nature of CMHC education requires students to reflect on their experiences, in order, to become aware how these experiences may impact them personally and professionally. Students get to choose how in-depth they go with their reflections for assignments or what they choose to share with their professors. As Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC) and Tarleton State University faculty, faculty are mandated to report certain information to different organization and offices at TSU. The following are topics faculty and staff must report:

- Child Abuse/Neglect
- Elderly Abuse/Neglect
- Sexual Misconduct of a Mental Health Professional
- Impacts on Clinical Judgement
- Educational Neglect
- Any Violations of Title IX
- CARE Team (student crisis situations)

## Student Retention Policy

### College of Graduate Studies Policy

Every student enrolled in the College of Graduate Studies is required to maintain a high level of performance and comply fully with the policies of the institution. The College reserves the right to suspend any graduate student who does not maintain satisfactory academic standing or fails to conform to Tarleton State University regulations. Students must keep a cumulative 3.0 GPA. Failure to do so will result in academic probation or academic suspension. *Please see the section on grades for more information.*

### Re-Admission

Following suspension status, a student may petition their Faculty Advisor, the Department Head, and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies for permission for re-admission. Each re-admission decision is made on an individual basis. If a student is re-admitted after being suspended, they must maintain a 3.0 GPA in each semester of enrollment. The student must wait until grades have been posted before the student can register for classes. **The student will have to re-apply to the College of Graduate Studies and the Department of Counseling including the application fees. The student is accountable to the catalog, handbook, and policies in place at the time of re-admission.**

### Continuation of Enrollment

If a student has been granted admission, the student must register in the term for which admission is granted. Students must understand and accept that **this is a continuous program based on twelve- month attendance in classes.** Students are required to follow the course rotation and attend all semesters as planned

### Withdrawing from Program

If a student decides the M.S. in CMHC is no longer something they want to pursue, it is the student's responsibility to withdrawal from the university through the Registrar's Office. Not withdrawing from the university, might be paying for classes the student is enrolled in at the time of their decision. <https://www.tarleton.edu/registrar/>

If at any point a previous enrolled student wants to come back to the CMHC program, depending on how long they have been away from the program they may have to pay a re-admissions fee with the College of Graduate Studies, pay the Counseling Department's application fee, take classes over, or go through the interview process again.

If a student withdraws from the program and knows they are coming back, the student **must** schedule and attend a meeting with their faculty advisor. Not doing so may result in Professional Disposition Review. All these reasons will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

## Clinical Sequence

All clinical courses (Pre-Practicum, Practicum, Internship A, and Internship B) **must** be taken in consecutive semesters. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis as determined by the Clinical Coordinator and the Department Head. If a student withdraw or does not successfully complete any of these courses, the Department may require restarting the clinical sequence. Please Clinical Handbook for more information.



# Department of Counseling Performance Standards

## Department Standards

Students enrolled in the Department of Counseling must maintain high scholastic standards and develop skills necessary to work with people with diverse needs. Students are expected to demonstrate professional responsibility in the professional counseling field and to conform to the *2014 ACA Code of Ethics*, any other relevant codes of ethics of relevant professional associations (see *Counseling Advocacy and Professional Associations* section), and the State of Texas LPC rules and regulations. **A student's admission to the CMHC Program does not guarantee professional fitness to practice counseling**, which is required to remain in the CMHC Program. At any time, if a student does not demonstrate professional responsibility, the student may be called in for a **Professional Disposition Review** with Departmental faculty to discuss needs.

## Attendance/Participation Policy

Prompt attendance at all class meetings is a professional responsibility. The rigors of graduate training in counseling involve more than simply the ability to earn an "A" or "B" in course material. If necessary, students may miss one class with a valid, **preapproved** excuse (such as illness or family emergency) and not face penalties related to their grade.

Students must email the instructor to let them know as soon as possible if they will be missing class. It is the students' responsibility to obtain all notes and handouts missed during their absence. Each absence beyond the first will result in a loss of 10% from the total grade. Therefore, students are advised to save their absence for emergencies such as unforeseen illnesses. In the event that a student misses more than three classes, the student will receive a failing grade. If a student misses more than 1 hour of class, it is considered an absence. University policy will be followed for attendance problems. Chronic tardiness or early departure (arriving 15 minutes late or leaving 15 prior to the end of class) will result in the lowering of a final grade at the instructor's discretion.

**No credit will be given if more than 15% of classes are missed.** In the case of an extreme emergency that will cause more than 15% of class to be missed, with instructor approval, a student may submit an appeal to the counseling faculty. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Persistent absences or tardiness, regardless of reason, will result in a Professional Disposition Review meeting.

## Assignment Policy

Students are expected to complete all assignments by due dates, as well as adhere to the Tarleton State University Academic Honesty policy. There are four categories of assignments not limited to: written assignments, skill demonstrations, student presentations, and course exams.

1. **Written Assignments.** A student must have prior permission from the instructor to submit an assignment past the due date based on a documented, legitimate reason (e.g., illness or emergency) and permission is given solely at the discretion of the instructor. If permission is granted, the late assignment will be docked 25% per day up to 3 days (72 hours)

including weekends after the due date. Written assignments will not be evaluated for a grade after 3 days (72 hours) of the due date and will receive a grade of 0. **Faculty are subject to change this policy per course, please look at your course syllabus.**

2. **Skill Demonstrations.** Skill demonstration assignments will not be accepted for evaluation after the due date and will receive a grade of 0.
3. **Student Presentations.** Student presentations, whether group or solo, will not be rescheduled to accommodate the absence of a presenter. The missed student presentation will result in a grade of 0.
4. **Course Exams.** Students must take the exam the day that it is administered or the grade will result in a grade of 0 unless instructor permission is given in advance.

## Turnitin

Students are expected to use outside resources (e.g., library, Internet, writing center) to complete assignments. There is a tab in the Department's Canvas Community that provides students with additional resources regarding APA writing style. Furthermore, in order to help students adhere to the Tarleton State University Academic Honesty policy, *Turnitin* will be implemented to use as a writing tool. Students will have the opportunity to submit papers in Canvas through *Turnitin* prior to the assignment due date. This tool is there to help detect any words that may not be written as the student's (plagiarism). Students can use this option to help enhance writing skills. In order to use this tool via Canvas, the student will have to prepare the paper ahead of the due date. The student will be able to submit a paper as many times as they would like prior to the due date to assess and reassess work submitted. However, please be aware that it can take up to 24 hours for *Turnitin* to produce an originality report after submitting it. If the student chooses not to utilize this option and *Turnitin* shows excessive citations of words that do not appear to be the student's, there is a risk of having a grade penalty on the paper. The consequences of plagiarism are discussed in each syllabus. Plagiarism could result in dismissal from the program and a referral to the Dean of Students.

## Grades

According to the College of Graduate Studies and the Department of Counseling, if in a particular semester a student's cumulative or overall GPA falls below the 3.0 GPA minimum, the student will be given notice of unsatisfactory academic performance. The student must attain a 3.0 cumulative GPA during their next period of enrollment; failure to do so will result in suspension for one long semester or the summer term. A student must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average every semester upon returning from the suspension. A graduate student is allowed one suspension. If poor academic performance results in a second suspension, the student will be permanently dismissed from the university. At the end of any grading period, if a student's overall GPA falls below 3.0, they will be placed on academic probation. Graduate students who are on first-time suspension must reapply (including the \$30 application fee) to the College of Graduate Studies for reinstatement.

In addition to maintaining a 3.0 GPA, students in the CMHC program will have to maintain a "B" or better in CNSL 5350 Foundations of Counseling, CNSL 5353 Theories and Application

in Counseling, and CNSL 5397 Pre-Practicum. For CNSL 5350 and CNSL 5353 please refer back to *First Semester Review* section. If students fail to receive a “B” or better in CNSL 5397, then students will have to attend a PDR and will not be permitted to go onto their clinical sequence.

## Incompletes (K)

Requests for an incomplete (K) grade must be made **before** the last day of class, with final approval granted by the Department Head.

## Grades of F

Tarleton differentiates between a failed grade in a class because a student never attended (F0 grade), stopped attending at some point in the semester (FX grade), or because the student did not pass the course (F) but attended the entire semester. These grades will be noted on the official transcript. Stopping or never attending class can result in the student having to return aid monies received. *For more information see the Tarleton Financial Aid website* (<http://www.tarleton.edu/finaid/contact.html>).

## Academic Grade Appeal

An individual course grade may be changed when the involved faculty member certifies to the university registrar that an error was made in computing the original grade. The Department Head and the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services must approve the grade.

## Appeal Procedure

Student academic appeals in the Department of Counseling shall follow the procedures listed below:

1. Appeals must be made within one calendar month after grades are posted.
2. The student will appeal directly to the faculty member involved. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal to the faculty member, the student can appeal to the Department Head.
3. The appeal to the Department Head must be in writing. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal to the Department Head, the student can appeal to the Dean of the College of Human Sciences and Health Services.
4. The appeal to the Dean must be in writing. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the appeal to the Dean, the student can appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

## APA and Writing Center

Students are expected to own an American Psychological Association (2020) *Publication Manual* (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). All papers **MUST** be written according to APA Style (7<sup>th</sup> ed.) professional version and with proper grammar. Students are expected to proofread papers carefully prior to submission. It is best practice to ask someone to proof a final draft for spelling and grammatical errors. If needed, students should consult with the University Writing Center (<http://www.tarleton.edu/writingcenter/>).

## Core Values Statement

This program strives to be a learning environment that acknowledges that students will have many perspectives based upon having differing backgrounds and beliefs. As a department, our goal is for all faculty and students to be respectful to each other. We recognize students' experiences and who they are is a resource, strength, and benefit. Faculty and students are expected to commit to creating an environment that facilitates inquiry and self-expression, while also demonstrating respect and diligence in understanding how others' viewpoints may be different from our own.

## Microaggressions

Microaggressions are defined *as* subtle verbal or nonverbal communications, intentional or not, resulting in harmful consequences (Solorzano, Ceja, & Yasso, 2000). If microaggressions are committed, they will be recognized and addressed by faculty in a respectful manner as a teachable moment to maintain a productive learning environment. If you have concerns about microaggressions that you experienced or witnessed in class, please speak with the instructor so this issue can be properly addressed.

## Names/Pronouns

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. Faculty will honor you by referring to you with the name and pronoun that you identify with. Please advise of any name or pronoun changes so that instructors can help create a learning environment in which you, your name, and your pronouns are respected.

## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

It is the policy of Tarleton State University and the Department of Counseling to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and other applicable laws. If you are a student with a diverse needs and seeking academic accommodations for a course, please contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services, at 254-968-5491 or [disability@tarleton.edu](mailto:disability@tarleton.edu). The office is located at the Stephenville campus in the Thompson Student Center in room 20. More information can be found at <https://www.tarleton.edu/drt/> or in the University Catalog. If a student has documentation from the Office of Student Accessibility, please provide the professor with the documentation so that accommodations can be made.

## Evaluating Student Performance Policy

Members of the Department of Counseling faculty, using their professional judgment and expertise, continually evaluate students' performance (academic and professional responsibility) both informally and formally. The criteria used by the faculty to evaluate students include:

- Department of Counseling Policies and Procedures;
- Receiving a grade of C or below;
- A cumulative GPA below 3.0;
- Faculty's observations of performance (academic or professional responsibility);
- Student performance (academic or professional responsibility) in simulated practice situations;
- Site supervisors' evaluations of students' performances (academic or professional responsibility) in field placements;

- Tarleton State University's Rules; and
- Professional Counseling's Codes of Ethics (BHEC, ACA, ASCA, AMHCA, NBCC, and TEA).

### **Formal Points of Review**

- Completion of the first six semester hours (see section on First Semester);
- The end of the second semester;
- The first semester of clinical course work in the field (CNSL 5397) (see section on the Counseling Department Comprehensive Exam;
- Counseling Department Comprehensive Exam;
- Rubrics utilized with each course;
- Site Supervisor Evaluation of Student; and
- CPCE.

## Professional Disposition Review

As counselor educators, faculty bear the responsibility of serving as gatekeepers for the counseling profession (see ACA Code of Ethics). Thus, faculty are constantly monitoring and reviewing students' performance (academic or professional responsibility). When a faculty member becomes aware of student problems in the areas of professional disposition or academic performance, the faculty member will present these issues to the faculty during a faculty meeting. The faculty present will vote on whether a Professional Disposition Review (PDR) should be held. A simple majority (51% of present faculty) vote will be necessary to move forward with a PDR. Following faculty vote, a PDR will be arranged for the student to attend.

Such plan will be focused on remediating educational or professional deficiencies, and might include the following (not exhaustive list):

- Encouraged individual to seek counseling to address specific issues identified
- Writing a reflective essay
- Attending a writing lab
- Attend additional training related to area of concern
- Creating SMART plans to address issues

One of the roles of faculty is to provide mentoring to students to help them acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of the professional counselor. The role of PDRs is to help the student acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes to achieve adequate readiness for their role as professional counselor.

For those candidates who enter the PDR process and fail to make adequate progress in resolving problems that significantly impair their potential for academic success or counseling effectiveness, the counseling faculty may recommend withdrawal from the program.

Transition out of the program may be required if actions are so egregious, the faculty believes a student's continuation in the program represents a legitimate safety concern involving the threat of harm to self/others, or their behavior is unprofessional or violates any ethical or legal standards. The advisor or PDR team will recommend academic, vocational, and personal counseling to students to deal with this transition. If the change of study is to another program in the department, program representatives will assist students in following the Graduate School's protocol for changing their program of study.

### Professional Disposition Review-Academic Meeting

If a faculty member believes a student is not making satisfactory progress in meeting departmental, professional, or university standards, then that faculty member will review the situation with other faculty members as soon as the issue arises. Based upon faculty feedback and a vote on the PDR, the student may then be referred to a PDR. This academic meeting will be comprised of a minimum of three faculty members. The following faculty will be present at the PDR:

1. The student's current advisor in the program

2. The faculty who was first made aware of the current issue
3. A third neutral faculty member who either does not have the student in class, did not witness the problematic behavior, or does not teach on the same campus as the student.

*Note: if #1 and #2 are the same, then another current instructional faculty for the student will serve on the committee.*

Once the vote on the PDR has been conducted, the designated chair of the PDR will send the student a Notification of PDR, which will consist of an email informing them of the PDR and arranging for scheduling of the meeting. The student must respond to the email within 7 calendar days. Failure to respond to the Notification of PDR will result in an advising hold being placed on their student account, until such time as they schedule and attend their PDR. Academic progress will be halted unless the PDR has been attended.

The department head is never allowed to chair or be a member of a PDR. After the initial PDR, a follow-up PDR will be held to determine the ways in which the student has (or has not) met the requirements of the plan.

If a student receives a faculty vote to attend a second PDR during the course of their academic career in the program, dismissal from the program may be recommended. If a student receives a faculty vote to attend a third PDR, they will automatically be dismissed from the program.

### **Professional Disposition Review-Academic Meeting Procedure**

1. During the meeting, the student will be provided the reasons for the PDR in writing.
2. The faculty will describe concerns to the student.
3. The student will be allowed to briefly address the issues brought forth by the faculty. The student is permitted to bring one adult as their adviser. The adviser may not direct ask questions of the PDR committee or interact with them during the meeting. However, they may ask for a brief recess to discuss issues with the student or otherwise communicate with them. If the student's adviser is an attorney licensed to practice law in any jurisdictions, the student must communicate this to the PDR prior to the meeting. If the student arrives to a PDR with an attorney, the meeting will be rescheduled until such time the department can arrange for a representative from the general counsel's office to be present as an observer of the proceedings, with the sole purpose of maintaining order during the process.
4. A plan to address the student's problems in academics, professionalism, or clinical skills will result from the meeting. The student will be held accountable to the plan in order to continue in the program. Such plan might include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - encouraging the student to attend individual counseling to address specific identified issues
  - writing a reflective essay
  - attending a writing lab
  - or, in extreme situations, dismissal from program
5. There will be a PDR Follow-Up. During a follow-up PDR, the student will be given a chance to present the required actions they have taken, as well as demonstrate the ways in which their



disposition (academic/clinical/professional) has improved. It is the responsibility of the student to provide adequate evidence that they have effectively addressed the concerns of the faculty and shown professional growth.

## **Professional Disposition Review Appeal**

Students have the right to appeal a PDR in which the faculty recommendation is dismissal from the program.

## **Professional Disposition Review Appeal Procedure**

If the student appeals the PDR, the Department Head will determine whether the student remains in the program. The following procedure govern the appeal:

1. A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the PDR in which dismissal from the program is recommended may appeal to the Department Head.
  - a. For an appeal to be considered, the student must submit a written notice for an appeal to the Department Head within 10 working days of receiving the decision from the PDR meeting.
  - b. The Department Head may or may not meet with the student prior to the decision and will provide the student with a final decision in writing.
  - c. The Department Head will consider the matter based on results compiled by the faculty conducting the PDR meeting and the student. The department head will notify the student of the decision within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.
2. A student who is dissatisfied with the Department Head's decision may appeal to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services.
  - a. For an appeal to be considered, the student must submit a written notice for an appeal to the Dean within 10 working days of receiving the decision from the Department Head.
  - b. The Dean will consider the matter based on results compiled by the Department Head and notify the student of the decision within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal.

## **Utilizing Advisers in PDR-Academic Meeting**

Some students may choose to have a person accompany them to their Professional Disposition Review meeting. While this is typically not required or particularly helpful, it is permitted and will not be considered when the committee renders its decisions. If the student chooses to allow an adviser to accompany them to their Professionalism and Disposition Review, they realize that their right to privacy under FERPA may be impacted, as the adviser will witness the faculty and other members of the committee discussing aspects of the student's academic and/or clinical performance. When bringing an adviser, the chair of the PDR will provide the student with a form to sign which acknowledges that by bringing an adviser they are limiting their confidentiality provided by FERPA by allowing the adviser to hear about their educational record and that they are permitting the advisers to be witness to this information.



If a student chooses an adviser who is a lawyer, they must notify the PDR chair as soon as possible. The PDR committee must be given the opportunity to consult with university legal counsel, and a university lawyer may attend the meeting. If a student shows up to a PDR without informing the PDR chair about it prior to the meeting, the meeting will be immediately cancelled and rescheduled after legal advice can be sought out. It should be noted that this rule will be implemented even if one party claims that the adviser isn't acting as the student's lawyer. Any adviser who has a license to practice law in any of the 50 united states or US territories will fall under this policy, regardless of whether the student has formally engaged them as legal counsel. During the PDR, the adviser is not permitted to directly address the faculty members of the committee with questions or statements on behalf of the student. The adviser may confer with the student and give them advice on how to respond to the questions and declarations made by the PDR committee. The adviser will be informed of this policy at the beginning of the PDR meeting. On the first violation, the PDR chair will remind the adviser of the policy. If the adviser chooses to disregard the policy and address the committee multiple times, they may be asked to leave the room.

# Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)

## CPCE Explained

In response to increasing requests from counselor educators for a graduate counseling program exit exam, the Research and Assessment Corporation for Counseling (RACC) in conjunction with the Council for Credentialing and Education (CCE), has developed the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). The purpose of the CPCE is to assess counseling student's knowledge of counseling information viewed as important by counselor preparation Program. The CPCE will also provide collective feedback that can be used by Program in developing/adapting curriculum.

## Content

The CPCE will cover the eight common-core areas as defined by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program (CACREP) in their *Standards for Preparation*:

- **Human growth and development** – studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.
- **Social and cultural foundations** – studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.
- **Helping relationships** – studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes.
- **Group work** – studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches.
- **Career and lifestyle development** – studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors.
- **Appraisal** – studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.
- **Research and program evaluation** – studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research.
- **Professional orientation and ethics** – studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentialing.

## Format

The CPCE will consist of 160 items with 20 items per CACREP area. Of the 20 items per section, 17 will be scored items and the remaining 3 will be pretest items that are not identified to the student. The purpose of imbedded pre-testing is to generate actual score performance data on items. This allows CCE to select items for future test construction that have the most desirable psychometric attributes. Scores for each section and a total score will be reported to institutions for each student. The CCE will provide statistics on the program's students as well as national data. A demographic questionnaire will be included on the answer sheet for research purposes. Students are allowed four hours to complete the examination including the demographic questionnaire. The student will be asked information on the following:

- ethnicity
- gender
- education
- specialty
- credentialing
- preparation
- internship/practicum experience

*\*NBCC will obtain a program's permission prior to the use of this information in any research conducted.*

## Registration

Every candidate for the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree must apply for and pass a comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination is taken in the first semester of clinical coursework (CNSL 5397). Students are responsible for checking the website (<https://www.tarleton.edu/counsel/student-resources/CPCE.html>) for registration deadlines, information regarding the examination and arranging to take it as scheduled. **Registration for the Departmental Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) is a multistep process.** Contact the Department of Counseling testing coordinator (Dr. Hurless) to receive details about completing the registration process.

## Rescheduling the CPCE

In the case of an extreme emergency, a student may contact their Faculty Advisor to request permission to reschedule taking the CPCE. Approval will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If permission is granted, the Faculty Advisor will alert the Department Head. If a student chooses to reschedule taking the CPCE, the student chooses to delay their graduation date. A request to reschedule the CPCE can only be made once.

## Studying for the CPCE

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) is the instrument used for the department's comprehensive exam. Study materials can be purchased online for the CPCE. The *Encyclopedia of Counseling* by Rosenthal is also recommended to aid in preparation for the exam and in forming study groups. When utilizing the Rosenthal book, one needs to look at all answers in the multiple-choice questions, not just the correct answers. Students should consult with Faculty Advisors for more complete information.

## Passing Score

The passing score for a student in the Department of Counseling is a raw score of 82. Once scores are received from the national scoring center, students will be notified via their go.tarleton.edu email account. It is the student's responsibility to check the go.tarleton.edu account as this is the official email account the Department utilizes.

A report reflecting the Comprehensive Exam score will be sent to the College of Graduate Studies no later than ten (10) days prior to the date of commencement on which the degree is to be conferred. This report will indicate if the student passed or failed the exam.

### **Failing the CPCE**

Students are required to take the CPCE during CNSL 5397. Students who do not receive a passing score may not be eligible to advance to CNSL 5399s or students who do not take the CPCE during CNSL 5397. The CPCE must be taken the next semester. Students who do not receive a passing score on the exam are referred to their Faculty Advisor, CNSL 5397 instructor, and may have to attend a PDR meeting to develop an individual remediation plan. CNSL 5397 can be repeated up to two times (6 credit hours) based on the recommendation of the counseling faculty. Students are to be aware that Financial Aid may not cover the cost of repeating a course. If the course must be repeated, the student will be required to travel to the campus location where the course is offered as it will not be offered at all locations for all semesters. No student may take the exam more than two times. An alternative comprehensive exam may be offered after failing two times.

### **Alternative Comprehensive Exam**

Students unable to pass the CPCE on the second try may be offered an alternative exam. This exam is an oral exam over the three areas of the CPCE in which the student scored lowest. Three faculty members (one will be the student's faculty advisor) will be present during the oral exam and they will grade the oral exam. Students will be given the grading rubric before the date of their alternative comprehensive exam by their faculty advisor. If the alternative comprehensive exam is failed, the student will be dismissed from the program and referred to the College of Graduate Studies and Career Services for assistance in finding a more appropriate vocational direction.

## **Practicum and Internships**

Students should refer to the *Practicum and Internship Handbook* for all policies and procedures regarding Practicum and Internship. For deadlines and application, please go to the Department's website.

## Graduation and Licensing/Certification Paperwork

### Graduation

It is the student's responsibility to make sure all university requirements regarding graduation are completed. The deadline for registering for graduation is early in the semester. The following link contains comprehensive graduation information: <http://www.tarleton.edu/graduation/index.html>.

### Professional Endorsement Policy (LPC Board Paperwork)

At various times, a student will require an endorsement (written or verbal recommendation) from the Department of Counseling in order to gain internships, employment, or credentials. A student can only be endorsed by faculty for a position or credential for which the student has been prepared.

Faculty cannot sign LPC paperwork prior to a student graduating. The student is responsible for contacting the department for a signature **AFTER** graduation. Your CNSL 5399B professor can sign, clinical coordinator, or the Department Head can sign these forms after graduation.

### Licensed Professional Counselor

The M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree meets the academic requirements for the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors. The National Certified Counselor (NCE) examination is the Texas licensing examination. The Department of Counseling faculty recommends students take the NCE examination during their last semester of the program. Licensure is coordinated between the student and the board issuing the desired credential. The Department of Counseling faculty provide documentation and verification of training experiences to boards after the student has initiated the credentialing process.

Note: The M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Tarleton State University meets the requirements for CACREP and licensure in the state of Texas. It is important to note these requirements may not meet the requirements in other states. If you plan on moving in the future outside of the state of Texas, it is important to know the state requirements of a state you might move to in the future. Currently in the United States, there is no national set of licensure requirements and they vary from state to state.

### Documentation for Licensure

Here are some of the documents you need for licensure:

- First go to the website: <https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html>
- Read all the requirements and documentation you need to submit to the board
- Application is found electronically on the Board website
- *Practicum/Internship Documentation* forms: one form per practicum/internship sight. If you stayed at the same clinical site, then you will only need to fill out one form. Form(s) will need to be signed by the appropriate professor. You are responsible for maintaining your documentation and records for practicum and internships. Make

copies of all paperwork submitted to your university supervisor. Practicum/Internship hours should be documented according to LPC requirements (see LPC Board website for documentation requirements).

- A copy of the final transcript showing that a master's in Counseling has been conferred.
- A copy of passing the NCE.
- Fingerprints.
- A copy of passing the jurisprudence exam.
- You will need to find a LPC-Supervisor and forms submitted with their signature.

### **School Counselor Certification (School Counseling TExES Examination)**

Please refer to the *School Counseling Handbook*.

### **Registered Play Therapist**

If a student completed the electives CNSL 5393 Play Therapy and CNSL 5376 Advanced Play Therapy, then these electives count towards the requirements for some of the instruction requirements. Please consult the Association for Play Therapy (APT) website (<https://www.a4pt.org/>) for specific requirements. Requirements to be a Registered Play Therapist (RPT) include 150 hours of instruction in play therapy. For more information, please contact Dr. Blanco.

## Professional Counselor Identity

Students are encouraged to become advocates for the counseling profession by becoming involved in professional organizations at the national, regional, state, and local levels.

### Chi Sigma Iota

Chi Sigma Iota, Counseling Academic & Professional Honor Society International, was created in 1985 for individuals who were working towards developing their identity as a professional counselor. This honor society was created in order to promote academic and professional excellence and identity within master's and doctoral students in counseling and counselor education and supervision programs, counselor educators, as well as professional counselors who are committed to research, service, supporting human dignity, and fostering wellness for a healthier society.

The Tarleton State University chapter is called Theta Sigma Upsilon. Joining the Department of Counseling's local chapter is a great opportunity to get to know your professional peers and to support the professional counselor community. Most Theta Sigma Upsilon activities are open to all students in the Department of Counseling. However, to join Chi Sigma Iota, you must have completed at least one full-time semester at a CACREP or CORE accredited program, maintain a GPA of 3.5 or better, and receive a letter of invitation to membership indicating that you meet the high standards of Chi Sigma Iota.

If you are interested in joining Chi Sigma Iota or participating in Chi Sigma Iota events, please contact Dr. LaShondra Manning, Theta Sigma Upsilon chapter faculty advisor, at [lmanning@tarleton.edu](mailto:lmanning@tarleton.edu). More information about Chi Sigma Iota is available on their website located at [www.csi-net.org](http://www.csi-net.org).

### American Counseling Association

The national organization representing professional counselors is the American Counseling Association (ACA). An important function of ACA is to lobby for legislation that benefits the counseling profession, counseling professionals and, thereby, the community at large. Another important function of ACA is to provide professional development, such as the ACA Annual Convention, as well as forums for the discussion of counseling related issues. Publications you will receive as an ACA member include the monthly newspaper, *Counseling Today*, and the quarterly journal, the *Journal of Counseling & Development*. Materials (e.g., posters, mugs, membership plaques, etc.) are also available to assist the members in developing awareness of counseling and advocating for the profession in the community. Divisions are also available depending upon your area of interest or specialization. More information can be found on the ACA website.

American Counseling Association (ACA)  
5999 Stevenson Avenue Alexandria, VA 22304-3300  
1-800-347-6647 TDD 703-823-6862



Website: [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)

### American School Counselor Association

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a division of the ACA that promotes professional development and ethical behavior among professional school counselors and school counseling students throughout the nation. ASCA works to fulfill its goals through advocacy and professional development. The benefits of ASCA include professional development opportunities, publications that give members updated information in the field of school counseling, networking with other school counseling professionals and students majoring in school counseling.

American School Counselor Association  
1101 King St., Suite 625  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
(703) 683-ASCA (800) 306-4722 Fax: (703) 683-1619  
Website: [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)

### Texas Counseling Association

The Texas Counseling Association (TCA) is one of the 56 branches of ACA and represents counseling professionals in the State of Texas interested in advocacy, lobbying, and the general promotion of the counseling profession. By joining TCA, you will receive the TCA journal and become eligible for professional liability insurance at affordable cost. Your dues provide TCA with the opportunity to lobby on behalf of both counselors and the counseling profession. For example, TCA was largely responsible for school counselors being included in the \$3,000 raise for teachers in the spring of 1999. TCA also provides invaluable legal advice on professional and personal matters to all TCA members. There are also local chapters of TCA throughout the state. You may call the TCA office for information on your local chapter membership brochures.

Texas Counseling Association (TCA)  
316 West 12th Street  
Austin, TX 78701  
(512) 472-3403 Website: [www.txca.org](http://www.txca.org)

### Association for Play Therapy

The Association for Play Therapy (APT) is an organization which supports credentialed play therapists to further develop their skills as play therapists, as well as supports the development of play therapy as a profession. Members of APT enjoy benefits such as publications, professional development opportunities, research opportunities, and networking opportunities with others who support the goals of play therapy. Publications members receive include the quarterly newsletter, *Play Therapy Magazine*, and the semi-annual journal, *International Journal of Play Therapy*. APT provides professional development opportunities through CEU trainings and the annual international conference. APT also provides research grants and awards recognizing outstanding members of APT in the profession of play therapy.

Association for Play Therapy  
3198 Willow Avenue, Suite 110  
Clovis, CA 93612  
Tel: (559) 294-2128 Fax: (559) 294-2198  
E-Mail: [info@a4pt.org](mailto:info@a4pt.org) Website: <https://www.a4pt.org/>

## Other Relevant Professional Organizations

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Program (CACREP)

[www.cacrep.org/](http://www.cacrep.org/)

Texas Behavioral Health Executive Council:

<https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/index.html>

Texas School Counselor Association

<http://www.txca.org/tsca/>

Texas Association for Play Therapy

[www.TxAPT.org](http://www.TxAPT.org)

## **Departmental Scholarship Opportunities**

### **Ann Albrecht Scholarship**

This scholarship was established to honor Dr. Ann Albrecht, a beloved retired professor in the Department.

#### ***Guidelines***

The amount varies and the deadline is August 1.

#### ***Criteria***

This scholarship will be given in the student(s) second semester in the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. The student(s) will have received full admittance to the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. And will have earned a 4.0 GPA in their first semester of the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.

#### ***Selection Process***

The Scholarship Committee in the Department of Counseling.

### **Linda Duncan Scholarship**

This scholarship was established to honor Dr. Linda Duncan, Emeritus Professor in the Department.

#### ***Guidelines***

The amount varies and the deadline is August 1.

#### ***Criteria***

This scholarship will be given to a graduate counseling major who has full admittance to the Department of Counseling, a graduate GPA of 3.5 or higher and has completed at least 24 semester hours of counseling courses at Tarleton State University.

#### ***Selection Process***

The Scholarship Committee in the Department of Counseling.

### **University Scholarships**

All Scholarship Information at Tarleton State University can be found at:

<https://www.tarleton.edu/scholarships/index.html>

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Faculty and Staff Information**

<http://www.tarleton.edu/counsel/people.html>

### **Appendix B. Faculty Advisors**

<http://www.tarleton.edu/counsel/student-resources/advising.html>

### **Appendix D: Course Rotations**

<http://www.tarleton.edu/counsel/student-resources/advising.html>

### **Appendix E: Textbooks**

<https://texanscampusbookstore.tarleton.edu/home>

### **Appendix F: Scholarships**

<https://www.tarleton.edu/scholarships/>

### **Appendix G: Tarleton State University Calendars**

<https://calendar.tarleton.edu/>