



Professional Counseling Program Student Handbook

Revised and Effective May 2019

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CMHC	Dr. Kathy Ybañez-Llorente	ky10@txstate.edu	Program Coordinator/Graduate Advisor; CACREP Liaison

Program Tracks/Emphases: **CMHC**: Clinical Mental Health Counseling, **MCFC**: Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling, **SC**: School Counseling

A Brief History

As one would suspect, many students have come and gone and many changes have taken place since our inception as the Counseling and Guidance Program in the early 1960s. The Graduate Office and the Graduate Catalogs are able to specify dates, course offerings and program requirements that have existed over the years and hence reflect many of the major changes in the Program.

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 (NDEA) provided the initial impetus and direction for counseling and guidance programs in Texas and across the nation. Prior to 1958, school counselors were a rarity. They were located primarily in the larger school systems and, for the most part, performed the functions typically associated with registrars (e.g., attendance, registration, transcripts, and letters of reference). The general intent of the NDEA was to train persons to use assessment instruments to identify academically capable high school students and to encourage (guide) them into the fields of mathematics and science.

The Counseling and Guidance Program at Texas State was formed by Dr. Jerome (Jerry) Stone in the early 1960s. The program was approved by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) as a school counselor-training program with primary focus on training high school level counselors, lesser emphasis on Junior High School students, and virtually no emphasis on working with elementary age children. It was housed in the Department of Education. According to Texas Education Agency guidelines, the major domain of counselors was the administration and interpretation of educational and vocational tests and inventories, and to conduct guidance activities associated with career choice and placement.

Officially, there was only minimal concern with "counseling" as we know it today. It is interesting to note that while the official focus mandated by TEA and NDEA supported programs that were guidance-oriented, early training programs offered by many universities actually focused on the development and use of therapeutic counseling skills to be used by school counselors. So, in many instances, the intent of public school guidance programs differed to some degree from the actual functioning and orientation of many counselors in those programs.

Course offerings by the Counseling and Guidance program at Texas State were initially limited and resulted in somewhat superficial coverage in some cases. For example, the Standardized Testing course dealt with elementary statistics, the administration and interpretation of a variety of educational and vocational oriented standardized tests and inventories, and covered the administration and interpretation of individually administered intelligence tests such as the Stanford-Binet and Wechsler scales--all in one course. Similarly, the Counseling Techniques courses included a wide-ranging survey of current counseling theories as well as practice in using many of the counseling techniques associated with various theoretical orientations. As one might suspect, supervision and critique of counseling experiences were limited. Furthermore, certification as a School Counselor required completion of only 30 hours of graduate-level courses, 18 of which had to be in guidance-related courses such as Human Growth and Development. In addition to an 18-hour major, a 6-hour minor could be obtained.

The faculty of the fledgling Counseling and Guidance Program was comprised of persons who taught courses in both secondary and elementary education as well as one or two courses in counseling and guidance. Thus, the early Counseling and Guidance faculty were all part-time instructors in the

program. At one time or another, most faculty members taught virtually every course offered in the program. In other words, there were no "teaching area specializations" on the part of most faculty members. As the Counseling and Guidance Program grew in popularity, additional faculty were employed and as a result of the "enrollment explosion" in the 1970s and 80s, faculty members were assigned to full-time teaching in the Counseling Program.

In 1977, the first Wimberley Counselor's Conference was organized and coordinated by Dr. Damon Miller. The Wimberley Counselor's Conference was a two-day conference for counselors in central, south central, and south Texas. It became an annual affair and participants were housed at the 7-A Resort in Wimberley, Texas. The format of the conference primarily involved informal, unstructured group discussions in which counselors' experiences and concerns were shared. Typically, one formal presentation or one activity workshop was held during the conference. The conference ended in 1997 due to housing problems and inadequate facilities.

The 1970s and 80s experienced two major movements. First, the Texas Education Agency developed and approved a program for the training and certification of Guidance Associates. Guidance Associates were undergraduate students who were to be trained in guidance oriented skills such as educational and vocational test administration and interpretation, and the presentation of educational, career and personal awareness programs for students. The intent was to allow school counselors to become more deeply involved in personal counseling activities by providing support personnel who could offer guidance services to students. Texas State developed and received approval for such an undergraduate program. However, it soon became apparent that problems existed. Certification of Guidance Associates was available but no funding was provided for the employment of these persons in the public schools. Thus, for each Guidance Associate employed, the school district was charged one classroom teacher unit. School districts were unwilling to lose classroom teachers by hiring Guidance Associates and were equally unwilling to pay for Guidance Associate salaries out of local funds.

Consequently, the program at Texas State was dropped, as were programs across the state. The second major movement might be called the mental health movement. A significant increase in interest in mental health counseling, marriage and family counseling, and substance abuse counseling resulted in the passing of licensing and certification laws relating to Associate Psychologists and subsequently Associate School Psychologists and Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC). The certification and licensing laws had at least five significant effects on programs at Texas State and at universities across the state. First, they resulted in a drastic increase in the number of students enrolling in graduate counseling programs. Almost overnight counselor education programs expanded to near unmanageable proportions requiring more sections and larger classes. Second, the majority of the new students were primarily interested in developing therapeutic treatment skills to be used in private practice or institutional or agency work. Only a limited number had public school teaching certification or teaching experience and few were interested in entering the public schools as counselors.

Accordingly, the primary focus of the Counseling Program shifted toward mental health counseling concerns, and interest in school counseling was significantly diminished. The shift in emphasis and focus constituted a third major effect. It led to a major restructuring of the Department of Education. Under the leadership of President Hardesty, the Department of Education was split up and a new department, the Department of Educational Administration and Psychological Services, was formed. This new department was devoted almost completely to teaching graduate level courses in

Educational Administration, School Psychology, and Counseling. Up to this time, the School Psychology program had been operating under the umbrella of the approved school counseling program. The School Psychology program eventually sought and received independent certification and was no longer required to certify its graduates under the umbrella of the Counseling Program.

In 1982 a new licensure for mental health private practice came into being. The Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) allowed graduates from schools of education to practice psychotherapy in Texas. The counseling program at Texas State added hours to the current school counseling program in order to meet standards for both school counseling and Licensed Professional Counseling in the state of Texas. This method of handling state certification and licensure requirements continued until the 1990s. During this time there was an increasing movement nationally and in Texas to upgrade and distinguish existing counseling degrees. Instead of a 36- to 39-hour degree program, licensure required 45 hours and then 48-60 hours, depending on the license sought. Students were beginning to experience difficulty in gaining licensing and certification privileges in other states. Also, those LPCs in private practice were having difficulty meeting the upgraded standards of insurance companies, prohibiting these ex-students from third party pay options. Also, during this decade, the state of Texas enacted a licensure in marriage and family therapy, creating a pool of potential students for which no degree plan was currently available. The result was that the counseling faculty dedicated the next several years to the creation of different areas of emphasis (e.g., school counseling, marriage and family counseling, mental health counseling, and college student affairs work). This expansion required a complete restructuring of the existing programs. However, such programs required approval of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas Education Agency. It took almost five years to achieve program approval. The benefit was that the counseling program was finally designated as a Professional Counseling program (within the department of Educational Administration and Psychological Services) and ultimately approval was given to develop and offer the new programs.

Beginning in 2000, the Professional Counseling Program has been nationally accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) for the M.A. Program in Professional Counseling emphases (including Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and School Counseling). As a way to better reflect the academic programs housed within the department, the EAPS department name was changed to CLAS: Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology.

In 2016, CACREP approved the reaccreditation of all three M.A. emphases, Clinical Mental Health Counseling; Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; and School Counseling. Beginning in Fall 2016 some courses were renamed to provide alignment with the LPC rules and the CACREP criteria. The 61-hour program of Clinical Mental Health Counseling and Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling became 60 credit hours and School Counseling became 54 credit hours.

In 2018, the Professional Counseling Program received approval to increase the School Counseling emphasis to 60 hours in order to meet state licensure requirements and CACREP hour requirements. The program also received approval for a 48 hour School Counselor Certificate program that would meet state requirements for those solely seeing state certification.

Professional Counseling Program Philosophy

We believe that a well-prepared counselor is involved in and committed to a process of intentional growth that promotes pro-social autonomy, lifelong learning, and ethical behavior. These ideals are fostered within a dynamic and multi-modal learning setting in which diversity, critical thinking, self-in-context, scholarship, praxis, and the creation and integration of knowledge are celebrated.

Principles Which Guide Our Philosophy

- We will provide a safe, supportive, instructional environment for personal and professional growth.
- We will have a curriculum that develops skills reflective of professional standards and ethics.
- We will promote a collaborative environment that fosters creativity, critical thinking, and scholarship.
- We will be proactive in creating an academic community that represents and recognizes diverse worldviews.
- We will model and encourage the integration of self, theory, and practice.
- We will have performance-based, measurable objectives that are integrated across the curriculum.
- We will be proactive in promoting diversity among faculty, staff, and students.
- We will utilize a variety of instructional strategies and assessment techniques.
- We will share our beliefs, policies, procedures, and student expectations in a clear, open manner.
- We will promote shared governance among students and faculty.

Student Learning Outcomes

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical foundations of counseling, systematically articulate one's own professional philosophy, and integrate this philosophy into practice.

The student will demonstrate appropriate intervention strategies that integrate theory, client assessment information, and accepted professional counseling skills while providing a safe and secure therapeutic environment.

The student will demonstrate a working knowledge of ethical standards, and an ability to exercise ethical, moral reasoning in all matters relative to professional practice.

The student will demonstrate a commitment to becoming a responsible and contributing member of the counseling profession.

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the on-going relationship between personal self-care and professional effectiveness.

The student will demonstrate knowledge of basic statistics and research methodology, and integrate this knowledge into professional practice.

The student will demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which behavior, attitudes, and values impact professional relationships.

The student will demonstrate an understanding of diversity issues and an awareness of how they impact personal, professional, and community relationships.

Ethical Standards

All students are expected to understand and demonstrate their understanding of the 2014 American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics, and the Texas State University rules and regulations for student conduct, including those identified in the Texas State Student Handbook (<http://www.dos.txstate.edu/handbook.html>).

As part of the admission requirements, all students are required to sign an informed consent document acknowledging that the ACA Code of Ethics has been read. This consent document is maintained in the student's departmental file. The Professional Counseling Program at Texas State, as well as the counseling profession in general, has high expectations of students, and violations of University rules or professional ethical standards could render a student unfit to continue in the program.

Students are expected to periodically review the rules and regulations for student conduct and the ethical standards to insure continued understanding and practice throughout their time in the program.

Texas State ID, E-mail, and Listserv

The importance of obtaining an ID card and e-mail account through the university, as well as subscribing to the program listserv, cannot be over emphasized. Please take the time to complete these tasks as soon as possible. Failing to do so can result in your failing to receive valuable information from the university and the counseling faculty. *Immediate actions needed:*

➤ ***Get a Texas State ID – BobcatCard.***

This identification will allow you to use the library and other student services. ID cards are processed at the LBJ Student Center, Room 2-9.1 (phone: 245-2297). In order to obtain an ID card, you must pay the initial tuition installment for your first semester. If you wish to have your ID card made the same day you pay your tuition, simply take your receipt with you. You can also add a new purchasing feature to your BobcatCard that will allow you to use it as an ATM card. This new feature would allow you to use your BobcatCard at such places as the University Bookstore, Student Health Center, Mail Services, Campus Recreation, Paws Market, and all dining halls across campus, in addition to many off-campus vendors.

➤ ***Subscribe to the Professional Counseling Program listserv.***

The listserv is only for students in the Professional Counseling Program and alumni. It is used to disseminate information such as program updates, internship openings, comprehensive exam applications and practicum/internship application information. Students have the option to receive emails in digest or individual formats; individual format is recommended as attachments cannot be included in digest mode.

Students may subscribe to the listserv by going to the following webpage:

<http://groups.txstate.edu/mailman/listinfo/pro-counseling-prog>

Student members may also unsubscribe their email address at the same webpage.

The email address for posting messages is: pro-counseling-prog@groups.txstate.edu.

Please use this email address as opposed to sending it to faculty members to post on your behalf. The listserv moderator will process the email accordingly.

If you have more questions about the listserv, please email the listserv moderator, Dr. Maria Haiyasoso, mh1423@txstate.edu.

Class Registration

It is important to remember that the availability of classes cannot be guaranteed.

BE ADVISED: the most accurate source of current class offerings is to be found on CATSWEB, rather than in any available printed material.

Advance registration for the Spring semester is held the preceding Fall semester and advance registration for the Summer and Fall semesters is held together during the preceding Spring semester. **Only students who are enrolled in the semester in which advance registration is held are eligible to register early.** All others must participate in the regular registration process, unless specifically approved by the Department Chair and/or Faculty Advisor in Professional Counseling. See the Registrar website for registration dates and process information: www.registrar.txstate.edu

Students are encouraged to plan ahead and contact a Faculty Advisor to discuss course planning and degree completion requirements well in advance of registration.

Classes can fill up quickly, so register as soon as you are able. When registering, it is wise to have several alternative plans so that you are prepared to handle scheduling conflicts and classes that are full. Remember, you can locate index numbers of classes and view current course availability on CATSWEB. Follow these steps starting on the Texas State homepage: [CatsWeb](#)> [Students](#)> [Class Offerings \(by Term\)](#)> [Semester Year](#)> [Subject: Counseling, Course Level: Graduate/Masters](#)> [Class Search](#)

NOTE: If payment is not made on time, the university will drop a student's registration. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that payment is made on time. The academic calendar on the Texas State University homepage includes payment deadlines for your convenience.

Special Registration Situations:

Override Requests

In order to register:

1. for classes that require prerequisites in which you are currently enrolled;
2. for classes that are "closed"; or
3. for extra hours in the summer and long semesters,

you will need to complete an "override" form and it will be submitted to a CLAS administrative assistant (see Appendix A) for processing. **Faculty members cannot process override requests.**

To submit an override form, go to the [Professional Counseling Class Registration Override form](#) on the CLAS website. In order to secure an override in advance (other than for closed classes), it is advised that students submit their requests **TWO WEEKS** prior to early registration or the regular registration deadline. Late submissions risk not being processed in time for approval.

The process for securing an override is as follows:

1. Complete the [online override form](#) specifying student name, email address, student ID#, course #, CRN #, type of override needed, and justification for the override.
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2. Submit the electronic form. The Professional Counseling administrative assistant, will review all override requests and then notify students when the override request is approved or denied.

Waitlisting Process

When you find a closed class during registration, a waitlisting option might be offered. Be advised that not all courses will have this option available. If there is a waitlist established for the class, you will see it as an option during registration. The Office of the University Registrar has established a [Waitlisting](#) webpage that includes a tutorial describing this process.

Credit Hour Overloads

The program recommendation is taking no more than 9 credit hours per semester. All requests for additional hours must be approved by the Program Coordinator. Please also note that not all overrides or requests are granted.

Faculty Advisement

Faculty advisors advise students regarding coursework, certification and licensure requirements, program policies and procedures, changes in degree plans, and educational and career needs.

While students may consult with any faculty member, each student is assigned to a specific Faculty Advisor by area of emphasis. Consultation with the Faculty Advisor should be sought whenever questions arise. ***During your first semester, it is strongly recommended that you meet with your Faculty Advisor to plan a course of study.*** If you do not know the name of your assigned Faculty Advisor, please contact the Professional Counseling Program Coordinator, Dr. Kathy Ybañez-Llorente at ky10@txstate.edu.

Faculty may be reached via email, campus phone, or in person by appointment, during office hours. In order to receive the timeliest response, it may be helpful to make your initial contact via multiple forms of communication. Include in your message an inquiry as to the preferred mode of communication for that faculty member. Faculty have individual preferences as to which form of communication is most favored, based on varying schedules throughout the semester, including campus location between San Marcos and Round Rock.

Keep in mind that there may be times when faculty members will be temporarily unavailable. If you do not receive a timely response to a time sensitive question, you may want to contact an administrative assistant or another faculty member.

Student Orientation

Students are also encouraged to attend the program's Student Orientation. These are held at the beginning of each Fall and Spring semester, with one held on the San Marcos campus, and one held on the Round Rock campus. Orientations are announced via the student listserv.

Professional Counseling Performance Standards

Program Standards

Students enrolled in the Professional Counseling Program must maintain high scholastic standards and develop skills necessary to work with people with diverse needs. Students are expected to demonstrate emotional and mental fitness in their professional fields and to uphold the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics and any other relevant codes of ethics of relevant professional associations and the State of Texas. A student's acceptance into the Professional Counseling Program does not guarantee professional fitness, which is required to remain in the program. At any time if a student does not seem professionally fit, he/she may be referred to a Program Standards Committee to discuss the student's needs.

Academic Appeal Policy

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 grade change must be approved by the Department Chair, the Dean of the College of Education, and/or the Dean of the Graduate College. Students who wish to appeal a grade should first discuss the issue with the instructor. If no resolution is reached, the student may appeal to or discuss a concern with the department chair. If no satisfactory conclusion can be reached at this level, the student may appeal to the college dean. The dean's decision is final.

Student Retention Policy

Students must attain a course grade of "B" or better in all required courses for the degree. If your cumulative grade-point average falls below 3.0 during any semester of enrollment at Texas State, this will result in being placed on academic probation. In your next semester of enrollment, you must raise your cumulative graduate school GPA to 3.0 or above, or risk suspension from the Graduate College. When you have achieved a GPA of at least 3.0 at the end of your semester of probation, you will be notified by the Graduate College that you have been removed from probation status.

Re-admission

Following suspension status for six months, you may petition the Graduate Advisor and the Dean of the Graduate College for permission for re-admission. Each re-admission decision is made on an individual basis. If you are re-admitted after you have been suspended, you must maintain a GPA of 3.0 in each semester of enrollment.

Professional Endorsement Policy

The Professional Counseling Faculty will not endorse any graduate from this program for a license or certification for which they have not been trained.

Evaluation of Student Fitness and Performance

Student Review Policy and Appeal Process

Evaluating Student Performance

Members of the faculty, using their professional judgment, continually evaluate students' performance. Students receive feedback about their performance from faculty members, advisors, and supervisors. The criteria used by the faculty to make such judgments include instructors' observations of course performance, evaluations of students' performances in simulated practice situations, supervisors' evaluations of students' performances in practice situations, the code of ethics, and the Professional Counseling Performance Evaluation Form.

Required Withdrawal from the Program

If a faculty member believes that a student is not making satisfactory progress or meeting program, professional, or university standards, that faculty member will discuss the situation with the student. If the faculty member believes the student's performance cannot improve to acceptable standards, the faculty member may refer the student to a Program Standards Committee.

This committee will provide the student, in writing, with concerns regarding non-satisfactory progress, and provide the student an opportunity to meet with the committee to discuss those concerns. After considering the matter, and within 10 working days of meeting with the student, the committee will report to the student and the Department Chair its recommendation that the student either be allowed to remain in or be removed from the program, and/or that the student must meet specified conditions to remain in the program. Within 10 days of the receipt of such notification, the student will notify the Chair of the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology of the acceptance or appeal to the committee's recommendation. Lack of notification by the student is taken to mean acceptance. If the student is recommended to stay in the program, the committee may develop a growth or remediation plan that addresses the behavior in question.

If the student appeals the decision, the Department Chair will determine whether or not the student remains in the program or is subject to specified conditions. The Department Chair may or may not meet with the student prior to this decision. The Chair's final decision will be provided to the student in writing.

Final Appeal

A student who is dissatisfied with the Chair's decision may appeal to the Dean of the College of Education. For an appeal to be considered, the student must submit a written notice for an appeal to the Department Chair within ten working days of receiving the Chair's decision. The Dean will consider the matter and notify the student of her or his decision within ten working days of receipt of the appeal from the Chair.

NOTE: For the official policy on the appeals process, refer to the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology section of the [Graduate College Graduate Catalog](#).

Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)

The [Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination \(CPCE\)](#) is an exit examination required of all Professional Counseling Master's degree students at Texas State University. The purpose of the exam is to assess the student's knowledge of counseling to ensure minimum competence in the field. The CPCE will also provide collective feedback that can be used by the program in developing/adapting curriculum. **The CPCE is offered each Spring, Summer, and Fall semester.**

Students must pass the CPCE in order to advance in the program and enroll in COUN 5689 Clinical Practicum and COUN 5389 Site-based Internship (see Scoring section below). Given this requirement, many students take the CPCE the semester they will be enrolled in an Intermediate Methods course (which is also a pre-requisite to enroll in Clinical Practicum) or even the semester they are enrolled in COUN 5369 – Child & Adolescent Counseling, so they have two semesters before Practicum. It is advised that students complete the CPCE designated courses (see below) prior to taking the CPCE.

Benefits of Using the CPCE

- Allows Master's program comprehensive exams to better meet psychometric standards.
- Gives programs an objective view of the knowledge level of their students.
- Allows programs to examine student functioning in various curricular areas.
- Promotes longitudinal self-study.
- Compares a program's results to national data.
- Stimulates student integration of knowledge learned in separate courses.
- Gives students comparative strength / weakness feedback.

NOTE: CPCE is NOT a licensure exam. If you would like more information about the licensure exams you can find out more for each license:

- Licensed Professional Counselor: [National Counselor Exam](#)
- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist: [Examination in Marriage and Family Therapy](#)

Development of the CPCE

The CPCE is researched, developed, and distributed by both the Research and Assessment Corporation for Counseling (RACC) and the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE), two affiliate corporations of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). The item writing committee was selected from master's and doctoral level professionals. The committee compiled a comprehensive listing of texts used in counselor education programs. Each question was developed based on information found in the most commonly used textbooks.

Testing Information

The Texas State Professional Counseling Program uses the Center for Credentialing and Education's Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE). The examination was selected because it evaluates the eight CACREP core content areas and is a national standardized examination. Students begin the registration process through this website and take the exam at a Pearson VUE testing center.

* Students in the Professional Counseling Program at Texas State University are the only ones who can register for the CPCE through this website. Students from other universities should contact their own counseling program for approved testing centers.

CPCE Testing and Application Dates

Upcoming CPCE testing and application dates are available on the Texas State University Professional Counseling CPCE website at: <https://www.txstate.edu/clas/Professional-Counseling/current-students/CPCE.html>

Application and Payment Information

The CPCE program application should only be completed during the application dates listed for the corresponding testing date. Completing this application will indicate your intent to test during the next testing cycle. Upon the registration window closing, you will be notified of your eligibility to move forward and register for the exam through CCE.

Students will be notified about the CPCE application via the student listserv approximately two months prior to the CPCE exam.

In order to take the exam, students must first complete the program's CPCE online application. Approval to test will be determined by the Professional Counseling Program. Eligible examinees will receive additional information from the CPCE Coordinator directing them how to register and pay for the exam. When registering for the exam (a multi-step process), students will be able to schedule their exam at a Pearson VUE testing center at a time and location of their choosing, pending availability at their chosen testing center. Students must test within the testing window and must report their overall score to the CPCE Coordinator by the date listed on the CPCE webpage.

Total Exam Fee is \$150

If a student needs to cancel or reschedule the CPCE exam for any reason, the fee paid to CCE/PearsonVUE will extend examinee eligibility for 6 months. After that 6 month window, or if the exam was not passed the first time, the examinee will have to pay CCE/PearsonVUE for a new CPCE administration.

CPCE Online Application

The CPCE online application is only available **during the application dates listed on the CPCE website** for the corresponding testing date. Test dates are announced as they are confirmed with CCE/PearsonVUE. Here is the link to the online application: [CPCE Online Application](#)

Content Areas

The CPCE covers the Content Areas listed below. The CPCE should be taken as soon as the following courses are completed and **prior to** applying for Practicum. THE CPCE must be passed and an Intermediate Methods course completed to register for Clinical Practicum. It is strongly recommended, but not required, that you complete coursework in the CPCE Content Areas before taking the exam.

CPCE Content Areas	Content Area Definitions	Texas State Counseling Courses
Human Growth and Development	Studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.	COUN 5368 - Developmental Issues
Social and Cultural Foundations	Studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.	COUN 5301 – Professional Counseling Orientation or COUN 5328 – Professional Orientation in School Counseling COUN 5316 - Counseling Diverse Populations
Helping Relationships	Studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes.	COUN 5307 - Theories of Counseling and Personality COUN 5354 - Basic Counseling Skills and Abnormal Behavior
Group Work	Studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches.	COUN 5358 - Dynamics and Processes in Group Counseling
Career and Lifestyle Development	Studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors.	COUN 5355 - Career Counseling
Assessment	Studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.	COUN 5305 - Assessment in Counseling
Research and Program Evaluation	Studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research.	COUN 5391 - Research Seminar
Professional Orientation & Ethics	Studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentialing.	COUN 5350 – Advanced Counselor Ethics

Format

The CPCE consists of 160 total items with 20 items per CACREP area. Of the 20 items per section, 17 will be scored, with the remaining 3 serving as pretest items. The purpose of imbedded pre-test items is to generate actual score performance data on items for future use or deletion. 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.

Scoring

Passing the CPCE is a requirement for graduation. The Professional Counseling Program established the passing score of 92 as a cumulative score on a single test administration.

In order to proceed to COUN 5689 Clinical Practicum, students must pass the CPCE examination with a minimum of a 92, or the score must be within two points (90). Earning a passing score of 92 is required to proceed to COUN 5389 Site-based Internship.

Based on program policy, the following occurs when students do not pass the CPCE: Students who fail the CPCE after the first attempt will need to set up an appointment with their faculty advisor to develop a study plan prior to signing up to take the CPCE for the second time. Students who fail after a second attempt will meet with a Program Standards Committee to discuss additional needs and support. Upon the third failed attempt and based on PSC recommendations, students are not allowed to register for additional classes and are not allowed further attempts at the comprehensive exam. See **Evaluation of Student Fitness and Performance** for more information.

CPCE Study Resources

Students should begin to study for the CPCE by participating in classes and studying class notes. Students can also use a study guide for the National Counselor Exam (NCE) to study for the CPCE. Here are additional CPCE resources:

- [Study Guides Available at Alkek Library](#)
- [CPCE Textbook List](#)
- [Content and Sample Items](#)

If you have any questions about the comprehensive exam, you can contact the Comprehensive Exam Coordinator, Dr. Katie Purswell at kp1074@txstate.edu.

Liability Insurance

All students who register for an intermediate methods course (COUN 5360, 5366, 5370, 5373) or practicum/internship course (COUN 5689, 5389) are required to show proof of student counseling liability insurance. Students can join through the Texas Counseling Association, the American Counseling Association, or the American School Counseling Association, which allow members with student status to carry low-cost liability insurance.

Reminder: Liability insurance should be purchased prior to taking intermediate methods or practicum courses to avoid delays in working with clients. You will be required to provide a copy of liability insurance at the beginning of each class in order to verify coverage. Students are also responsible for renewing the insurance as needed.

In some instances, interns may be required to provide health certificates to work with clients. These certificates may be obtained through the University Health Center. If any additional verification is needed (e.g., Criminal background check, Pre-employment drug screen, etc.), students will need to secure it through the employment/Internship site, Human Resources office, or a separate, independent agency. Texas State University's Professional Counseling Program is not allowed to secure, facilitate, pay for, or maintain results of these types of requirements for students.

Clinical Sequence of Classes

The clinical course sequence is made up of the following courses, each of which must be taken in separate semesters. The sequencing of the classes is important, as each one builds a foundation for the next clinical course. As such, each course should be taken as closely as possible to the next course.

COUN 5354 Basic Techniques

COUN 5360/5366/5370/or 5373 - Intermediate Methods specialty courses

See your individual degree plan for the required IM class for your emphasis area; the appropriate IM course MUST be taken prior to COUN 5689, Clinical Practicum.

COUN 5689 Clinical Practicum

While in 5689, apply for COUN 5389, Site Based Internship (this requirement applies to all degree emphases)

COUN 5389 Site Based Internship I

While in first semester of 5389, apply for the second semester of internship (applies to CMHC and MCFC degree emphases)

COUN 5389 Site Based Internship II

Complete second Internship section. If not all required experience hours are gained in this second internship, the student must apply for and register for a third semester of internship. (applies to CMHC and MCFC degree emphases)

The next section will detail Clinical Practicum and Site-based Internship requirements.

Clinical Practicum and Internship

The counseling courses for which students must apply to and be accepted into are:

- *COUN 5689, Clinical Practicum*
- *COUN 5389, Site-Based Internship*

NOTE: Students must reapply between internship semesters.

Eligibility

Eligibility for the above courses is based on *successful completion of the prerequisite courses*. Students should adhere to the sequence of courses in the degree outline and advising provided by faculty. Specific course prerequisites for the specific practicum experiences are outlined in the Graduate Catalog and on CATSWEB.

Students must have a 3.0 grade point average in all graduate courses (i.e., "B" or better in each class) to apply and register for Practicum/Internship. Every applicant must be approved by the faculty member who is teaching the desired section. Any faculty member may challenge the student's eligibility or fitness for the Practicum/Internship under the Student Fitness and Performance Appraisal guidelines of the Department of Counseling, Leadership, Adult Education, and School Psychology (CLAS). No student will be admitted to any Practicum/Internship course until all challenges for fitness have been resolved.

Priority of placement is based on:

- Passing (or within 2 points of passing) the CPCE. Placement will not be made without this being met (see Note below).
- Most required courses completed (not including electives)
- Time/date of submission

NOTE: The CPCE examination (comprehensive examination) must be passed with a score of 92, or the score must be within the standard error of measurement (within two points of 92; i.e., 90 or 91), for the student to proceed to COUN 5689, Clinical Practicum. A passing score must be obtained to proceed to COUN 5389, Site Internship. Students who fail after the first attempt will meet with their advisor prior to signing up for the CPCE for the second time. Additionally, students who fail after a second attempt will meet with a Program Standards Committee (PSC). Upon the third failed attempt and based on PSC recommendations, students cannot register for classes and may not be allowed further attempts at the comprehensive examinations.

Application and Deadlines

Application for practicum/internship experiences must be submitted for **each** experience. Acceptance and completion of one course **does not** guarantee acceptance into a second course. Application forms are available during specific application periods, and deadline information is posted on the [Professional Counseling website](#) under the respective tabs.

Written notification of acceptance to a practicum/internship will be provided by the Practicum/Internship Coordinator as soon as all applications have been processed. The assigned University Supervisor/Professor of each section will provide specific course information and guidelines to students registered for their particular section. Students whose applications are not accepted must reapply for the subsequent semester.

Those students who missed the application deadline will be put on a waiting list in priority order, should an opening become available. Due to required faculty to student ratios required in these clinical classes, course enrollment is capped. We utilize the early application process to determine how many sections of Clinical Practicum and Internship will be needed each semester. Thus, seats are not guaranteed for those students missing the deadlines and applying late.

Clinical Practicum (COUN 5689)

Clinical Practicum is held in the Professional Counseling Clinics on both the San Marcos and Round Rock campuses.

The clinical practicum is conducted under the direct supervision of a Professional Counseling Program faculty member. Applications are due according to the schedule listed on the website. The Clinical Practicum includes 100 hours of clinical work comprised of the following:

- Co-leading a counseling group off campus focusing on personal and/or interpersonal development (20 direct group hours). We prefer that students co-lead with a licensed or certified counseling professional (i.e., LPC, LMFT, LCSW, Licensed Psychologist, or Certified School Counselor), but will accept co-leadership with licensees currently under supervision (i.e., LPC-Intern, LMFT-Associate, LMSW working toward LCSW). Please consult with your Practicum professor/supervisor for approval of your group experience. ***Please be aware: By the first week of class in Clinical Practicum, you are required to secure an off-campus group counseling site where you will earn the group co-facilitation hours.***
- Conducting individual counseling sessions with clients (individual, children, adolescents, couples, and families) under live supervision with a counseling program faculty member (20 direct hours); and
- Participating in three hours of individual and group supervision per week, observation of other student's counseling sessions when time permits, preparing case notes, and doing extended research to prepare for counseling sessions each week (60 indirect hours).

Site-Based Internship (COUN 5389)

The site-based internship experience is completed *at a pre-approved site and with a pre-approved supervisor chosen by the student*. If a new internship site is desired, the student must gain prior approval through coordination by site personnel and the Practicum/Internship Coordinator. Students should indicate their proposed site in the application for internship.

If a new site is desired:

- The site *supervisor* must have submitted a *Professional Disclosure Statement for Supervision* (see Internship section) and be deemed appropriate by the Practicum/Internship Coordinator.
- Appropriate forms (e.g., Memorandum of Agreement, Intern Activity Plan, etc.), which are found in the Internship Packet must be provided to the coordinator.
- Final assignment to the internship will then be made.

Site supervisors must hold an independent state issued license in their discipline (LPC, LMFT, LCSW, Licensed Psychologist), or be a Texas Certified School Counselor (for school emphasis only). State approved supervisor status is NOT required for Site based supervisors (LPC-S, LMFT-S).

NOTE: It is recommended that students begin arranging their sites and updating their vitas* early in the semester prior to their internship semester.

*Vita = a biographical resume of one's career and training, as prepared by a person applying for a job (See Career Services for preparation assistance, if necessary).

Internship Sites

To meet Program and CACREP standards, the following parameters for COUN 5389, Site-Based Internship, are as follows:

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The internship site is to provide the student the opportunity to use preventative, developmental, and remedial counseling interventions with appropriate clientele and community interventions. Direct client contact hours must be earned in a community agency setting. Interns must earn 120 direct client contact hours and 180 indirect hours each semester, for a total of 300 hours per semester and 600 hours over the course of the two semesters.

Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling

The internship site is to provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate systemic approaches, primarily with couples and families. For Internship, direct client contact hours must be earned in a community agency setting. Interns must earn 120 direct client contact hours and 180 indirect hours each semester, for a total of 300 hours per semester and 600 hours over the course of the two semesters. Of those 120 direct client contact hours per semester, **40 direct hours per semester must be relational hours**. This relational experience includes counseling with couples, families, sibling groups, and parent-child dyads. The remaining 80 direct client contact hours can be with individuals, groups, couples, or families. MCFC students must have a total of **80 relational hours** out of the 240 direct client contact hours over both internship semesters.

School Counseling

The internship site for one semester of COUN 5389 is to be in a K-12 school counseling setting through the school counseling program at the school. The site supervisor should be a certified for two years or have a minimum of two years of professional school counseling experience. The student intern will have the opportunity to demonstrate individual and group counseling approaches to enhance the personal, academic, and career success of K-12 students as well as demonstrate competence in consultation with parents and school staff, and coordination of the school counseling program. It is expected that the school is following the state approved Developmental Guidance Plan.

- A total of 240 direct client contact hours should include individual and group counseling of students, classroom guidance presentations, consultation services to parents and teachers.
 - The student intern must log a total of 600 hours: 240 direct client contact and 360 indirect hours. This is typically completed in one semester.
-

Additional recommendations about Internships:

- Paid internships are possible, not frequent. Be advised that all students are ultimately responsible for securing their own paid or unpaid internship placements.
- Begin considering and reviewing potential internship sites at least two semesters prior to applying for Internship.
- Review material posted within the Clinical Experience TRACS site. Your access will be permitted to this site once you complete COUN 5354 Basic Techniques.
- Internship information is also regularly posted on the listserv, from announcements about Internship Fairs, to notices directly from sites seeking interns.
- It may be helpful to volunteer at potential internship sites prior to entering into internship, or seek an opportunity to co-facilitate groups at the site during Clinical Practicum.
- The internship experience is an important part of your personal and professional growth and direction. Choose sites and supervisors accordingly.
- It is recommended that students be proactive in seeking accurate, up-to-date information regarding internship requirements. Ask questions if you are not sure. Do not assume!

Thesis

Degree audits are set up according to “thesis” and “non-thesis” options. For more information about theses, including procedures for finding a topic and choosing a thesis chair and committee, please refer the Thesis/Dissertation Guide on the Graduate College website:

<http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/students/thesis-dissertation.html>

If you did not choose a thesis option when applying to the program, you can add the thesis to your degree plan by contacting your assigned advisor or the Graduate Advisor.

Two courses are assigned for the thesis:

- **5399A Thesis.** (3-0) This course represents a student’s initial thesis enrollment. No thesis credit is awarded until student has completed the thesis in COUN 5399B. Graded on a credit (CR), progress (PR), no credit (F) basis.
- **5399B Thesis.** (3-0) This course represents a student’s continuing thesis enrollments. The student continues to enroll in this course until the thesis is submitted for binding. Graded on a credit (CR), progress (PR), no credit (F) basis.

NOTE: Thesis courses are *additional* hours to the degree plan; they may not be used in lieu of electives. These two courses will be taken at the end of the student’s program.

Students are encouraged to utilize their time in COUN 5391 Research Methods to explore and develop their thesis topic.

National Counselor Certification and Exam

The NCE is a 200-item multiple choice examination designed to assess knowledge and skills determined to be important for providing effective counseling services. Passing the National Counselor Exam is a requirement for licensure in many states, including the State of Texas.

Here is some basic information about the NCE:

- Since our counseling program is CACREP-accredited, students can choose to take the NCE before or after graduation. If you choose to take it during the counseling program, you are applying to become a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and take the NCE. If you choose to take the NCE after graduation, you will apply to take the NCE through the LPC Board. ***See the table below for more information about the difference between these two options.***
- Students do not have to take the NCE to graduate. This is not the Comprehensive Exam (CPCE), which is a requirement for graduation. A separate email will be sent via the student listserv when the CPCE application is available online.

Taking the NCE During Graduate School	Taking the NCE After Graduate School
Cost: \$335	Cost: \$275
NCE is offered twice a year in April and October.	NCE is offered each month.
NCE is administered as a computer-based exam.	NCE is administered as a computer-based exam.
Scores take eight weeks to process.	Scores are available right after you take the NCE.
You're applying to become an NCC and take the National Counselor Exam.	You are just applying with the LPC Board to take the National Counselor Exam.
The NCC is a credential, not a clinical license. Having an NCC offers several benefits such as having a professional credential and access to professional resources, products, and discounts.	You can choose if you want to pursue becoming an NCC or not.
Once you graduate, transcript submitted to NBCC to finalize NCC application (can take 6-8 weeks), and then official NCE score report is sent to you. Then you can apply for licensure.	There may be a delay in working toward your LPC, because you have to graduate and then take the NCE. You can register for the NCE as soon as you graduate and then apply for the license after you pass the exam.
Texas State University requires that you pass the CPCE prior to applying to become an NCC and take the NCE.	You will have passed the CPCE and met all graduation requirements (including graduating!) prior to applying to take the NCE.
Sign up through Texas State University and then register and pay through NBCC. NBCC sends you a link to the registration process via email.	Sign up through the Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors after you graduate by completing the form available on their website.

Program Requirements for NCC Eligibility

Our program requirements for students to be eligible to apply for the NCC credential and take the NCE include:

- Students are degree-seeking counseling students,
- Students have completed six of the eight core CACREP subject areas, and
- Students have passed the CPCE exam. *

If you have met all of these requirements, then click on the link to the online NCC sign up page. The sign up page provides the information so that the Texas State University Professional Counseling Program can verify students and create an "NCC Eligible Student List." NBCC will then send students on the NCC Eligible Student list a link to the NCC credential process and NCE online application. You must be on the Texas State NCC Eligible Student List to get an invitation to begin the NCC credential process and sign up through NBCC to take the NCE.

***CPCE clarification** - If you have not yet taken the CPCE, but plan to take it three or more months prior to the NCE, you can complete the NCC Sign Up application. Texas State must be able to confirm that you passed the CPCE several months before the NCE due to NBCC application due dates for participating universities. An example of this is if you plan to take the CPCE in September, you could not sign up to take the NCE in October but you could sign up to take the NCE in April.

NCC Application Process

If you meet program requirements for NCC eligibility, sign up to take the NCE during NCE sign up times listed on the Texas State University Professional Counseling NCE website at:

<http://www.txstate.edu/clas/Professional-Counseling/NCE.html>

Here are the NCC/NCE sign up procedures:

1. **Complete NCC Sign Up through Texas State** - Complete the NCC Online Application through Texas State University Professional Counseling Program to be endorsed by our program to become an NCC and take the NCE. You must assure that you have met eligibility requirements (listed above) before you complete the sign up. The link for the NCC Sign Up is: [NCC Sign Up](#). The email confirmation you receive is your confirmation that you have completed the application. If there are any issues with your application, such as not meeting eligibility requirements, Dr. Purswell will email you directly within two weeks.
2. **Complete NBCC online application and pay for the NCC/NCE** - NBCC will review the list sent by Texas State University, then send an email individually to students on the list. This may take several weeks. The email will have a subject line that says something like, "You have been endorsed for National Certification." It will direct you to the ProCounselor website to begin the NBCC sign up process.
3. **Prepare for and take the NCE!** - Take time to study for the exam! It's an expensive exam, so you want to do your best. NBCC will send a confirmation letter about one to two weeks before the exam. Follow the guidelines on that letter, including what you need to take to the exam (e.g., ID, NBCC confirmation letter). Arrive early for the exam and use your mindfulness skills to be mentally and emotionally prepared. You can do this!
4. **Receive results and complete LPC and NCC application processes.** - NBCC will send your results to you within eight weeks. At that time you can begin the process of applying to become an LPC-Intern through the LPC Board and complete the rest of the NCC application process through NBCC. The LPC Board website is [Texas LPC Board](#).

Where can I take the NCE?

If you are an eligible professional counseling student, you can take the NCE exam at a Pearson VUE testing center. Logistics for the exam will be arranged by you when you receive confirmation from

NBCC to formally register for and pay for the NCE administration. After you register, if you still have questions about the date, time, and location of the exam, you can contact NBCC at nbcc@nbcc.org

How is the NCE Scored? (NBCC, 2014)

The NCE uses 160 items of the 200-item exam to determine if a test taker meets the minimum passing score. The other 40 items undergo field testing to establish suitability for future use. Test takers will not know which items are being field tested when they take the NCE. The maximum possible score on the NCE is 160. NBCC determines the minimum passing score, which varies between versions, using a modified Angoff procedure. The NCE is not scored on a curve, so scores are not influenced by other test taker's results. NBCC will not release your examination score to a third party without your written consent.

<https://www.nbcc.org/Exams/NCE>

NCE Content Areas

The NCE covers the Content Areas listed below.

NCE Content Areas	Content Area Definitions	Texas State Counseling Courses
Human Growth and Development	Studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels.	COUN 5368 - Developmental Issues
Social and Cultural Foundations	Studies that provide an understanding of issues and trends in a multicultural and diverse society.	COUN 5301 – Professional Counseling Orientation or
		COUN 5328 – Professional Orientation in School Counseling
		COUN 5316 - Counseling Diverse Populations
Helping Relationships	Studies that provide an understanding of counseling and consultation processes.	COUN 5307 - Theories of Counseling and Personality
		COUN 5354 - Basic Techniques in Counseling
Group Work	Studies that provide an understanding of group development, dynamics, counseling theories, group counseling methods and skills, and other group work approaches.	COUN 5358 - Dynamics and Processes in Group Counseling
Career and Lifestyle Development	Studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors.	COUN 5355 - Career Counseling
Appraisal	Studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation.	COUN 5305 - Assessment in Counseling
Research and Program Evaluation	Studies that provide an understanding of types of research methods, basic statistics, and ethical and legal considerations in research.	COUN 5391 - Research Seminar

Professional Orientation & Ethics	Studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning including history, roles, organizational structures, ethics, standards, and credentialing.	COUN 5350 – Advanced Counselor Ethics
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National Certified Counselor (NCC) Credential

The National Certified Counselor (NCC) is a voluntary credential that identifies to members of the public and prospective employers that you have met national certification standards based on research conducted in the field. The NCC is not a clinical license, so students cannot practice with an NCC credential. Students must hold licensure as an LPC or as an LPC-Intern, under the supervision of an LPC-Supervisor, to practice counseling within the State of Texas.

The NCC credential can be an effective profile booster in your job search. As a credential holder, you can use the NCC designation on your résumé and business cards. In addition, you will have access to various professional resources, product discounts and professional liability insurance discounts. To hold the NCC, you must have a qualifying master's or doctoral degree, pass a national exam, meet experience and supervision requirements, adhere to a strict code of ethics, and participate in continuing education activities.

Questions?

If you have questions about the NCE, you can contact Licensure Exam Coordinator or NBCC at nbcc@nbcc.org.

NBCC also offers a Student Information page to provide additional resources to students: [NBCC Student Information](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

➤ What is the Professional Counseling Performance Evaluation (PCPE) Form?

The [Professional Counseling Performance Evaluation Form](#) was developed by the faculty in the Professional Counseling Program to objectively assess student performance and progress in the program. The form is used to assess performance and progress in all experiential courses (e.g., advanced intermediate methods classes, practicum, etc.), but also may be used in any class in order to advise a student of deficiencies. Students must keep all performance evaluations throughout the program and submit them for admission to Clinical Practicum (COUN 5689) and Site-based Internship (COUN 5389).

➤ Do I need a parking permit/sticker to park on campus?

Yes. All students, faculty, and staff who operate or park a vehicle on either campus (San Marcos or Round Rock) must register the vehicle with Parking Services and purchase a permit. For additional information: Parking Services (512) 245-2887 or website: parking.txstate.edu

➤ Are there any student organizations I can join?

Yes, there are two. The Sigma Tau Sigma Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) is for students in the M.A. Professional Counseling Program. Chi Sigma Iota is an international counseling honor society that promotes academic, professional, and scholarly excellence among counseling students and professionals. Counselors for Social Justice-Texas State University (CSJ-TSU) is a community of graduate students and counselor educators who seek equity and an end to oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, counselors, families, communities, schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems. More information about each group is located at the end of the handbook. Link to program webpage for more information on our [Student Organizations](#).

➤ Where can I find a list of required textbooks for my courses?

There is no need to email professors about textbooks since the textbooks for Professional Counseling courses can always be easily located through the Texas State [University Bookstore](#) website (located on the University main page). Departments have to provide textbook information well in advance of the semester, so it should be accessible to all students. You do not have to use the Bookstore to purchase, but it is helpful in that you can find the ISBN to then locate the textbook on other purchasing sites.

➤ What is the style of writing required by the program?

The program requires those standards set forth in *the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2009, 6th ed.) in all writing assignments. Knowledge and use of APA standards of writing remains essential for successful completion of your graduate studies. If you are not intimately familiar with APA standards, you are strongly urged to buy the newest edition of the APA manual, consult with other colleagues, form groups to get feedback on writing, and/or work with the Texas State Writing Center, an invaluable source of help. Another available resource: *Mastering APA Style: Student's Workbook and Training Guide* (H. Gelfand & C. Walker, Eds.).

➤ When do I see my first “real” client? What about group counseling experience?

You will see clients during your Intermediate Methods class. You will either take COUN 5360, COUN 5366, COUN 5370, COUN 5373 or a combination, depending on your degree plan. You will see a client

or possibly more than one client if you are taking COUN 5360. Also note that during your COUN 5689 Clinical Practicum class, you will be responsible for finding a counseling group in the community to co-lead with a licensed mental health professional. It would be a good idea to keep this in mind well before your enrollment in the COUN 5689 class.

➤ **Do I need to pass the comprehensive exam to be enrolled in Clinical Practicum?**

Students must pass or be within 2 points of the passing criteria to be enrolled in Clinical Practicum. (See **Comprehensive Examination** section for more information on this).

➤ **Where can I find information about the site-based internships?**

The Practicum/Internship Coordinator maintains a list of previously approved site supervisors. This document also lists some sites that have not been approved for Internship, or removed from the approved internship list. This document is housed in a dedicated TRACS site titled “Clinical Experience.” Students are added to this TRACS site when they are in or have completed COUN 5354. If students would like to have a new site added to the list, contact the Practicum/Internship Coordinator Dr. Tracy Chiles, and she will provide the site with a form that will begin the vetting process.

Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society also co-sponsors Internship Fairs with the Professional Counseling Program. This event allows numerous internship sites to present information about their sites to counseling graduate students. Internship Fair locations alternate between the San Marcos and Round Rock campuses to encourage attendance by as many students as possible. Start to participate as early as you can!

➤ **What is required of my supervisor during Site-based Internship?**

Site supervisors *must be licensed or certified in their mental health field* in one of the following disciplines: LPC, LMFT, Psychologist, LCSW, or Certified School Counselor. Supervisors also must have a minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the program area in which the student is completing clinical instruction. This is verified through the site supervisor’s ***Professional Disclosure Statement for Supervision***, required for site approval. The on-site supervisor is required to provide one hour of individual supervision weekly to the student intern. Student interns are to be supervised at all times by fully licensed/credentialed mental health providers. State approved supervisor status is NOT required for Site based supervisors (i.e., LPC-S, LMFT-S).

➤ **Can the site-based internship be completed after graduation?**

No, the graduate internship must be completed while enrolled in the program.

➤ **Do I need to re-apply for my second semester internship?**

Yes. Students currently enrolled in their first semester of internship need to reapply for COUN 5389 through the Professional Counseling Program for their second semester. Students enrolled in their second semester of internship will have priority placement for a *seat* in an internship class.

➤ **Will the hours I see clients between semesters count toward my required hours?**

No. Hours accrue only during the semester enrolled, i.e., from the semester’s beginning date through to the semester end date. If students choose to maintain clients between semesters to meet other internship site requirements (not hours), client needs, or to sustain momentum for student hours, arrangements must be made with the site to do so. The site must be willing to assume all liability and

responsibility for work between semesters, must continue with individual supervision, and must provide written verification of such agreement to the Practicum/Internship Coordinator on agency letterhead.

➤ **Can I transfer hours from one semester of internship (5389) to the next semester?**

You are required to complete 600 total hours (320 indirect; 240 direct), evenly divided over the course of your two internship semesters. A maximum of 25 direct hours can be carried over into the second semester of Internship, but no indirect hours carry over. If your internship site and/or semester length does not result in evenly spaced semester hours (300 total hours, 180 indirect, and 120 direct), you may work directly with the professors involved to coordinate those hours. Keep in mind that during internship you will develop therapeutic relationships with clients. This requires that you remain at your site, providing services to those clients, for the entire duration of each semester. In other words, even if you complete your direct and indirect hours prior to the second semester ending, you must complete all site based internship obligations, continue to attend class (group supervision), and continue seeing clients for the remainder of the semester.

➤ **Do Continuing Education hours count anytime during my enrollment in the counseling program?**

Continuing Education hours only count after you are a licensed professional. However, maintaining a file of such experiences can later document special, or additional, training, for example, hours needed to pursue play therapy registration.

➤ **How many practicum and internship work hours can transfer from pre-graduation to post-graduation licensure hours?**

It remains under the purview of the State Boards (LPC and LMFT) to accept and approve hours submitted by the student. We suggest keeping a *permanent* file of all practicum and internship hours, in case you move to a different state and need to reapply for a new licensure/certification. Review the state board rules for LPC and LMFT licensure related to the counting of excess practicum(internship) hours.

NOTE: You must turn in all three Practicum/Internship Documentation Forms (1 from Clinical Practicum, 2 from Internship semesters) with your application to the licensing board. The board will determine how excess graduate hours count toward the required 3,000 hours.

➤ **Will hours in career counseling count toward the required hours toward licensure?**

Career counseling is one aspect of professional counseling, so the hours are not differentiated. All hours required for licensure must be taken as a student or under supervision after receiving a temporary license.

➤ **If I am on the School Counseling track, are there additional courses that I must take to apply for an LPC-Intern license with the LPC Board?**

There are new rules for students on the School Counseling track that will begin on 8/1/17. According to LPC Board rules: (§681.82 Persons applying for licensure must have a planned graduate program in counseling with 60 semester hours with §681.83 the following courses to meet the 60-hour requirement shall include: (1) addictions counseling; (2) counselor ethics; (3) couples, marriage, or families; and (4) a course in psychopathology to include criteria of psychiatric diagnosis and use of the current DSM.) Look at school degree plans closely to ensure you are on the degree track that will meet these requirements. Also be sure to seek advising to meet this requirement.

➤ **What is considered a full time course load for the Program?**

Nine credit hours is considered full time. Students must get permission from the Program Coordinator to take twelve credit hours.

➤ **How long does it take to complete the Counseling Program?**

Depending on number of courses taken each semester, completion of required experience hours in clinical courses, flexibility in schedule, and availability of classes, the date of completion can vary from student to student. Three to three and a half years is usual for students. Meeting with your assigned Faculty advisor early can help to determine a projected/estimated degree completion date.

➤ **When I have a name or address change, who do I contact?**

You should make two calls to report this change: one to the Graduate College, and the other to the Professional Counseling Program. Accurate records must be maintained in each office.

➤ **Will a felony or misdemeanor conviction prohibit me from entering the program?**

We do not screen for convictions. However, as noted and further explained in the Informed Consent at Application, the licensing and certification agencies require disclosure of felony or misdemeanor convictions and these could preclude you from earning your license or certification. See the following link for Criminal History Evaluation procedures that should be addressed and started before or at the beginning of a student starting the Professional Counseling Program:

http://www.dshs.texas.gov/plc_cheval.shtm

➤ **What if I decide to take some time off from the program?**

If you decide to be out less than a year, you will need to complete an update application which is found at: <http://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/forms/update.html>. The Graduate College will process it and then re-activate your records.

If you take up to a year off, you will need to reapply on ApplyTexas. Your previously submitted documents are transferred to the new application and then request for approval to readmit is sent to the Graduate Advisor. The personal leave or Leave of Absence form is used to expedite the readmission process.

➤ **Can I be on a “dual track” for licensure?**

There is no dual track or double major. The degree offered is in Professional Counseling with different concentrations (CMHC, MCFC, or School). Degree completion is based on the selected emphasis area (only one can be selected).

If you are planning to pursue both LMFT-Associate and LPC-Intern licensure after graduation, the only way to meet the academic requirements of both is through the MCFC concentration. In addition to completing the MCFC courses, you would also have to take COUN 5344 Substance Abuse to pursue both licenses after graduation. COUN 5344 would not be covered by financial aid since it is not on the MCFC degree plan. COUN 5344 is part of the CMHC degree plan, required for LPC-Intern licensure.

As far as Internship, you would have to focus on earning the required relational hours for MCFC, and those hours will count toward the necessary licensure requirements for both licenses.

Pursuing CMHC concentration would provide the academic requirements to apply for LPC-Intern only after graduation. The internship experience for the CMHC concentration would not qualify for LMFT-Associate requirements.

➤ **How do I know what courses/requirements I need to graduate?**

Pull up your degree audit (log in through CatsWeb). This is a document which will show what classes and program requirements (e.g., comprehensive exam or elective) you still need in order to complete your degree. This document is maintained through the Graduate College, which they use to determine if you qualify for graduation. Compare your degree audit to the chart of degree concentrations/plans at the bottom of this webpage: <https://www.txstate.edu/clas/Professional-Counseling/degree-concentrations.html>

Faculty advising will be done using these two documents. You should contact your assigned Faculty Advisor early in your program to determine how to meet the requirements of your degree plan. If you have questions about specific classes or your degree plan, be sure to contact your assigned Faculty Advisor.

Requested changes to your degree audit should be routed to the Graduate Advisor/Program Coordinator through your assigned Faculty Advisor. Such changes include counting a specific course as an elective, removing or adding the Thesis option, or changing concentrations.

Post-Graduate Licensure

Students are responsible for reading and understanding LPC or LMFT Board application procedures, maintaining paperwork needed for licensure applications throughout their graduate program, and submitting all application materials to the Board after graduation.

Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)

All of the emphases in the M.A. with a major in Professional Counseling meet the current academic requirements needed to apply for LPC-Intern licensure through the [Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors](#).

There are new licensure rules that will impact School Counseling emphasis students. According to revised LPC Board rules:

- §681.82 Academic Requirements - Persons applying for licensure must have a planned graduate program in counseling of at least 48 semester hours with 60 semester hours for applicants starting a counseling program as of August 1, 2017.
- §681.83 Academic Course Content - As of August 1, 2017, the following courses to meet the 60-hour requirement shall include: (1) addictions counseling; (2) counselor ethics; (3) couples, marriage, or families; and (4) a course in psychopathology to include criteria of psychiatric diagnosis and use of the current DSM.

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT)

The Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling emphasis meets the current academic requirements needed to apply for LMFT-Associate licensure through the [Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists](#), as well as academic requirements to apply for LPC-Intern licensure through the [Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors](#).

Documentation for Licensure Application: LPC and LMFT

Submit the following documents:

- Practicum Documentation forms: one form for Practicum and one form for each Internship semester, documented and signed by the appropriate professors and maintained by each student, are needed. Practicum/Internship hours should be documented according to LPC and LMFT requirements (see respective websites for documentation requirements).
- A copy of the final transcript showing that a master's in Counseling has been conferred.
- Deficiency plan students must submit transcript to document courses completed.
- **For LPC Applicants**: Documentation from the National Board for Certified Counselors demonstrating that the student has passed the National Counselor Examination (NCE) OR student must contact LPC Board to get an approval letter to take the NCE.
- **For LMFT Applicants**: You will apply to take the MFT Exam when you complete the LMFT initial application after you graduate. See the MFT Board website for more info.

State Licensure Boards:

[Texas State Board of Examiners of Professional Counselors](#)

[Texas State Board of Examiners of Marriage and Family Therapists](#)

School Counseling Certification

School Counseling TExES Examination

Students with an emphasis in school counseling are required to complete the courses outlined in a degree or deficiency plan, to successfully pass the state TExES 152 for school counselors, and to have completed two years of teaching experience in a public or accredited private school (to become fully certified as a Professional School Counselor). All coursework for certification must be completed before students are allowed to take the TExES. Students must have taken and passed COUN 5338 (Advanced Issues in School Counseling) and meet Texas State departmental requirements prior to receiving approval to take the TExES 152. After requirements are met, the School Counseling Track Coordinator will contact the Office of Educator Preparation (OEP) to provide approval for the TExES 152. An email will be sent to the student at the email address on file with the Texas Education Agency (make sure you update your email with TEA). The student must complete the instructions in the email to sign up for the TExES 152.

NOTE: For verification purposes, ALL identification information MUST REMAIN CONSISTENT between SBEC/TEA and ETS. You will be required to show your driver's license or similar photo ID upon your arrival at the test site.

After all certification requirements have been completed, students should submit the following for permanent certification as a Certified School Counselor (CSC):

- A copy of an official service record (or letter from principal or superintendent on letterhead stationary showing years worked, number of days per year worked, and capacity of service, e.g. classroom teacher)
- A copy of a final transcript showing master's degree awarded (if not Texas State graduate).

This material should be submitted to the Deficiency Plan Coordinator (see Appendix A).

If you have questions about the TExES 152 or certification as a school counselor contact the School Counseling Track Liaison, Dr. Jennifer Greene-Rooks at jhg45@txstate.edu.

Specializations

Play Therapy

Are you interested in becoming a Registered Play Therapist (RPT)? Our program offers a lot of resources for you to work towards becoming an RPT. Requirements to be a Registered Play Therapist (RPT) include 150 hours of play therapy training. COUN 5369 counts as 50 training hours; COUN 5373 and COUN 5381 count as 67.5 training hours each. (No more than 135 training hours can be with the same person/professor.) You can earn additional training hours by attending APT-approved workshops, such as trainings offered through the Texas State University [Institute for Play Therapy \(IPT\)](#). The mission of IPT is to offer quality play therapy training to encourage play therapy networking, research, and resources. Check out upcoming seminars at the IPT website!



In order to become an RPT, you will also be required to have supervised play therapy experience. Supervised play therapy experience in Practicum (COUN 5689) and Internship (COUN 5389) will count, so be sure to keep a detailed log of those play therapy hours. Consult the [Association for Play Therapy \(APT\) website](#) for specific requirements on becoming an RPT.

Animal-Assisted Counseling

The Texas State University [Animal-Assisted Counseling \(AAC\) Academy](#) is a professional training program that promotes the human-animal bond through the study and practice of animal-assisted counseling and play therapy. The mission of the AAC Academy is to provide quality training in animal-assisted counseling that improves the well-being of children and families through positive human-animal interactions. The AAC Academy offers a series of intensive workshops for graduate students and professionals to earn introductory and advanced training in animal-assisted counseling and play therapy.



**Animal-Assisted
Counseling Academy**

TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Where Pawsitive Learning Begins

The AAC Academy uses a cohort design, meaning that participants who plan to complete the whole program are invited to participate and go through the program together. There are three components to the AAC Academy:

- Step 1 - Intro to AAC or COUN 5380-Intro to AAT online course,
- Step 2 - Intermediate Methods in AAC, and
- Step 3 - Practicum in AAC.

For Step 1, students can choose to attend a four-day intensive workshop (Intro to AAC) or enroll in COUN 5380-Intro to AAT, an online course. Steps 2 and 3, Intermediate Methods and Practicum in AAC, must be attended in person, since they involve training the potential therapy animal and learning and practicing AAC interventions. Below is a description of the course/workshops. If you have any other questions about the program after reviewing the website, feel free to contact the AAC Director, [Dr. Elizabeth Kjellstrand Hartwig](#).

Counseling Advocacy & Professional Associations

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

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.

Website: www.counseling.org

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy

The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) is the professional association representing those in the field of marriage and family therapy. The purpose of AAMFT includes research, theory development, and education with regards to marriage and family therapy. Every year, the AAMFT hosts an annual conference and provides avenues to obtain continuing education hours required for continued certification. As a member of AAMFT, members receive journals and other publications, such as the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* and the *Family Therapy Magazine*. The AAMFT also publishes brochures and pamphlets that provide information about marriage and family therapy to the public. Also, AAMFT offers products to promote professional development. These items include videotapes, books, and brochures.

Website: www.aamft.org

International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors

The International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC) is a division of the ACA that embraces a multicultural approach in support of the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of the families we serve. IAMFC members help develop healthy family systems through prevention, education, and therapy. This organization promotes excellence in the practice of couples and family counseling by creating and disseminating first-class publications and media products, providing a forum for exploration of family-related issues, involving a diverse group of dedicated professionals in our activities, and emphasizing collaborative efforts.

Website: <http://www.iamfconline.org/>

American School Counselor Association

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) 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.

Website: 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. The Capital of Texas Counseling Association is located in Austin, and the South Texas Counseling Association serves the region surrounding San Antonio. You may call the TCA office for information on your local chapter membership brochures.

Website: www.txca.org

Association for Play Therapy

The Association for Play Therapy (APT) is a professional organization which advocates for and sets standards for the field of play therapy. It credentials play therapists through their Registered Play Therapist (RPT) and Registered Play Therapist-Supervisor (RPT-S), and Registered Play Therapist in School Counseling (RPT-SC) programs. 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. APT members receive the Play Therapy Magazine, and the quarterly journal, the International Journal of Play Therapy. APT provides professional development opportunities through APT-approved CE provider trainings and the APT annual international conference. APT also provides awards that recognize outstanding members of APT in the profession of play therapy.

Website: www.a4pt.org

Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society

Chi Sigma Iota is an international honor society comprised of graduate students and professionals in counseling. The mission of Chi Sigma Iota, “is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling” (see: <http://www.csi-net.org/>).

Sigma Tau Sigma is the CSI chapter at Texas State University. Member benefits of CSI include:

- **Events** designed to promote the professional development of members and opportunities to network with colleagues and professionals in the community.
- **Information** relevant to the counseling field through the *Exemplar*, the informative and scholarly international newsletter distributed to all members from CSI headquarters.
- **Local chapter info** through web site, membership meetings, emails, and newsletters.
- **Recognition** as an academically outstanding professional counseling student.
- **Connection** to alumni of Texas State through their membership and participation.

Students eligible to join Chi Sigma Iota will be sent an invitation to apply for membership.

Chi Sigma Iota

Website: www.csi-net.org

Chi Sigma Iota – Sigma Tau Sigma Chapter

CLAS Dept., Education Bldg., 4th Floor

601 University Dr. San Marcos, TX 78666

Email: CSISigmaTauSigma@txstate.edu

Website http://csi-net.org/group/sigma_tau_sigma

Counselors for Social Justice-Texas State University (CSJ-TSU)

Counselors for Social Justice-Texas State University is a community of graduate students and counselor educators who seek equity and an end to oppression and injustice affecting clients, students, counselors, families, communities, schools, workplaces, governments, and other social and institutional systems. For those interested in social justice issues, you are welcome join this organization of like-minded counselors and counselors-in-training.

Faculty advisors Dr. Sarah Blalock s_b426@txstate.edu and Dr. Jennifer Greene-Rooks jhg45@txstate.edu

Additional State Professional Organizations:

[Texas School Counselor Association](#)

[Texas Association for Play Therapy](#)

National Accreditation Organization:

[Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs \(CACREP\)](#)

Frequently Used Phone Numbers and/or Websites

Office/Contact	Phone #	Website
Alkek Library	512-245-2686	www.library.txstate.edu
Allies of Texas State	512-245-2278	www.sdi.txstate.edu/Support-and-Empowerment/LGBTQIA-and-Allies.html
Bobcat Shuttle	512-245-5555	www.shuttle.txstate.edu
Campus Recreation	512-245-2392	www.campusrecreation.txstate.edu
Career Services	512-245-2645	www.careerservices.txstate.edu
Cashier's Office	512-245-2748	www.txstate.edu/gao
CATSWEB (Registration & Transcripts)	512-245-2287	www.catsweb.txstate.edu
Counseling Center for Texas State students	512-245-2208	www.counseling.txstate.edu
Disability Services	512-245-3451	www.ods.txstate.edu
Division of Student Affairs	512-245-2152	www.vpsa.txstate.edu
Financial Aid & Scholarships	512-245-2315	www.finaid.txstate.edu
Graduate College	512-245-2581	www.gradcollege.txstate.edu
LBJ Student Center	512-245-8686	www.lbjsc.txstate.edu
Loan Collections	512-245-2544	www.txstate.edu/sbs
Non-Traditional Students Org.	512-245-4923	www.lbjsc.txstate.edu/ntso
Parking Services	512-245-2887	www.parking.txstate.edu
Registrar's Office	512-245-2367	www.txstate.edu/registrar
Round Rock Center	512-716-4001	www.rrhec.txstate.edu
Student Health Center	512-245-2161	www.healthcenter.txstate.edu
Student Organizations	512-245-3219	getinvolved.lbjsc.txstate.edu
Writing Center	512-245-3018	www.writingcenter.txstate.edu
