



# **Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health Counseling Phoenix Campus Student Program Handbook**

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

# Table of Contents

## Contents

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences .....	1
Table of Contents .....	2
Section 1: Introduction .....	4
Welcome .....	4
Introduction.....	5
Overview of the Phoenix Campus MSC/CCMH Program .....	5
Program Mission Statement.....	5
Program Philosophy .....	6
Post-Graduate Licensure Requirements.....	6
Information About Professional Organizations.....	6
Section 2: Program and Degree Information .....	8
MSC/CCMH – Degree Information .....	8
Program Structure.....	8
Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs).....	9
Preferred Course Sequence and Prerequisites .....	9
Admission and Matriculation Requirements.....	11
Program Orientation.....	11
Graduate Portfolio I (CNSL/502) .....	11
Portfolio II (CNSL/556) .....	11
Section 3: Student Responsibilities and Expectations.....	12
Student Responsibilities .....	12
Counseling Program Professional Dispositions Assessment Rubric.....	12
Counseling Program Student Professional Disposition Assessment Rubric.....	13
Supplemental and Professional Standards for Candidates in Counseling .....	15
Definitions.....	16
Supplemental Standards.....	16
College of Social and Behavioral Sciences: Counseling .....	17
Supplemental and Professional Standards Referral Process & Procedure .....	17
Notice of Referral.....	18
Remediation Plan .....	18
Retention Committee .....	19
Academic Graduation Requirements .....	20
Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) .....	20
Grade Requirements .....	21
Collaboration at University of Phoenix.....	21

Standards for Collaborative Teamwork .....	21
Class Participation Guidelines .....	21
University of Phoenix Approved Writing Style Guide .....	22
Academic Appeal Policies .....	22
Section 4: Field Experience/Clinical Placements.....	23
Field Experience/Clinical Placements.....	23
Eligibility .....	23
Practicum CCMH/592 .....	24
Internship CCMH/597A & CCMH/597B .....	24
Professional Liability Insurance.....	24
Site Placement .....	24
Responsibilities and Expectations for Clinical Placements.....	24
Group Supervision .....	25
Safety Policies and Procedures for Home Visits.....	25
Practicum/Internship Hours Carryover Policy .....	25
Paid Practicum/Internship Policy .....	26
Section 5: Faculty .....	26
Faculty Overview.....	26
Relationships Between Students and Faculty.....	26
Faculty Advisors .....	26
Counseling Skills Center .....	27
Procedures for Disseminating Information.....	27
Professional Affiliations .....	27
Online Resources.....	27
Endorsements .....	27
Student Counseling Services .....	28
Disability Services .....	28
References.....	29
University of Phoenix Master of Science in Counseling Statement of Acknowledgement and Understanding.....	30

## Section 1: Introduction

### Welcome

Welcome to the University of Phoenix Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health (MSC/CCMH) program. You have joined a community of counseling professionals and educators committed to providing you with a collaborative, scholarly and practitioner-oriented academic and clinical experience. University of Phoenix cultivates an award-winning multi-cultural environment of mutual respect. In accordance with CACREP standards, our CCMH program maintains a low faculty-to-student ratio of 1 to 12 or lower, which allows for engagement with you, our students, via ongoing dialogue for personal mentoring as well as for collaborative inquiry and practice. Our comprehensive, rigorous, and research-based curriculum is designed to build your professional counselor identity and prepare you for state licensure.

You will be supported and guided through the theoretical knowledge and clinical skills development of each phase of the degree program. On behalf of the CCMH faculty and the entire College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, I wish you much success in this program.

Sincerely,

Christina Neider, Ed.D.

Dean, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

## Introduction

This handbook outlines areas critical to effective student learning in the Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health (MSC/CCMH v01AZ) Phoenix Campus program. Students should use this handbook, along with other UOPX student resources and materials as a resource guide as they progress through their program.

## Overview of the Phoenix Campus MSC/CCMH Program

Our Phoenix, AZ campus MSC/CCMH program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) with a curriculum designed to meet educational standards for Board certification as a National Certified Counselor (NCC) and Arizona state licensure.

The American Counseling Association (ACA, 2018) provides the following definition of professional counseling as a foundation for the MSC/CCMH degree: “Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.”

The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program at University of Phoenix meets the needs of the working adult professional who will benefit from a graduate education in counseling. Because counseling and jobs requiring counseling skills have an above-average expected growth in both the public and private sectors through the first quarter of the 21st century, students from diverse settings and backgrounds will find the interpersonal communication and therapeutic skills they master in this program useful in enhancing their careers (2021, Bureau of Labor Statistics)

The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program is a 60-credit degree that prepares graduates to work as practitioners with diverse clients in various mental health environments, including private practice, hospitals, and public and private mental health agencies.

Students learn the foundations of counseling including theories and their application with groups and individuals; assessment and evaluation; counseling and consultative relationships; career planning; research methods; legal and ethical concerns; trauma and crisis; and program development, implementation, and evaluation. The program addresses critical issues facing clinical mental health counselors and includes supervised practicum and internship experiences where students obtain practical experience prior to graduation. Students in the program must pass the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) as part of the graduation requirements.

## Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Master of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health program is to prepare confident, competent, and self-reflective clinical mental health counselors with the professional dispositions, and demonstrated knowledge and skills in all of the following areas:

- Professional counseling orientation and ethical practice
- Social and cultural diversity
- Human growth and development

- Career development
- Counseling and helping relationships
- Group counseling and group work
- Assessment and testing
- Research and program evaluation

Furthermore, students who are preparing to specialize as clinical mental health counselors will demonstrate foundational knowledge and skills necessary to address a wide variety of client issues within the context of the clinical mental health counseling practice.

## Program Philosophy

Commitment to standards of excellence and a quality curriculum are the core beliefs of the faculty and administration of the Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH Program. The program, faculty, and staff respond to community needs by providing a practical course of study and clinical experiences that prepare students to be competent and ethical practitioners. The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program contributes needed counseling services to the local community through partnership with local agencies who provide clinical placements for our students and by providing free counseling services to the local community in our Counseling Skills Center. The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program also contributes to the community by providing continuing education opportunities.

Students are prepared to become counseling professionals committed to the ideals of working with people in therapeutic relationships. Students find themselves immersed in educational and clinical systems training that provide opportunities to practice a broad range of skills. Exposure to developmental and systemic models, with a balance of theory and practical application, is at the core of the counseling student experience. Additionally, students are introduced to and held responsible for adhering to core values of the counseling profession as contained in the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics.

Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH faculty provide a collaborative learning environment where students gain understanding and experience in counseling with diverse populations. Faculty members are culturally diverse practitioners who model the behaviors and attitudes fostered by the program.

## Post-Graduate Licensure Requirements

Our CACREP accredited Phoenix Campus CCMH curriculum prepares students for licensure eligibility in Arizona. Licensure requirements are unique to each state. Students are encouraged to stay updated on the licensure requirements in any state in which they intend to practice. Please refer to [State Licensure Requirements](#) for information about licensure in other states.

## Information About Professional Organizations

The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program promotes and facilitates the development of a strong professional identity between and amongst counselors. Students are offered free membership in the Arizona Counseling Association and are encouraged to join and participate in the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its branches and divisions. A benefit of ACA

membership is that current students who are members of ACA are eligible to receive free professional liability insurance. Students are required to provide proof of liability insurance prior to entering a practicum or internship course.

The ACA offers counseling resources and serves as a platform for national leadership and advocacy for the counseling profession. In addition to the parent organization, the ACA includes 18 chartered divisions, four regions and 56 chartered branches in the US, Europe, and Latin America.

State branches of these professional organizations advocate for counselors at the state level and typically provide continuing education opportunities for the counseling community. Students can become involved in their choice of professional affiliation at the national and state levels by attending meetings and conferences, joining committees, offering input, volunteering, submitting manuscripts to journals, and submitting presentations for conferences. Phoenix campus faculty members are actively involved as leaders in the Arizona Counseling Association (AZCA). [Arizona Counseling Association](#)

For additional information about professional organizations, please see the [College of Social and Behavioral Sciences resource page](#).

## Section 2: Program and Degree Information

### MSC/CCMH – Degree Information

Our students are expected to be dedicated learners who are ready to embrace multiple roles, systems, settings and situations, diversity, advocacy, and leadership.

Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program faculty include fulltime counselor educators, working practitioners, and leaders in the field dedicated to ethical practice in teaching, supervision, research, scholarship, advocacy, clinical practice, service, and leadership.

The Phoenix campus CCMH program is CACREP accredited, and the CACREP standards-based curriculum requires professional counseling knowledge and skills development and personal growth and self-reflection, which are carried into supervised clinical experiences. Assessment of knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for ethical counseling practice is constantly monitored throughout the program.

Faculty supervision utilizes a decision-making model that supports personal growth and requires self-awareness about ethical issues in establishing and maintaining a therapeutic alliance.

### Program Structure

Curriculum, course work, and clinical experience combine to produce theoretical knowledge, critical thinking skills, affective awareness, ethical development, and counseling skills. These outcomes are based on accepted CACREP standards emphasizing programmatic attention to counselor professional identity and ethics, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, career development, helping relationships, group work, assessment, research, and program evaluation. Outcome-based assessments of core counseling competencies are ongoing throughout the program. For that reason, the practicum/internship courses are completed at the end of the required course sequence. The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program is an in-person, 60 credit degree including practicum and internship requirements.. Information about student technology competencies and recommendations for the digital program are available for students to review in the [Onboarding Checklist](#) for new students.

Multimodal learning methods may also involve, but are not limited to:

- Class lecture
- Assigned readings
- Role-plays
- Small in-class group work
- Class Discussion
- Small group collaborative presentations
- Small group and independent research
- Collaborative exercises
- Access to an electronic chat room to discuss materials with other class members and faculty
- Written assignments
- Quizzes and in-class exams
- Critical thinking activities
- Synchronous individual supervision



Because of the compressed timeframe and therefore intensive nature of graduate courses at University of Phoenix, students are encouraged not to take more than one course at a time (doubling up). In addition to classroom time, out-of-class time is required for homework, project activities, and comprehensive clinical coursework.

## Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)

Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) are statements that describe the knowledge, skills, or abilities that students will be able to demonstrate upon completion of a specific program of study. Each is intended to describe a skill that can be measured by faculty in multiple ways throughout the program curriculum. PSLOs include:

1. Develop a professional identity as an advocate and steward for the counseling profession.
2. Integrate social and cultural diversity competencies into their practice as a professional counselor.
3. Integrate human growth and development theories and principles into their counseling practices.
4. Integrate career development theories and principles into their counseling practices.
5. Integrate counseling theories, models, and techniques into their counseling practices.
6. Integrate group counseling theories and practices into their counseling practices.
7. Execute counseling assessment and testing processes and procedures to guide their practice as a clinical mental health counselor.
8. Evaluate research and programs to inform counseling practice.

## Preferred Course Sequence and Prerequisites

Course ID	Course Title	Credits	Length	Prerequisites
CNSL/502	Graduate Portfolio I	0	6 weeks	
CCMH/504	Individual and Family Development Across the Life Span	3	6 weeks	CNSL/502
CCMH/506	Personality Theories and Counseling Models	3	8 weeks	CNSL/502
CCMH/515	Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Counseling	3	8 weeks	CCMH/504, CCMH/506
CCMH/525	Research Methods for Mental Health Counselors	3	8 weeks	CCMH/515

CCMH/535	Psychometrics	3	6 weeks	CCMH/525
CCMH/520	Biological Basis of Behavior/Physiological Issues	3	8 weeks	CCMH/535
CCMH/544	Introduction to Clinical Assessment	3	8 weeks	CCMH/520
CCMH/548	Psychopathology: Advanced Clinical Assessment	3	6 weeks	CCMH/544
CCMH/551	Individual Counseling	3	6 weeks	CCMH/548
CNSL/556	Portfolio II	0	3 weeks	CCMH/551
CCMH/510	Multi-Cultural Issues in Mental Health Counseling	3	6 weeks	CNSL/502
CCMH/568	Group Counseling	3	8 weeks	CNSL/556
CMHC/565	Family, Couple, and Child Counseling	3	8 weeks	CNSL/556
CCMH/561	Dependency and Addictions	3	6 weeks	CNSL/556
CCMH/540	Career and Vocational Counseling	3	6 weeks	CNSL/556
MFCC/566	Advanced Marriage and Family Therapy	3	6 weeks	CCMH/565
CCMH/578	Seminar Clinical Mental Health	3	6 weeks	MFCC/566
CCMH/581	Supervision/Management in Clinical Mental Health	3	6 weeks	CCMH/578
CCMH/5920	Orientation To Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	0	1 week	CCMH/568, CCMH/565, CCMH/561, CCMH/540

CCMH/592	Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	3	10 weeks	MFCC/566, CCMH/592O
CCMH/597A	Internship A	3	15 weeks	CCMH/581, CCMH/592
CCMH/597B	Internship B	3	15 weeks	CCMH/597A

## Admission and Matriculation Requirements

Admission and matriculation into the program require an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution with a GPA of 2.5. After admission to the Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program, students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 to remain in good standing. Admission and matriculation require successful completion of CNSL/502 (Graduate Portfolio I).

## Program Orientation

Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program candidates and students receive multiple levels of orientation. Students are provided with information on the following:

- Specific information about the program, policies, and requirements
- Counselor identity
- Practicum and internship expectations

## Graduate Portfolio I (CNSL/502)

Graduate Portfolio I (CNSL/502) involves a selection process for entry into the counseling programs. Admission decisions are based on an evaluative process by a selection committee consisting of experienced counseling faculty. Candidates are introduced to specifics of their program in the first CNSL/502 workshop with a program orientation. Over the full 6 weeks of CNSL/502, students will be evaluated in basic attending skills, writing skills (paper mechanics and content), and professional behavior. Candidates are evaluated in general for their potential for success in forming interpersonal relationships in small groups and with individuals; their aptitude for study at the graduate school level; and for their overall career goals in relation to the outcome of the program.

Students who do not pass CNSL/502 on the first attempt may reapply in 30 days. A student failing CNSL/502 on the second attempt must wait 6 months before reapplying. Passing Graduate Portfolio I is limited to a total of three attempts.

## Portfolio II (CNSL/556)

About midway through the counseling program students are evaluated for readiness for clinical placement in practicum and internship (CCMH/592, CCMH 597A, CCMH/597B). The evaluation is a gateway that counseling students must pass by demonstrating counseling skills and critical-thinking competencies. Teams of experienced faculty practitioners facilitate the course and provide a collaborative assessment of student learning. Passing Portfolio II is required to move

forward in the program. Portfolio II provides an integrative experience requiring the student to gather information learned in previous courses, integrate that knowledge, and demonstrate competency in key areas covered in the program. This assessment also has two goals: 1) to help students evaluate their own progress and 2) to provide an opportunity for faculty to objectively evaluate the student's professional and personal development, along with readiness for clinical placement.

Students failing Portfolio II have an opportunity to retake Portfolio II when it is offered next. As part of the Supplemental and Professional Standards process, students complete a remediation plan to prepare to retake and successfully pass the course.

## Section 3: Student Responsibilities and Expectations

### Student Responsibilities

Each student will maintain behavior in accordance with the highest ethical and professional counseling standards as outlined by the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its branches and divisions. In addition to these counseling professional standards, all students at University of Phoenix must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. Students are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and with integrity as responsible members of the University's academic community. This requires the demonstration of mutual respect and civility in academic and professional discourse. Conduct, either on or off-campus that is determined to impair, interfere with, or obstruct the opportunities of others to learn or that disrupts the mission, processes, or orderly functions of the University will be deemed misconduct and shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. The Student Code of Conduct and retention (disciplinary) process is in the University of Phoenix Academic Catalog.

### Counseling Program Professional Dispositions Assessment Rubric

All counseling students must review and sign the New Student Orientation Agreement during the admissions course, CNSL/502. This fulfills the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics requirement that “counselor educators clearly state to students, before and throughout the training program, the levels of competency expected, appraisal methods, and timing of evaluations for both didactic and clinical competencies” (F.9.a. Evaluation of Students, p. 15). The Agreement also introduces counseling students to the ethical obligation that counselor educators are required to engage in gatekeeping. This duty is defined as “the initial and ongoing academic, skill, and dispositional assessment of students’ competence for professional practice, including remediation and termination as appropriate” (2014 ACA Code of Ethics, Glossary of Terms, p. 19). This objective is achieved, in part, when students are evaluated on professional counselor standards which include knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

Counselor education program faculty members utilize the Counseling Program Professional Dispositions rubric below to systematically assess each student during their entire program of study in the following courses: CNSL/502; CCMH/556; CCMH/592; CCMH/597A & CCMH/597B.

**Counseling Program Student Professional Disposition Assessment Rubric**  
**University of Phoenix**  
**Counseling Program**

Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (95 – 100%) A	Meets Expectations (80-94%) B-to A-	Approaches Expectations (60-79%) D- to C+	Does Not Meet Expectations (0-59%) F	Weight
<b>The student contributes to a positive climate in the University classroom and all field placements, practicums, and/or internships.</b>	Participates actively in class discussion and assignments by contributing feedback that engages critical thought, as well as provides additional resources to support views and ideas. Works effectively with others by displaying both genuine empathy and respect for others. Creates an atmosphere that stimulates collaboration.	Participates actively in class discussion and assignments. Works effectively with others. Shows respect of others and consideration for the thoughts and feelings of others.	Participates occasionally in class discussion and is often late on classroom assignments. Occasionally presents problems with working within group assignments and task.	Frequently does not actively participate in class discussion, and is frequently late in turning assignments, and/or has several missed assignments. Displays difficulty when working with others. Often shows lack of respect of others and consideration for the thoughts and feelings of others.	14%
<b>The student demonstrates mastery of written and spoken language for self-expression, as well as for effective interaction in all settings.</b>	Verbally communicates thoughts and ideas clearly. Demonstrates an ability to write in a clear and concise manner, with minimal to no errors in spelling and grammar. Adheres to APA standards. Communicates in a professional tone.	Communicates effectively verbally. Demonstrates an ability to write in a clear, organized, fluent manner. Adheres to the conventions of the language when appropriate. Recognizes distinctions between formal and informal tone.	Occasionally displays difficulty in clearly communicating thoughts verbally. Written assignments are often disorganized and displays an informal writing style. Inconsistent use of formal tone.	Frequently displays difficulty in clearly communicating thoughts verbally. Written assignments are frequently disorganized and unclear. Primarily uses an informal writing style.	14%
<b>The student is a thoughtful and responsive listener.</b>	Demonstrates an understanding of program and professional goals and objectives. Solicits and is open to feedback from both instructors and peers. Receives feedback in a positive manner. Displays both eagerness and enthusiasm in making necessary adjustments. Displays active listening skills and acknowledges the thoughts of others.	Solicits feedback that demonstrates an understanding of program and professional goals and objectives. Receives feedback in a positive manner and makes necessary adjustments. Listens and responds to others.	Occasionally becomes argumentative when feedback is provided. Does not display active listening skills and occasionally interrupts others while speaking.	Frequently becomes argumentative when feedback is provided. Does not display active listening skills and frequently interrupts others while speaking.	14%
<b>The student is committed to reflection, assessment,</b>	Demonstrates a keen and heightened sense of self awareness. Is	Reflects on information provided and demonstrates an ability to apply ideas	Displays emerging skills in self-awareness but	Lacks sufficient skills in demonstrating self-awareness.	14%

<b>and learning as an ongoing process.</b>	eager and enthusiastic in implementing information provided and apply ideas to his/her own practice or life. Frequently demonstrates ability to modify behavior and/or understanding when provided with new information or experience. Actively seeks out opportunities and participates in scholarship outside the classroom.	to his/her own practice or life. Able to modify behavior and/or understanding when provided with new information or experience. Demonstrates an interest in and commitment to lifelong learning.	occasionally struggles with the ability to reflect on information provided and apply ideas to his/her own practice or life. Occasionally demonstrates ability to modify behavior and/or understanding when provided with new information or experience.	Frequently struggles with the ability to reflect on information provided and apply ideas to his/her own practice or life. Does not demonstrate the ability to modify behavior and/or understanding when provided with new information or experience.	
<b>The student is willing to give and receive help.</b>	Frequently volunteers to assist others in the university classroom and/or practicum settings. Demonstrates openness to assistance from others. Eagerly and enthusiastically accepts direction from others. Respects authority.	Volunteers to assist others in the university classroom and/or practicum settings. Demonstrates openness to assistance from others. Accepts direction from others. Respects authority.	Occasionally volunteers to assist others in the university classroom and/or practicum settings. Occasionally rejects direction from others and is occasionally resistant toward authority.	Does not or infrequently volunteers to assist others in the university classroom and/or practicum setting. Frequently rejects the direction from others and is often resistant toward authority.	14%
<b>The student appreciates and values human diversity and shows respect for others' varied talents and perspectives.</b>	Listens to others' perspectives in a respectful manner. Exhibits an understanding of the complexities of race, power, gender, class, sexual orientation, and/or privilege in American society. Uses culturally sensitive language in communication and avoids communicating stereotypes and group generalizations. Expresses a genuine desire to increase multicultural competencies.	Listens to others' perspectives in a respectful manner. Exhibits an understanding of the complexities of race, power, gender, class, sexual orientation, and/or privilege in American society.	Demonstrates limited awareness for the need to understand the complexities of race, power, gender, class, sexual orientation, and/or privilege in American society. Occasionally uses language that is insensitive to the multicultural dynamics of others.	Demonstrates limited awareness for the need to understand the complexities of race, power, gender, class, sexual orientation, and/or privilege in American society. Frequently uses language that is insensitive to the multicultural dynamics of others.	15%
<b>The student demonstrates a level of responsibility and ethical judgment appropriate for a professional counselor.</b>	Attends and arrives on time to all classes and practicum/internship experiences. Does not represent work of others as his/her own. Protects both students' and clients' rights to	Attends and arrives on time to all classes and practicum/internship experiences. Does not represent work of others as his/her own. Protects both students' and clients' rights to	Occasionally late and/or leaves early from classes and practicum/internship experiences. Occasionally omits citations	Frequently late and/or leaves early from classes and practicum/internship experiences. Frequently comes to classes and practicum/internship experiences	15%

	<p>confidentiality and privacy. Consistently communicates professionally with classmates, instructors, organizations, staff, and clients. Dresses professionally and consistently comes to classes and practicum/internship experiences prepared. Frequently volunteers to take on additional responsibilities, as appropriate.</p>	<p>confidentiality and privacy. Communicates in a professional manner with fellow classmates, instructor, organization's staff, and clients during classes and practicum/internship experience. Dresses professionally and comes to classes and practicum/internship experiences prepared.</p>	<p>or references to others' work. Protects both students' and clients' rights to confidentiality and privacy. Occasionally communicates in an unprofessional manner with fellow classmates, instructor, organization's staff, and clients during classes, practicum/internship experience. Dresses casually for practicum/internship experiences and occasionally comes to classes and practicum/internship experiences unprepared.</p>	<p>unprepared. Represents work of others as his/her own. Does not adhere to protecting both students' and clients' rights to confidentiality and privacy. Dresses inappropriately and unprofessionally for practicum/internship experiences. Frequently communicates in an unprofessional manner with fellow classmates, instructor, organization's staff, and clients during classes and practicum/internship experience.</p>	
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The seven program professional dispositions are derived from the 18 University Professional Dispositions utilized in the Supplemental and Professional Standards process detailed below. If a student demonstrates behaviors that fall below these seven program professional dispositions, program faculty will file a Supplemental Standards referral.

**Note:** Students violating client confidentiality, other ethical standards, and behavioral standards per the Student Code of Conduct and the Supplemental and Professional Standards (that follow), may be withdrawn from the program.

## Supplemental and Professional Standards for Candidates in Counseling

As prospective counselors within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, candidates in the MSC/CCMH program are expected to represent the University as professionals and adhere to the ethics and standards of their profession as well as the University's Student Code of Conduct.

The following University Supplemental and Professional Standards for candidates in all College of Social and Behavioral Sciences programs apply to MSC/CCMH degree candidates from their first course (CNSL/502, Graduate Portfolio I) through their practicum (CCMH/592), and internships, (CCMH/597A and CCMH/597B). The University Supplemental Standards address a candidate's affective attributes and dispositions to be a counselor. A candidate's ability to



satisfactorily meet the Supplemental and Professional Standards is a matter of ongoing judgment made by online MSC/CCMH program faculty.

Candidates in programs leading to certification or licensure are subject to greater scrutiny because of their anticipated entry into a licensed profession. Additionally, candidates who will be interacting with members of the community, i.e., students, patients, families, clients, participate in external activities as part of their academic program and are expected to represent the University as professionals and adhere to the ethics and standards of their profession, irrespective of where these activities occur.

In addition to being subject to the Student Code of Conduct, candidates are also expected to follow the Supplemental and Professional Standards for their respective program (“Standards”), as both address a candidate’s affective attributes and disposition to be in the selected chosen profession. Adherence to these standards includes off-site activities and locations when the candidate’s behavior affects the reputation of the University and/or the integrity of the program.

## Definitions

**Academic Judgment:** The College’s assessment of whether the candidate’s behavior demonstrates the attributes and disposition to be in the selected chosen profession.

**Candidate:** Any student in a licensure or certification program or a program that has anticipated interactions with members of the community.

**Off-Site Activities:** Field Placement, Clinical, Rotation, Practicum, Internship, Preceptorship, or any other activity that is required as part of the candidate’s program at a location other than the classroom.

**Referral:** Notice to the College that a candidate may be in violation of one or more of these standards.

**Remediation Plan:** The method the College uses to remediate the candidate to return to the program, if possible.

## Supplemental Standards

1. The candidate is sensitive to community and cultural norms that pertain to the University classroom and off-site activities and locations.
2. The candidate contributes to a positive climate in the University classroom and all off-site activities and locations.
3. The candidate adheres to college, clinical, and agency site policies and procedures.
4. The candidate participates in off-site activities consistent with their respective professional practice, including satisfactory performance of all required skills specified.
5. The candidate maintains all state-mandated eligibility requirements for certification for placement and/or licensure.
6. The candidate only engages in practice for which they have been authorized or for which they have been educated/validated.
7. The candidate appreciates and values human diversity and shows respect for others’ varied talents and perspectives.



8. The candidate values the development of critical thinking, independent problem solving, and performance capabilities in themselves and those with whom they interact.
9. The candidate demonstrates mastery of written and spoken language for self-expression, as well as for effective interaction in all settings.
10. The candidate is committed to reflection and assessment and is open to receiving feedback.
11. The candidate is willing to give and receive help.
12. The candidate is a thoughtful and responsive listener.
13. The candidate maintains a pattern of meeting requirements in courses and external placements.
14. The candidate demonstrates a commitment to keeping abreast of new technology, ideas and understanding in their chosen field.
15. The candidate demonstrates a level of responsibility and ethical judgment appropriate for a professional.
16. The candidate is responsible for personal transportation to and from off-site activities.
17. The candidate maintains professionalism and confidentiality in virtual settings.
18. The candidate is committed to establishing a safe and supportive environment.

## College of Social and Behavioral Sciences: Counseling

Candidates in counseling programs are required to follow guidelines outlined in the [American Counselors Association \(ACA\) Code of Ethics](#).

### Supplemental and Professional Standards Referral Process & Procedure

Upon notice that a candidate may not be meeting one or more of the Standards, the College will review the information, the candidate's history, and any additional information that will assist in appropriately addressing the issue(s) presented. If the respective College determines that a candidate may not be meeting one or more of the Standards, they may file a Referral.

Referrals provide the College the opportunity to review the candidate's behavior and determine whether counseling, remediation, or withdrawal from the program is appropriate. The process is designed to be remedial in nature, as the goal is for candidates to understand what is expected of them to be successful in their profession.

If at any time during the process the candidate fails to meaningfully participate, the College may recommend the student be withdrawn from the program. Program withdrawals must be approved by the College Dean.

Candidates are not permitted to have representation by an attorney or any other third party at any time during the process.

This process is separate from the Student Code of Conduct disciplinary process, but they may run concurrently. Candidates charged with violating the Student Code of Conduct are subject to the policies, procedures, and sanctions under that policy *in addition to* these standards.

A Student Code of Conduct charge may be the basis for a Referral if the underlying incident indicates these Standards have not been met. Similarly, a Referral may be the basis for a Student Code of Conduct charge.

Candidates are not subject to expulsion for a Standards violation, only for a violation of the Student Code of Conduct if found responsible.

### **Notice of Referral**

1. Once the College determines a Referral should proceed, the candidate will be provided a Letter of Referral identifying the applicable Standards and the student's deficiencies in meeting them.
2. Candidates have ten (10) calendar days from the date of receipt to provide a written response to the College. Candidates are required to respond to the Letter of Referral.
  - a. Failure to respond may result in the candidate being indefinitely suspended at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if not currently enrolled.
3. The candidate is required to meet with the College for the purpose of discussing the Referral and, if necessary, developing a Remediation Plan to correct identified deficiencies.
4. If a candidate fails to meet with the College within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of receipt of the Letter of Referral, the candidate will be suspended at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the candidate is not currently enrolled. The candidate will remain suspended indefinitely until the Referral is resolved.

### **Remediation Plan**

In the event a candidate is placed on a Remediation Plan, they will be provided with a written copy. The Remediation Plan includes what is required of the candidate and the allotted timeframe for completion. The College has final authority over the terms of the Remediation Plan, which includes the following:

1. The candidate is expected to maintain regular contact with the College regarding their progress, including any barriers to completion.
2. The candidate must complete the Remediation Plan requirements in the time prescribed and submit documentation of completion to the College for review.
3. After review of the documentation by the College, the candidate will be notified in writing whether the Remediation Plan was successfully completed.
4. If a candidate does not successfully complete the Remediation Plan, the candidate will be suspended at the conclusion of their current course or immediately if not currently enrolled. Non-completion may also result in an additional Referral.

- a. A student suspended for failure to complete the Remediation Plan will be reinstated upon successful completion of the Remediation Plan.

## **Retention Committee**

For candidates with more than one Referral or who engage in serious misconduct, the College may refer students to a Retention Committee. Any candidate with a history of more than two Referrals may be automatically referred to a Retention Committee. The process includes the following:

1. Candidates will be notified in writing of the convening of a Retention Committee and potential outcomes.
2. Candidates have ten (10) calendar days from the date of notice to provide a written response.
  - a. Failure to respond may result in the candidate being suspended at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if not currently enrolled. A candidate suspended solely for failure to respond will remain suspended until the candidate's response is received and the student has met with the Retention Committee.
  - b. The candidate will be notified in writing of the decision of the Retention Committee, including any right of appeal.
3. Failure by the candidate to meet with the Retention Committee within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the notification will result in the candidate being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if not currently enrolled. A candidate suspended solely for failure to meet with the Retention Committee will be reinstated upon meeting with the Retention Committee.
4. The Retention Committee is comprised of one member of College leadership and two (2) faculty members within the candidate's College.
5. The candidate has the opportunity to address the Retention Committee and is expected to provide insight regarding the Referral. The Retention Committee and the candidate will address the issues that appear to be hindering the candidate's academic progress and possible solutions. The Retention Committee will determine whether a Remediation Plan or withdrawal from the program is necessary.
6. After meeting with the candidate, the Retention Committee will deliberate and make one of the following decisions:
  - a. Take no action;
  - b. Institute a Remediation Plan; or
  - c. Withdraw the candidate from the program.

## **Decision**

The candidate will be notified in writing within seven business days of the Retention Committee's decision and information on the appeal process if applicable. Any decision by the

Retention Committee is part of the candidate's record and may be taken into consideration should the candidate receive any future referral. The following further explains the Committee's decision:

**1. Take No Action**

- a. No further action steps are necessary by the candidate.
- b. A decision to take no action is final and cannot be appealed.

**2. Institute a Remediation Plan**

- a. A Remediation Plan will be instituted according to the above-titled section.
- b. A decision to institute a Remediation Plan is final and cannot be appealed.

**3. Withdraw the Candidate from the Program**

- a. Upon a decision that the candidate be withdrawn from the program, the candidate will be scholastically suspended.
- b. A summary report, generally containing findings and recommendations, will be forwarded to the College Dean, who has the ultimate authority to accept, reject, or modify the recommendation of the Retention Committee and render a final decision.
- c. The candidate has the right to appeal a final program withdrawal to the Central Administration Appeals Committee (CAAC).
  - i. The candidate must file a written statement within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the decision. The notification will provide the student with information on submitting such appeal.
  - ii. If no appeal is filed within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the decision, the program withdrawal is final, and the student will remain scholastically suspended.
- d. Central Administration Appeals Committee details:
  - i. The CAAC is comprised of three senior University representatives, at least one of which is from the appropriate College.
  - ii. The CAAC reviews information provided by the College, including any information considered by the Retention Committee and the candidate's written appeal.
  - iii. The CAAC will make one of the following decisions:
    - a. Uphold the program withdrawal.
    - b. Reverse the withdrawal and reinstate the candidate back into the program and remediate, if applicable.
  - iv. The student will be notified in writing of the CAAC's decision.
  - v. The decision of the CAAC is final.

## Academic Graduation Requirements

### Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)

Students in the online MSC/CCMH program must take and pass the Counselor

Preparation comprehensive Examination (CPCE). Students must pass the CPCE with a minimum score. The CPCE is an exit exam and preparatory for the National Counselor Examination (NCE) and/or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE), one or both of which are required for licensure in all states, and which address the core areas of competency. Counseling programs at the University of Phoenix prepare students to sit for the exams. Students are eligible to take the CPCE after completing all prerequisite coursework leading into practicum and internships.

### **Grade Requirements**

All courses require a grade of “B-” or better. Any grade below a grade of “B-”, an In Progress (IP) grade, or an Incomplete grade (“I”), do not meet academic progression requirements for the program. Students who receive one of these grades may not enroll in any additional coursework until a grade of “B-” or better is awarded. MSC students will be placed on Scholastic Disqualification if a “B-” or better is not earned.

## **Collaboration at University of Phoenix**

Collaboration stimulates creativity, speeds innovation, and makes students valuable to employers who expect students to be able to work effectively with teammates/colleagues. Throughout the program students function within a team as both a leader and a team member. Students will embrace diversity, treat others with respect, and work with classmates to develop more powerful ideas collaboratively than they might have on their own.

Through active collaboration, students will gain valuable experience and insight from people around them who will challenge them to grow as an individual and as a team member. This concept is vital in the field of professional counseling, where collaboration is the expected standard.

### **Standards for Collaborative Teamwork**

1. Members develop perspective and goals for the group.
2. Members develop effective work plans, meeting schedules, and assignments.
3. Members are clear about goals for work products.
4. Members develop and agree upon standards of group member performance.
5. Members effectively manage conflict and resolve problems within the group.
6. Members share workload equally.
7. Members build consensus and effectively share in decision making.
8. Products of the group process (oral presentations, papers) are cohesive and present the image of a single product, rather than a collection of individual products.
9. Tasks are completed on time and meet established requirements.

## **Class Participation Guidelines**

Grading the student, both individually and as a group member, is a complex task for the faculty member. The philosophy of the University of Phoenix is to encourage active student participation each week to augment the learning; thus, faculty members must be able to grade participation objectively and subjectively.

Part of the student's grade is derived from class participation or is a factor in collaborative assignments. Outlined below is a suggested class participation guide:

1. In class participation the student:
  - Contributes to group discussion frequently
  - Chooses topics relevant to the topic being presented in class at that time
  - Is interested in class and faculty discussion
  - Actively listens to others
  - Leads group discussion
  - Serves as group spokesperson
  - Relates theory to practice in group discussion
  - Asks questions
  - Is prepared for group discussion
  - Enhances the group presentation
2. In class involvement, the student:
  - Arrives prepared to each class
  - Shows interest in faculty and class discussion
  - Asks pertinent questions in class
  - Relates theory to practice
  - Contributes to class discussion frequently
  - Does not dominate or monopolize group discussions
  - Tries to involve classmates in discussions

## University of Phoenix Approved Writing Style Guide

The University of Phoenix-approved writing style guide is the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition*. As a suggestion, purchase the manual before the first course of the program as it will be useful throughout your program. In the University of Phoenix Course Materials, this book is referred to as both the *APA Manual* and the *University of Phoenix Approved Style Guide*. **Students are expected to have well-developed writing skills appropriate for graduate level work and to understand APA writing style format to be accepted into the program.** Graduate school requires a good deal of writing in each class. Further, it is a professional expectation in counseling.

The APA manual contains specifications for researching, writing, documenting, and formatting typewritten work. The nature of each assignment will dictate which section of the manual is useful. For example, students might consult the manual to determine how to outline a five-page paper, create citations, and format the paper (including title page and reference page). The [Center for Writing Excellence](#) provides a tutorial on APA style for students and faculty.

## Academic Appeal Policies

In addition to the appeal policy detailed above in the Supplemental and Professional Standards process, the University has established specific processes for students to submit grievances for violations or misapplication of a current policy, procedure, or established practice. Except as otherwise provided, students should first attempt to informally resolve their concerns with the department representative(s) involved or a supervisor. If the issue cannot be resolved through informal means, the student may file a formal grievance in writing with [Resolution Services](#) for an impartial evaluation. For additional information please refer to the Academic Catalog.



The University has also established student appeals process for exceptions to academic policies through the Student Appeals Center (SAC). Exceptions may be granted based upon academic rationale and the student's individual circumstances. Students must provide the reason(s) why an exception should be granted, refer to each specific policy being appealed and provide all relevant supporting documentation. The SAC determines the eligibility of the request and whether it will go forward. If a student's initial SAC appeal is denied that decision may be reviewed by a SAC 2nd Level Committee if the student provides new information not previously considered. SAC decisions are ineligible for appeal through any other entity within University of Phoenix.

## Section 4: Field Experience/Clinical Placements

### Field Experience/Clinical Placements

1. Students will attend a pre-practicum/clinical placement orientation, CCMH/592O, prior to the beginning of their initial clinical placement course. CCMH/592O is a 1-night, 4-hour course where students will review practicum/internship information in the program handbook about practicum and internship training, requirements, forms, and processes for working with the Field Placement Center team and faculty Clinical Coordinator to secure a field placement site.
2. Practicum and internship courses are supervised clinical experiences that provide opportunities for students to counsel clients in community settings. The Phoenix campus Counseling Skills Center (CSC) is equipped with private counseling rooms, a small group meeting room, video/audio recording technology, a bulletin board for information sharing, for practicum and internship students. Practicum is a highly supervised opportunity for students to begin working in a clinical environment. Students do not begin Practicum and Internship until the last year of their studies after fulfilling all requirements for clinical placement.
3. Practicum and Internship courses include opportunities for students to work with diverse populations in multiple modalities. The clinical placement courses represent continued experiential training and 700 total hours of documented direct and indirect clinical work. Site Supervisor Evaluations of student performance assist in determining areas of focused training completed during clinical courses. Students also have an opportunity to evaluate both their site and site supervisors.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for practicum/internship, students must have fulfilled the appropriate course pre-requisites. If you have questions, contact your Academic Counselor.

Students must also be enrolled in a practicum/internship course before clinical placement activities can begin. Course numbers by program are as follows:

- CCMH/592: Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- CCMH/597A: Internship A
- CCMH/597B: Internship B

## Practicum CCMH/592

This is a course that focuses on the assessment and continuing development of counseling and clinical documentation skills. Students have a variety of opportunities to receive feedback and to evaluate their ability to integrate theory into practice. Students determine their styles and strengths as professional counseling practitioners, as well as identify areas needing further development. Individualized practice sessions, case management skills, and feedback are designed into the course. Students must complete 100 total hours, including 40 direct service hours, and are required to complete the course over a 10-week period.

## Internship CCMH/597A & CCMH/597B

The Internship is a clinical experience required of all MSC/CCMH students. The internship is divided into two courses, each lasting 15 weeks. Students research and apply to community agencies where they will provide clinical counseling to clients under the direction of an approved licensed site supervisor. Internships are divided into two 300-hour sections, totaling 600 hours. 240 of the 600 required hours must be direct client contact.

## Professional Liability Insurance

Students are required to obtain Professional Liability Insurance prior to direct client contact in clinical courses. Students must provide proof of insurance with a Certificate of Insurance in their name at the first clinical placement course workshop (Week 1). Student membership in the American Counseling Association (ACA) will provide the opportunity to obtain Professional Liability insurance at no cost as part of membership benefits.

## Site Placement

The University enters into contractual agreements with clinical placement sites with assistance from the Field Placement Team. These agreements clarify expectations and seek to ensure students have a rich clinical training and supervision experience. It is important for students to understand that they will not be placed by the university at an agency. ***Students must select a clinical placement with one of the approved, contracted sites on record.*** The list of approved sites is available to students after passing Portfolio II, generally during the Practicum Orientation workshop.

Students are encouraged to make careful decisions regarding the selection of clinical placement sites. Students are required to secure their own clinical placement site selected from the list of approved sites. Work and home schedules may require adjustment to work effectively with the site requirements and meet the clinical service hour requirements for each course and for licensure.

## Responsibilities and Expectations for Clinical Placements

It is every student's personal responsibility to apply, present professionally, submit a cover letter and resume, and interview for the position at the selected agency (if an interview is required by the agency). There may be additional requirements such as background checks or fingerprinting required at the selected site. We recommend that students consider a variety of sites to ensure timely placement and to receive a wide range of experience. Upon being offered a practicum or internship position, submit paperwork required by the campus, which includes the signed Supervision Contract from the site supervisor.



Students are expected to perform the agreed upon duties while supervised by the site supervisor and practicum/internship instructor. Students are expected to be on time and always demonstrate professional and ethical behaviors. Students are required to attend supervision on site as well as in weekly practicum/internship classes. Students are required to submit an up-to-date weekly log of their practicum/internship activities to their site supervisor and course faculty member for a signature. Signed weekly logs are uploaded to TK20 in Blackboard Ultra.

## Group Supervision

Students are required to attend group supervision meetings with the practicum/internship course faculty supervisors. Attendance and participation in 1.5 hours of weekly, synchronous group supervision is a mandatory requirement for all field experience students. If a student misses more than two supervision meetings during the course, they will be required to retake the course. Arriving habitually late is not viewed as professional behavior and may impact your grade. Being more than 15 minutes late will result in an absence.

## Safety Policies and Procedures for Home Visits

If services are to be provided at a client's home instead of at an agency's location, clinic, hospital, or care facility, the agency agrees to implement formal policies and procedures to protect the safety of the student's educational experience. These policies include student training on safety protocols, check-in and check-out procedures, client screening processes, permission to use mobile phones, and the accompaniment of an agency supervisor to all in-home service sessions. Under NO circumstances should students provide in-home services without an agency supervisor being physically present. Before starting any agency-related assignments or home visits, the agency must provide written policies and procedures on safety protocols. Students must also sign a statement acknowledging that they've received a copy of the agency's written policies and procedures as well as notice of the applicable training that will be provided to the supervising University faculty member. The agency is responsible for any claims or damages brought by any student, client, or third party arising out of in-home service care. Additional information is provided in the agency Affiliation Agreement.

Additionally, students are required to fulfill all agreements with the placement site and are not allowed to leave the site until the internship course is complete even if they have completed their hours.

## Practicum/Internship Hours Carryover Policy

Hours acquired during practicum (CCMH/592) are contained within the practicum course and cannot be carried over into internship A (CCMH/597A). Students who are deficient less than 50 hours in the Practicum course will be allowed to progress into their internship courses with an IP grade but will not be able to accrue internship hours until their practicum requirements have been satisfied. Students will be required to complete the *Summary of Service* form and have it approved by their faculty member. This form will be submitted to the internship faculty member. Students who do not acquire at least 50 hours in the practicum course will be required to re-take the course.

Extra and deficit hours acquired in Internship A (CCMH/597A) are carried into Internship B (CCMH/597B). This requires: 1) the University supervisor to consult with the site supervisor to verify the student's skills are progressing adequately; 2) the student completes the *Summary of Service* form and sends it to the Field Placement coordinator; 3) the Field Placement

Coordinator uploads the form from TK20; 4) the student will be responsible for uploading the *Summary of Service* form in TK20, verified by the course facilitator.

Students who choose to take a leave of absence from the program are not eligible to continue in clinical placement accruing hours.

## Paid Practicum/Internship Policy

Paid practicum/internships are permitted. Students may complete practicum/internship hours at their place of employment. Students must be supervised by someone other than their employer supervisor; the supervisor providing the clinical supervision must be appropriately licensed and meet the state requirements as a supervisor. Additionally, students must complete their practicum/internship hours doing something unrelated to their employment duties; students cannot continue to work in the same capacity that they are employed and count that as their clinical hours.

In summary, students can get paid for their practicum and internship and are allowed to earn practicum experience at their place of employment under these conditions:

- a. the student practicum/internship experience is different than their job duties;
- b. the student has a different supervisor for practicum/internship activities;
- c. the site meets state and University requirements for practicum/internship students and has been approved by the University for practicum/internship, with an active Affiliation Agreement on file.

## Section 5: Faculty

### Faculty Overview

Faculty members are leaders in the local counseling community. Faculty have distinguished themselves through education, scholarship, leadership, effective practice, and professional service.

### Relationships Between Students and Faculty

Faculty and students follow ACA Ethical Code guidelines regarding unacceptable relationships (ACA, 2014, F.10.a-e) and potentially beneficial relationships (ACA, 2014, F.10.f).

### Faculty Advisors

The program provides faculty advising for counseling students. Faculty advisors help students with their graduate program by providing support for student learning. Faculty advisors serve as mentors, encourage and assist in the development of a professional counseling identity and promote student specific professional career goals and development. Faculty advisors help track student progress through the entire program and offer professional guidance to students as they navigate graduate school challenges. Faculty advisors will also communicate about opportunities for participation in professional organizations and conferences, as well as counselor-related research.

## Section 6: Resources

### Counseling Skills Center

The Phoenix campus MSC/CCMH program provides a counseling training facility referred to as the Counseling Skills Center (CSC). The CSC is equipped with private counseling rooms, a small group meeting room, video/audio recording technology, a bulletin board for announcements and clinical course placement information. In addition, the CSC has a library of counseling resources. Students are required to utilize SimplePractice for record keeping and all communication with clients.

### Procedures for Disseminating Information

It is important that students are aware of programmatic changes, current professional and academic events and learning opportunities. Students receive information through mass emails, faculty announcements in class, in the electronic forums/Blackboard classroom, and the program message board located in the Counseling Skills Centers.

### Professional Affiliations

Students are offered free membership in the Arizona Counseling Association and are encouraged to join the American Counseling Association (ACA). In addition, students are encouraged to participate by attending meetings, volunteering time and services, submitting manuscripts for publication, attending conferences, and speaking at conferences.

Academically eligible students will be invited to join Chi Sigma Iota, the Counseling Academic and Professional Honor Society International, which promotes scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership, and excellence in counseling.

### Online Resources

The CCMH program offers several online resources to facilitate learning and development of core competencies. The University of Phoenix classroom includes student textbooks in electronic format, an extensive online library (the University Library) with multiple databases, information about the local campus, access online support, and links to assistance with educational tasks (such as writing, researching, and subject tutoring). Students will access the University of Phoenix classroom throughout their program.

### Endorsements

Students may submit any requests for program endorsements related to credentialing and employment through the Field Placement Team, who will evaluate and provide such endorsement in consultation with Accreditation and Regulatory Compliance (ARC) administrative faculty and with approval and signature of the Academic Director of Counseling. Faculty may provide personal references for students, with appropriate consideration as to their knowledge of the student's progress in the program, the program the student attended, and the faculty members' area of expertise within the scope of program instruction.

## Student Counseling Services

Although it is not the policy of this University to require personal or career counseling as a program requirement, the University of Phoenix recognizes personal issues can impede academic and clinical functioning because of the professional development that takes place within courses and training. Undergoing counseling as a personal growth opportunity, as well as having the experience of being a client, can be cathartic, and is generally a healthy approach to maintaining mental wellness. It is strongly recommended for all counseling professionals.

Information on counseling services is available in the Life Resource Center accessible through the student website. Students also have access to Career Services for Life® until they retire. These services include career coaching, resume building templates, and access to job boards. Links to counseling services and Career Services for Life® can be found by students in the Virtual Student Union (VSU). The VSU is a centralized hub for student resources located on the student's homepage of their student portal.

## Disability Services

University of Phoenix recognizes and accepts the obligations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability and requiring institutions of postsecondary education to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability in all programs, activities, and employment.

In order for the University to provide eligible students with a disability with reasonable accommodations, the student must submit an official request for services to a disability services advisor. All students seeking accommodations must contact their disability services advisor in order to begin the self-disclosure and accommodation process. University of Phoenix Disability Services Office is available to assist employees and faculty members with disabilities who request accommodations and can be found at the [University of Phoenix Disability Services](#) site.

## References

American Counseling Association. (2014). ACA code of ethics.

<https://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf>

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021, September). *Marriage and family therapists*. U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook.

<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/marriage-and-family-therapists.htm>

# University of Phoenix Master of Science in Counseling Statement of Acknowledgement and Understanding

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (Print Student Name), hereby state that I have downloaded an electronic copy or received a hard copy of the University of Phoenix MSC/CCMH Program Handbook and have read and understand the Program Handbook for the University of Phoenix MSC/CCMH degree program. I further state that I acknowledge and will adhere to the Supplemental Standards for the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences students.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_