



# **The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences**

*“Igniting Students’ Passion for the Helping Professions”*

**Master of Science in Counseling  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
Version 002**

**Program Handbook**

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## Introduction

This handbook outlines the areas critical to effective student learning in the Master of Science in Counseling (MSC) Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. Students should use this handbook, along with other UOPX student resources and materials, as a resource guide as they progress through their program. “General Policies and Procedures” includes an introduction to the MSC/CCMHv002 program, along with standards consistent across the University’s campuses and MSC programs. “Program Information” provides information specific to the requirements of the MSC/CCMHv002 program.

## General Policies and Procedures

### *Overview of MSC Program*

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences offers graduate-level counseling programs with curriculum designed to meet the educational standards for certification and licensure by state authorities. The American Counseling Association (2011) provides the following definition as a foundation: “Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.”

MSC programs at the University of Phoenix meet 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 throughout the first quarter of the 21st century, students from a variety of settings and backgrounds should find the interpersonal communication and therapeutic skills offered in this program useful in enhancing their careers (BLS, 2017).

Curriculum, course work, and clinical experience produce student-learning outcomes related to knowledge, critical thinking, affective development, and counseling skills. These outcomes are based on industry-accepted counselor education standards emphasizing counselor education with attention to 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 an ongoing component of the program structure and course sequencing. Average program length is 3-4 years and include practicum and internship requirements. Practicum/internship courses occur after fulfilling progression requirements and prerequisite courses.

The program involves a variety of delivery formats depending on the subject matter and competencies to be developed. These formats include multimodal delivery methods that may involve, but are not limited to the following:

- Assigned readings
- Role-plays
- Small group work
- Discussion
- Small group (Learning Team) presentations
- Small group and independent research
- Participation in a weekly learning team
- Access to an electronic “chat room” to discuss materials with other learning team members and faculty
- Written assignments
- Quizzes and examinations
- Critical thinking activities
- In-person residencies
- Student interaction through a multimedia platform

Because of the compressed and intensive nature of graduate courses at University of Phoenix (UOPX), we do not recommend taking more than one course at a time (i.e. doubling up). In addition to discussion and interactive activities in the classroom, out-of-class time is required for homework, Learning Team meetings, project activities, and comprehensive clinical coursework. Concurrent courses are *not* allowed during clinical courses.

### ***Online Resources***

Numerous online resources facilitate learning and development of core competencies. The UOPX Classroom includes student textbooks in electronic format, an extensive Online Library with multiple databases, a venue within the Classroom in which students can communicate with faculty and peers, access to online support, and links to assistance with educational tasks (such as writing, researching, and subject tutoring). Students will access the Classroom throughout their Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. In addition, the MSC/CCMH program at UOPX is available in an online modality in many states.

### ***Learning Team Philosophy***

The foundation of the UOPX educational philosophy and practice is the recognition of a distinction between the traditional college student and the student who has assumed the adult responsibilities of self-determination, achieved a level of independence, and has experienced professional development. The University of Phoenix focuses attention on shared participant responsibility for self-directed learning. Throughout the University programs, student expectations include seeking answers to critical questions, identifying and developing resources for validating information, and taking charge of their own learning process. The programs, therefore, provide the structure and support necessary to encourage independence and self-direction.

Traditionally, the role of the student has been relatively passive. The educational model advocated by the UOPX, based on the principles of John Knowles, demands active participation by students

in their educational process that places substantial responsibility on the learner. The dynamic process employed with Learning Teams maximizes each student's understanding and involvement in his or her degree program. Learning Team activities and time commitments are *not* optional. By sharing learning responsibilities, dissemination of more information amongst group members occurs in a limited amount of time.

Learning Teams are comprised of three to five students, who meet weekly (electronically). Learning Teams provide a format for students to support one another, learn from one another, and develop and refine their problem-solving skills. Oral and written projects completed within Learning Teams contribute to each student's individual grade. It is essential for Learning Team members to make a commitment to work together in order to meet course objectives and complete group assignments as instructed. Effective collaboration is one of the University's fundamental learning goals. One critical organizational competency involves learning to work effectively in teams, both as a team member and leader. This concept is crucial in the healthcare fields, where collaboration between professionals is generally an expected standard. The UOPX goal is to give students educational experiences that enhance effective core competencies and skills in a collaborative spirit, such as a Learning Team.

## Master of Science in Counseling - Degree Information

### *Program Mission Statement*

The mission of the Masters of Science in Counseling Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is to prepare confident, competent, and 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 circumstances within the context of the clinical mental health counseling practice.

### *Program Philosophy*

Commitment to standards of excellence and quality curriculum are the core beliefs of the faculty and administration behind the Master of Science in Counseling (MSC) Program. The program

faculty and staff respond to community needs by providing a practical course of study and practicum experiences that prepare students to be competent and ethical practitioners. The MSC program provides needed services to the community through collaboration with local agencies, schools, and a range of institutions. The MSC program also contributes to the community by providing continuing education opportunities.

Students are prepared to become competent professionals committed to the ideals of working with people in relationships. Students find themselves immersed in educational and clinical systems training that provide opportunities to practice a broad range of skills and prepares them to help people. Exposure to developmental and systemic models—with a balance of theory and practical application—is at the core of the counseling student experience. Additionally, introduction to a core set of values is an integral component in a field dedicated to helping others. Descriptions of this ideology, found in a variety of counseling and therapy association codes of ethics, essentially guide professional identity and behavior. Professional organizations related to counseling include the American Counseling Association (ACA), American Mental Health Counseling Association (AMHCA), American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), and American School Counselors Association (ASCA).

Students will also gain understanding and experience in providing therapy within ethnically, culturally and racially diverse populations. MSC faculty provide a collaborative learning environment. They are culturally-diverse practitioners who model the behaviors and attitudes fostered by the program. With vast fieldwork backgrounds, our faculty members represent a wealth of information, skill, and practical experience.

### ***Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs)***

PSLO #1: Students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions that are key to success in professional counseling, advocacy, and ethical practice.

PSLO #2: Students will demonstrate knowledge, skills and dispositions in social and cultural diversity that provide an understanding of societal changes and trends; human roles; societal subgroups; social mores; interaction patterns and differing lifestyles.

PSLO #3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of human growth and development to include wellness, the importance of mind-body interactions and their effect on physical and psychological well-being; the nature and needs of individuals at all developmental levels; normal and abnormal human behavior; personality theory and learning theory within cultural contexts.

PSLO #4: Students will demonstrate an understanding of career development theories; occupational and educational information sources and systems; career and leisure counseling, guidance, and education; lifestyle and career decision-making; and career development program planning, resources, and evaluation.

PSLO #5: Students will demonstrate an understanding of counseling and helping relationships to include philosophic bases of helping processes; counseling theories and their applications; helping

skills; consultation theories and their applications; helper self-understanding and self-development; facilitation of client or consultee change; and techniques for prevention and intervention.

PSLO #6: Students will demonstrate an understanding of group counseling and group work to include group development, dynamics, counseling theories; group leadership styles; group counseling methods and skills, and other group approaches.

PSLO #7: Students will demonstrate an understanding of assessment and testing to include group and individual education and psychometric theories and approaches to appraisal; data and information gathering methods; validity and reliability; psychometric statistics; factors influencing appraisals and use of appraisal results in helping processes.

PSLO #8: Students will demonstrate an understanding of counseling research and program evaluation to include types of research; basic statistics; research-report development; research implementation; program evaluation; needs assessment; and ethical and legal considerations.

PSLO #9: Students will demonstrate effective communication in the classroom and workplace.

PSLO #10: Students will demonstrate knowledge, skill and professional dispositions necessary in the use of appropriate psychological tests and assessments; diagnostic processes and classifications (including the DSM and ICD), and treatment planning in the context of clinical mental health counseling practice.

Graduates of the MSC program exemplify leadership and excellence in practice and are prepared to:

1. Maintain and advance professional standards
2. Facilitate growth
3. Think critically
4. Communicate effectively
5. Demonstrate flexibility
6. Manage conflict and stress
7. Use various theoretical models
8. Analyze and apply scholarly and counseling related research
9. Make clinical and treatment decisions based on sound ethical and legal reasoning with consideration and respect for diversity
10. Make appropriate diagnoses within the scope of practice
11. Supervise others in the clinical practice of their discipline
12. Intervene effectively with individuals and groups during crises, emergencies, and disasters.

***Program Objectives:***

1. To provide a foundation in the current scholarly knowledge base that is essential to the practice of counseling.
2. To integrate the acquisition of theoretical and conceptual foundations for the clinical practice of counseling in the therapeutic process.
3. To ensure the synthesis of theories with skills that enrich clinical and interpersonal interactions.
4. To develop a broad base of therapeutic skills and knowledge in order to respond to culturally diverse populations.
5. To foster an attitude of intellectual and critical inquiry and self-development, and to inculcate professional values and ethical standards unique to counseling.
6. To develop an understanding of the research process that promotes the use of research for the discipline in which the student will practice.
7. To prepare the student to exercise leadership and self-direction in planning, initiating, implementing, and evaluating therapeutic roles.
8. To interact with the community, agencies, and a diverse range of health professionals to ensure a dynamic collaborative relationship.
9. To expose the student to relevant counseling models, including current paradigms, which provide a balance of theory and practical application.
10. To prepare students to assist individuals, couples, groups, and families with meeting their counseling goals.
11. To provide services based on counseling theories, recognized professional standards, and scholarly research.
12. To teach effective communication, conflict and stress management, negotiation, problem solving, and decision-making skills with consideration of diversity amongst individuals and groups.
13. To critically analyze research and apply research findings in clinical practice.

14. To exhibit a broad range of knowledge in regard to available community resources and professional practice, and demonstrate appropriate ability to access and apply new knowledge.
15. To demonstrate continuing professional growth and development.
16. To recognize and take a leadership role in emerging issues and practices in counseling.
17. To use principles of clinical evaluation and assessment in order to make clinical and program decisions within sound ethical, legal, and regulatory parameters.
18. To apply supervision and consultative principles and practices in a variety of settings.
19. To assist with identifying and providing needed services in the event of individual or community crises, emergencies, and disasters.

### ***Information about Professional Organizations***

The MSC program promotes and facilitates the development of a strong professional identity among counselors. Students are required to join and participate in the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its branches and divisions, American School Counselor Association (ASCA), American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), or other approved professional organizations as listed in the Enrollment Agreement. Proof of membership and coverage for professional liability insurance is required prior to entering a practicum or internship course.

The ACA offers counseling resources and serves as a platform for national leadership, advocacy, and development of the counseling profession. In addition to the parent organization, ACA includes 19 specialty divisions, four regional groups, and 56 branches. Students can access the ACA online at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org). For students in the School Counseling program, the ASCA provides a supportive network for School Counselors with a platform for accessing professional journals and the most up-to-date literature in this field. The ASCA website is [www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org). The American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy is the professional organization for the field of marriage and family therapy. Their website is [www.aamft.org](http://www.aamft.org).

State branches of the 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 respective choice of professional affiliation at the national and state levels by attending meetings and conferences, joining committees, offering input, volunteering skills, submitting manuscripts to journals, and submitting presentations for conferences.

## ***Program Orientation***

Students and potential students receive multiple levels of orientation and are provided with information on the following:

- Specific information about the program, policies, and requirements
- Counselor identity
- Specific practicum and internship expectations
- Other student questions

During CNSL/500 Orientation to the Counseling Profession (the initial program orientation), MSC faculty members orient candidates to both the MSC program and the basic tenets and standards of the counseling profession. Students must successfully pass CNSL/500 before they are considered to be accepted in the program.

### ***Orientation to the Counseling Profession (CNSL/500)***

CNSL/500 is a three week orientation required for specified counseling program applicants. Students will explore the field of counseling and options for a career path to determine their readiness for entry into a graduate program in counseling. Students are required to take a career inventory assessment to examine their interests and aptitude for acquiring the skills needed in the counseling professions.

Students also begin to identify their personal motives for a career in the counseling field. Additional topics include orientation to UOPX learning platforms, the online library, graduate level writing expectations, and the broader idea of navigating graduate school and studies. Students who do not pass CNSL/500 on the first attempt may reapply in 30 days. A student failing CNSL/500 on the second attempt must wait six months before reapplying. Passing CNSL/500 is limited to a total of three attempts.

### ***Residency Courses (CNSL/503R, CNSL/513R, & CNSL/523R)***

The MSC/CCMHv002 program includes three residencies which include both online and in-person portions. These courses represent a dynamic aspect of this program. Each residency is two weeks in length with the first week being completed entirely online, and the second week culminating in a three day, in-person workshop in Tempe, AZ, which includes interaction with faculty and peers on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

Each residency is designed to evaluate students' counseling skill sets based on prior learning within the program. This is a great opportunity for students to gain insights regarding their developing skills based on faculty assessment and feedback. It is also an opportunity to develop

rapport with both faculty and fellow students by developing social networks and support groups. Students must pass each residency in order to move into the next sequence of courses.

Each residency is an important milestone in the development of professional counseling skills. The residencies provide students with an opportunity to demonstrate skills and apply learning through face-to-face counseling situations. Attendance to the in-person workshop portion of the residency course is mandatory. Students are required to be present for the entire portion of the three day workshop. Arriving late or leaving early is unacceptable and will result in not passing the residency course. It is important for students to keep this in mind when making travel arrangements.

If a student does not pass a residency course on the first attempt, they must wait three months before retaking the course. During this three month remediation period, the student will work closely with his or her faculty advisor on skill development to prepare for the second attempt. If the student does not pass a residency course on the second attempt, the student will be placed on scholastic suspension.

The residency courses are a great benefit for students in this program. Not only do the courses allow students to receive constructive feedback on skill development, they also ensure students are progressing through their mastery of skill at the pace required for the program. These courses allow students to demonstrate readiness for the next courses in their program while preparing them for the professional field of counseling.

The in-person workshop portion of residency courses starts at 8:00 a.m. on Friday and concludes at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, including homework Friday and Saturday nights. This is an intense three days of working individually and in groups.

Faculty advisors within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences will work with our students to prepare them with all the necessary information, timelines, and directions pertaining to the residency. This information includes hotels located in close proximity to the campus that are partnered with UOPX to provide the necessary services and any additional information related to travel. Lunch and small snacks will be provided to students during the in-person workshop portion of the residency. Any costs related to travel, lodging, and meals for the in-person portion of the residency courses are the sole responsibility of the student and are not covered by financial aid.

### ***Clinical Placements***

Practicums and Internships are supervised clinical experiences that provide opportunities for students to counsel clients in community settings. Practicum is a highly supervised tutorial 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.

Practicums and Internships include opportunities for students to work with diverse populations in multiple modalities. The clinical placement courses represent continued experiential training and, depending on the student's program, may involve up to 900 hours (depending on state

requirements) of documented direct and indirect clinical work. Site Supervisor evaluations of student performance assist in determining areas of focused training during the field placement series of courses. Students also have an opportunity to evaluate both their site and site supervisor.

Students are *required* to obtain Professional Liability insurance prior to entering into a client contact scenario. Students must provide proof of insurance with a Certificate of Insurance in their name before beginning their first clinical placement course workshop. Student membership in the American Counseling Association, or other similar professional organizations, will provide the opportunity to obtain Professional Liability insurance as part of membership benefits.

The University enters into contractual agreements with clinical placement sites. These agreements clarify expectations and seek to ensure students have a rich clinical training and supervision experience. ***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 Residency II (CNSL/513R).

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 in order to work effectively with the site requirements and meet the clinical service hour requirements for each course and for licensure.

### ***Student Responsibilities***

Each student will maintain behavior in accordance with the highest ethical and professional counseling standards as outlined by the counseling association relevant to the corresponding program, i.e. the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its branches and divisions, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), or the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT). Students are expected to keep all information about clients confidential. Logs, case notes, and other clinical assignments should contain no identifying information and (client) names used should be fictitious.

*Students violating client confidentiality, other ethical standards, and behavioral standards per the Student Code of Conduct and the Supplemental Standards (that follow), may be expelled from the program.* The Student Code of Conduct and retention (disciplinary) process is in the University of Phoenix Catalog along with additional procedures in the Supplemental Standards.

## **Supplemental Standards for Candidates in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Programs – Counseling**

Candidates in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences program leading to certification or licensure in Counseling at UOPX are subject to greater scrutiny because of their anticipated interactions with clients and others in the community. These degree candidates participate in one or more field placements, practicums, and/or internships as part of their academic program. As prospective

counselors, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences candidates 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 Supplemental Standards for Candidates in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences Programs ("Supplemental Standards") apply to these degree candidates before, during, and after their field placements, practicum, and internships. The Supplemental Standards address a candidate's affective attributes and disposition to be a counselor. A corresponding Professional Dispositions Rubric provides additional guidance.

A candidate's ability to satisfactorily meet the Supplemental Standards is a matter of ongoing academic judgment made by faculty, campus staff, and campus management.

### ***Supplemental Standards***

1. The candidate contributes to a positive climate in the University classroom and all field placements, practica, and internships.
2. The candidate demonstrates mastery of written and spoken language for self-expression, as well as for effective interaction in all settings.
3. The candidate is a thoughtful and responsive listener.
4. The candidate is committed to reflection, assessment, and learning as an ongoing process.
5. The candidate is willing to give and receive help.
6. The candidate is sensitive to community and cultural norms for the degree program, University classroom, and all field placements, practica, and internships.
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 himself/herself and those with whom he/she interacts.
9. The candidate demonstrates a commitment to keeping abreast of new ideas and understanding in the human service and/or counseling field.
10. The candidate demonstrates a level of responsibility and ethical judgment consistent with professional guidelines developed for these fields and appropriate for a professional human service worker and/or counselor.

11. The candidate maintains the highest ethical standards in interactions with faculty, students, staff, and clients, as well as in preparation and submission of required course work and the completion of tests.
12. The candidate maintains a pattern of exceeding minimal requirements in courses, field placements, practica, and internships.

When it is determined by faculty, campus staff, or campus management that a candidate falls short of meeting any of the above Supplemental Standards, they may file a “Referral” with the campus college chair, campus director of academic affairs or designee. Any candidate who receives one or more referral(s) shall be counseled, remediated, or withdrawn from their program, as appropriate.

Candidates who are separately charged with violating the Student Code of Conduct shall be subject to the policies, procedures, and sanctions for processing such charges. However, a charge under the Student Code of Conduct may also be the basis for a referral on separate academic grounds under these Supplemental Standards. Similarly, an observation under the Referral Process may be the basis for a Student Code of Conduct charge.

### ***Procedure for Processing Supplemental Standards Referrals***

The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has instituted processes to ensure candidates are regularly evaluated by faculty and have access to counseling and advisement on professional requirements. These processes are conducted through collaboration between faculty, campus staff, and campus management who understand the professions and who can offer constructive feedback. It is the intention of the Referral Process to identify a candidate’s deficiencies and promote dialogue on how the candidate can improve and move forward in their program.

During the course of a candidate’s program, faculty members, through a review of grades and dispositions, will monitor the candidate’s academic progress. The director of academic affairs (DAA), or designee, will serve as the primary point of contact in instances where a remediation plan and/or Candidate Retention Committee meeting is deemed necessary.

#### **First Referral**

1. Upon receipt of a Notification of a Referral, the college appointed administrator will review the information presented, as well as gather any additional information relevant to the notification. The appointed administrator will forward a letter of referral identifying the student’s deficiencies in meeting the Supplemental Standards to the Office of Dispute Management (ODM) for review. Upon approval by ODM, the appointed administrator will then notify the student by letter of the referral, identifying the student’s deficiencies in meeting the Supplemental Standards.

Note: The appointed administrator may convene a meeting of the Retention Committee if the reported conduct is deemed serious enough to warrant possible recommendation options available to the Retention Committee. (See Sections B and C below).

2. Upon receipt of the Notification of Referral letter, the student must respond in writing within ten (10) calendar days. Failure to respond may result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled. A student suspended solely for failure to respond will be reinstated to attendance upon successful completion of the Supplemental Standards process.
3. The appointed administrator and student will agree to a time/date when the student must meet with the appointed administrator or designee to discuss why the referral occurred and whether or not a formal remediation plan will be implemented.
4. The student must meet with the appointed administrator.
5. Failure by the student to meet with the appointed administrator within thirty (30) calendar days will result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled. A student suspended solely for failure to meet with the appointed administrator will be reinstated upon successful completion of the Supplemental Standards process.
6. The appointed administrator and student will meet for the purpose of discussing the referral and developing a remediation plan to assist the student in correcting identified deficiencies. The appointed administrator has final authority over the terms of the remediation plan. The student will be provided a written copy of the remediation plan.
7. The student will not be permitted to have representation by an attorney or any other third party at any time during the referral process.
8. The student is expected to maintain contact with the appointed administrator as required by the administrator regarding progress in completing the remediation plan or challenges with completing the remediation plan. Failure to complete the remediation plan in the time prescribed will result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled and may result in an additional referral under the Supplemental Standards. A student suspended for failure to complete the remediation plan will be reinstated upon successful completion of the Supplemental Standards process.

9. The student will be notified in writing upon successful completion of the remediation plan.

**A. Appointed Administrator Referrals, Second Referrals, and Multiple Referrals**

1. The appointed administrator may refer students to the Retention Committee for conduct deemed serious enough to warrant possible recommendation options available to only the Retention Committee; all second referrals and students with more than two referrals will be referred to the Retention Committee.
2. Note: Second and multiple referrals – Students receiving a second referral or multiple referrals due to failure to meet state-mandated requirements may be allotted additional referrals (the number of which will align with state expectations) prior to convening the RC.
3. Upon receipt of a Notification of a Referral, the appointed administrator will review the information presented, as well as gather any additional information relevant to the notification. The appointed administrator will then notify the student in writing of the referral and the convening of a Retention Committee, identifying the student's deficiencies in meeting the Supplemental Standards. Notification shall specifically describe the issue(s) to be discussed and the possible recommendation options available to the Retention Committee.
4. Upon receipt of the Notification of Referral with Retention Committee letter, the student must respond in writing within ten (10) calendar days. Failure to respond may result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled. A student suspended solely for failure to respond will remain suspended pending the decision of the Retention Committee.
5. After the student responds, the appointed administrator shall convene a meeting of the Retention Committee as described below.
6. The student will not be permitted to have representation by an attorney or any other third party at any time during the process.
7. The student will be notified in writing of the decision of the Retention Committee, including any right of appeal.

**B. Retention Committee**

1. The Retention Committee is comprised of the appointed administrator or designee and at least two (2) faculty members within the student's college.

2. The appointed administrator and the student will agree to a time/date that the student must meet with the Retention Committee.
3. Failure by the student to meet with the Retention Committee within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the notification will result in the student being suspended indefinitely at the conclusion of the current course or immediately if the student is not currently enrolled. A student suspended solely for failure to meet with the Retention Committee will remain suspended pending the decision of the Retention Committee.
4. The student must participate in a dialogue with the Retention Committee to discuss why the referral occurred and whether a formal remediation plan or withdrawal from the program shall be implemented. The Retention Committee members shall discuss with the student the issues or problems that appear to be hindering the student's academic progress and the student is expected to provide insight regarding the referral and possible solutions.
5. The student will not be permitted to have representation by an attorney or any other third party during the process.
6. After meeting with the student, the Retention Committee members shall dismiss the student from the meeting prior to their deliberations on a recommendation. The Retention Committee shall make one (1) of the following recommendations:
  - a. Take no action
  - b. Institute a formal remediation plan
  - c. Withdraw the student from the program
7. The Retention Committee shall issue a summary report, generally containing findings and recommendations, to the college appointed dean, who has the ultimate authority to accept, reject, or modify the recommendations of the Retention Committee and render the decision.

## **C. Decision**

### **1. Take No Action**

- a. Upon a decision to take no action, the student will be notified in writing of the decision.
- b. A decision to take no action may be taken into consideration should the student receive any future referral.
- c. A decision to take no action is final and cannot be appealed.

## **2. Institute a Formal Remediation Plan**

- a. Upon the decision that a formal remediation plan be instituted, the student will be notified in writing of this decision and directed to contact the appointed administrator.
- b. Upon notification, the student is expected to contact the appointed administrator within thirty (30) calendar days for the purpose of scheduling a meeting to develop a remediation plan to assist the student in correcting identified deficiencies. Failure by the student to meet with the appointed administrator within thirty (30) calendar days of notification may result in an additional referral under the Supplemental Standards.
- c. The student will not be permitted to have representation by an attorney or any other third party during the process.
- d. The appointed administrator has final authority over the terms of the remediation plan. The student will be provided a written copy of the remediation plan.
- e. The student is expected to maintain contact with the appointed administrator regarding progress in completing the remediation plan or challenges with completing the remediation plan. Failure to complete the remediation plan within the prescribed time may result in an additional referral under the Supplemental Standards.
- f. A recommendation decision by the Retention Committee to institute a formal remediation plan is final and cannot be appealed.

## **3. Program Withdrawal**

- a. Upon decision that the student be withdrawn from the program, the student will be scholastically suspended and notified in writing.
- b. A student who does not successfully complete the student teaching, practicum, internship or field experience within two (2) attempts will be withdrawn from the program and scholastically suspended without going through the Retention Committee.
- c. The student notification of program withdrawal and scholastic suspension will inform the student of the right to appeal this decision to the Central Administration Appeals Committee by filing 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.
- d. If no appeal is filed within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the decision, the program withdrawal becomes a final decision, the student will remain scholastically suspended, and there is no further appeal.

#### **D. Central Administration Appeals Committee**

1. The Central Administration Appeals Committee, facilitated by the Office of Dispute Management (ODM), is generally comprised of the dean from the appropriate college, an assistant or associate dean from the appropriate college or designee, and a vice provost of Academic Affairs or designee.
2. The Central Administration Appeals Committee will review information provided by the campus which shall consist of any information considered by the Retention Committee and the student's statement of appeal.
3. The Central Administration Appeals Committee shall make one (1) of the following decisions:
  - a. Reject the withdrawal and remand back to the campus to reinstate the student into the program and remediate if applicable or,
  - b. Uphold the program withdrawal.
4. Students are not entitled to representation by an attorney or any other third party at any point in the process. If the violation involved allegations of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking, then the accused and the accuser are entitled to the same opportunity to have others present during a disciplinary proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by an attorney or advisor of their choice.
5. The student will be notified in writing of the Central Administration Appeals Committee decision.
6. The decision of the Central Administration Appeals Committee is final.

*Note: It is possible a student may be referred for counseling as a result of action under the Supplemental Standards.*

#### ***Professional Dispositions***

**Note: This chart complements the *Supplemental Standards for Candidates in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences - Counseling Programs*. It is intended to provide behavioral examples to show how each disposition might be demonstrated inside and outside of the classroom and in professional settings.**

<b>Disposition*</b>	<b>Description of "At Standard" Indicators</b>
1. The candidate contributes to a positive climate in the University classroom and all field placements, practicums, and/or internships.	Participates actively in class discussion and assignments, works effectively with others and shows respect of and consideration for the thoughts and feelings of others.
2. The candidate demonstrates mastery of written and spoken language for self-expression, as well as for effective interaction in all settings.	Communicates effectively verbally, demonstrates an ability to write in a clear, organized, fluent manner; adheres to language conventions when appropriate, recognizes distinctions between formal and informal communication.
3. The candidate is a thoughtful and responsive listener.	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.
4. The candidate is committed to reflection, assessment, and learning as an ongoing process.	Reflects on information provided and demonstrates an ability to apply ideas 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.
5. The candidate is willing to give and receive help.	Volunteers to assist others in the University classroom and/or practicum settings and demonstrates openness to accept assistance from others. Accepts direction from others and respects authority.
6. The candidate is sensitive to community and cultural norms of the counseling and/or human services program, the University classroom, and all field placements, practicums, and/or internships.	Uses language that demonstrates sensitivity to others; communicates effectively with peers, instructors, students, and clients; shows an awareness of the context in which she/he is interacting.

<b>Disposition*</b>	<b>Description of "At Standard" Indicators</b>
7. The candidate appreciates and values human diversity and shows respect for others' varied talents and perspectives.	Listens to others' perspectives in a respectful manner; exhibits an understanding of the complexities of race, power, gender, class, sexual orientation, and privilege in American society.
8. The candidate values the development of critical thinking, independent problem solving, and performance capabilities in himself or herself and those with whom she/he interacts.	Demonstrates an ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate complex issues; exhibits the ability to solve problems both independently and in cooperation with others; sets and achieves high standards.
9. The candidate demonstrates a commitment to keeping abreast of new ideas and understanding the counseling and/or human services field.	Identifies and analyzes important trends in counseling and/or human services; looks for opportunities to integrate theory and practice; demonstrates enthusiasm for learning new ideas and strategies; relates class discussions and issues to current events in counseling and/or human services.
10. The candidate demonstrates a level of responsibility and ethical judgment appropriate for a professional counselor and/or human services worker.	Attends all classes, practicum experiences, required activities and arrives on time; dresses for practicum experiences in an appropriate manner; communicates in a professional manner regarding extenuating circumstances that may prevent attendance; comes to class prepared.

<b>Disposition*</b>	<b>Description of "At Standard" Indicators</b>
<p>11. The candidate maintains the highest ethical standards in interactions with faculty, students, and staff, as well as in preparation and submission of required course work, and the completion of assignments.</p>	<p>Does not represent the work of others as his/her own; is truthful when making statements about qualifications and competencies; observes contractual commitments and timelines; protects students' and clients' rights to privacy and confidentiality; establishes relationships with co-workers and clients based on courtesy, mutual trust, and open communication; respects the uniqueness and characteristics of varying backgrounds; acts within the community in a way that enhances the status of the profession; promotes the improvement of organizational policies; develops an understanding and respect for laws and policies that protect organizations, staff, clients, and communities.</p>
<p>12. The candidate maintains a pattern of exceeding minimal requirements in course, field placements, practicums, and/or internships.</p>	<p>Attends all required activities and arrives on time; dresses for field placements, practicums, and/or internships in a professional manner; communicates professionally to organizations, staff, and clients; comes to class prepared; respects diversity; volunteers to take on additional responsibilities, as appropriate; participates in professional development opportunities offered in a counseling/human services setting; maintains privacy and confidentiality.</p>

*\*Note: The first nine dispositions were adapted from the standards of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), formerly available at the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) website, <http://www.ccsso.org>.*

## Academic Requirements

### *Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)*

Students in UOPX counseling programs must take the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) or another exam that is approved by the dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Students must pass the CPCE with a minimum score of 62. The CPCE is an exit exam and preparatory for the National Counselor Examination (NCE), which is required for licensure in most states and addresses the core areas of competency assessed on the NCE. Counseling programs at UOPX prepare you to sit for the NCE. Students are eligible to take the CPCE after completing all coursework listed as prerequisite to the first clinical placement course.

### *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.

Faculty may share information in accordance with FERPA guidelines about student progress throughout the program as a strategy for enhancing student success and ensuring compliance with professional ethical responsibilities.

### *Class Participation Guidelines*

Grading the student, both individually and as a group member, is a complex task for the faculty member. The philosophy of UOPX is to encourage active student participation in each week to augment the learning; thus, the faculty member must be able to objectively and subjectively grade participation. Part of the student’s grade is derived from class participation or is a factor in Learning Team assignments.

Outlined below is a suggested class participation guide.

1. With regard to Group Involvement, the student:
  - a. Contributes to group discussion frequently
  - b. Chooses topics relevant to the topic being presented at that time
  - c. Shows interested in class and faculty discussion
  - d. Displays active listening to others
  - e. Leads group discussion
  - f. Serves as group spokesperson

- g. Relates theory to practice in group discussion
- h. Asks questions
- i. Is prepared for group discussion
- j. Enhances the group presentation

### ***University of Phoenix Approved Writing Style Guide***

The approved UOPX writing style guide is the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Sixth Edition*. As a suggestion, purchase the manual before the first course of the program as it will be useful throughout your program. In the UOPX Course Materials, this book is referred to as both the “APA Manual” and the “UOPX 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 typically involves 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(s) of the manual is/are 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 houses a tutorial on APA style for students and faculty.

### ***Standards for Written Work***

#### **1. Content/Development**

- a. All key elements of the assignment are covered in a substantive way. Content is comprehensive, accurate, and persuasive (if applicable).
- b. Major points are stated clearly, supported by specific details, examples, or analysis, and are organized logically.
- c. Where appropriate, the paper supports major points with theory relevant to idea development and uses the vocabulary of the theory correctly.
- d. There is integration of theory and practice whereby the writer is able to link theories to practical experience (i.e. application to the “real world” work setting).
- e. Research is adequate and timely for the topic.
- f. The context and purpose of the writing is clear (critique, research, sample memo, business plan).

#### **2. Organization**

- a. The structure of the paper is clear and easy to follow.

- b. The paper's organization emphasizes the central theme or purpose and is directed toward the appropriate audience.
- c. Ideas flow in a logical sequence.
- d. The introduction provides sufficient background on the topic and previews major points.
- e. Paragraph transitions are present, logical, and flow is maintained throughout the paper.
- f. The conclusion is logical and flows from the body of the paper.
- g. The conclusion reviews the major points and does not introduce new material.

### **3. Format**

- a. The paper, including citations and the reference page, follows APA guidelines for format.
- b. The paper is laid out effectively and uses reader-friendly aids (sections, summaries, tables of contents, indices, appendices) when appropriate.
- c. The paper makes appropriate use of references. Three are considered minimum at this level.
- d. Headings, the use of italics, etc., aid in the readability of the paper and are not "overdone."
- e. The paper is neat, with attention given to format requirements.

### **4. Grammar/Punctuation/Spelling**

- a. Rules of grammar, usage, and punctuation are followed.
- b. Spelling is correct.

### **5. Readability/Style**

- a. Sentences are complete, clear, and concise.
- b. Sentences are well-constructed, with a consistently strong, varied structure.
- c. Sentence transitions are present and maintain the flow of thought.
- d. Words used are precise and unambiguous.
- e. The tone is appropriate to the content and assignment.

### ***Standards for Oral Presentations***

#### **1. Organization and structure**

- a. Presentation is well-organized, clear, and effectively structured.
- b. The introduction tells the reader what to expect (i.e. act as a "sign post"). The conclusion summarizes the main points.
- c. Group presentations are integrated rather than a disjointed series of individual presentations.
- d. The topic is researched adequately.

#### **2. Effective use of visual aids**

- a. Visual aids are clear and effective.
  - b. Visual aids contribute to a focused and integrated presentation.
3. Content of presentation
- a. The content of the presentation clearly follows the written paper on which it is based (if applicable).
  - b. The topic is relevant and addresses the specifications of the assignment. The content presented is comprehensive, accurate, and believable.
  - c. Key points are noted and presented logically.
4. Style and presentation
- a. Non-verbal gestures are appropriate to the purpose of the presentation and flow of ideas.
  - b. Confidence and knowledge of content are evident.
  - c. Audience is engaged, when appropriate, in a professional manner.
  - d. Delivery time is used well. Presentation is not rushed.
  - e. Speaker adheres to the specified time limit.
5. Questions and comments
- a. Audience feedback is solicited.
  - b. Audience questions are effectively addressed and correctly answered.

### ***Standards for Learning Team Work***

1. Members develop perspective and goals for the group as a whole.
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 performance for group members.
5. Members effectively manage conflict within the group and resolve problems.
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.

## **Faculty Overview**

Faculty members for the MSC program are leaders in their counseling communities. Selected faculty have distinguished themselves through effective practice, professional service, and demonstrated knowledge. All faculty members in the MSC program are active in the counseling community, providing direct services, supervising counselors, volunteering for professional organizations, and serving as administrators of agencies. Faculty members in the

MSC program demonstrate continued learning and professional service throughout their employment at UOPX.

### ***Relationships between Students and Faculty***

Because faculty members are active within the local counseling community, there is an increased possibility that students will have contact with faculty members outside of the educational setting. For example, students may work at the same agency as a faculty member.

There are potentially beneficial aspects to this relationship. For example, faculty members with whom students are familiar or comfortable can function as mentors for the student. Faculty members can mentor students through such activities as writing manuscripts, presenting at conferences, attending meetings of professional organizations, and discussing theoretical perspectives or career options. However, the possibility of interactions outside the educational setting requires vigilant attention to ethical boundaries. Faculty and students follow ACA Ethical Code guidelines with regard to unacceptable relationships (ACA, 2005, F.10.a-e) and potentially beneficial relationships (ACA, 2005, F.10.f).

### ***Procedures for Disseminating Information***

It is important students are aware of programmatic changes, current professional and academic events, and learning opportunities. Students receive information through mass emails, faculty announcements in class, and in the electronic forums and the Classroom. In addition, academic counselors may conduct class visits at specific times throughout the program. During the class visits, they may review progression and degree-completion requirements.

## **MSC/Clinical Mental Health Program Information**

Counseling programs are aligned with required state licensure laws and rules where the programs are approved to be offered. Students who move to another state from where they enrolled may NOT be able to complete their program. Should a student have the need to relocate while enrolled in the counseling program, they must reach out to their academic counselor PRIOR to their move to determine if they will be able to continue their program in that state. Furthermore, when transferring to a different state it will be the student's responsibility to ensure they are meeting all the requirements for licensure in the new state.

## **Clinical Mental Health Counseling v002 Program Description**

The Master of Science in Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, is a 63-credit\* program 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,

program development, implementation, and evaluation. The program addresses critical issues facing 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.

\*This program is 66 credits in Utah and Nevada due to state-specific requirements.

## Faculty Advisors

The Master of Science in Counseling Degree program provides faculty advising for counseling students. A faculty advisor will be assigned during your first course following CNSL/500. Faculty advisors help students with their graduate program by providing support, challenging student learning, and overseeing students' ability to work with others within the program. 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 students' progress throughout 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.

There are many possible topics for discussion with faculty advisors, including:

- Career goals, including a professional development plan
- Development and articulation of a theoretical approach
- Use of advocacy in the office, in administration, and in legislation
- Membership in professional organizations
- Acquisition of advanced clinical skills/specialized training
- Research and presentation opportunities
- Supervision and licensure
- Residency assessment and CPCE/NCE

Faculty members may share information with each other in accordance with FERPA guidelines about student progress throughout the program as a strategy for enhancing student success and ensuring compliance with professional and ethical responsibilities.

## Professional Affiliations

Students are required to join the American Counseling Association (ACA), state branches of ACA, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and/or the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), according to students' respective degree program's policy. Faculty will inform students about the available and required association memberships, according to their respective program. In addition, students are encouraged to participate by

attending meetings, volunteering time and services, submitting manuscripts for publication, attending conferences, and speaking at conferences.

## Endorsements

Submit any requests for program endorsements related to credentialing and employment through the director of academic affairs, who will evaluate and provide such endorsement in consultation with faculty. Faculty may provide personal references for students with appropriate consideration as to their knowledge of the student's progress in the program 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, UOPX recognizes personal issues can impede academic and clinical functioning as a result of the professional development that takes place within courses and training. Undergoing psychotherapy/counseling as a personal growth opportunity, as well as having the experience of a client, can be cathartic, is generally a healthy approach to maintaining mental wellness, and is strongly recommended for all counseling professionals. Students who experience personal difficulties and would like to seek counseling are informed of the availability of services within the Campuses and within the respective communities. Students are also encouraged to consult with core faculty, their faculty advisors, and/or the director of academic affairs for community referrals.

## 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 disabled individuals in all programs, activities, and employment.

In order for the University to provide eligible disabled students 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. Human resources is available to assist employees and faculty members with disabilities who request accommodations.

## MSC/CCMHv002 Preferred Course Sequence and Prerequisites

Basic Counseling				
Course ID	Course Title	Credits	Length	Prerequisites
CNSL/500	Orientation to the Counseling Profession	0	3 weeks	
CCMH/504	Individual and Family Development Across the Life Span	3	6 weeks	CNSL/500
CCMH/506	Personality Theories and Counseling Models	3	8 weeks	CNSL/500
CCMH/515	Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Counseling	3	8 weeks	CCM/504, CCMH/506
CCMH/511	Fundamental Counseling Skills	3	6 weeks	CCMH/515
CNSL/503R	Residency I	1	2 weeks	CCMH/511

Intermediate Counseling				
Course ID	Course Title	Credits	Length	Prerequisites
CCMH/525	Research Methods for Mental Health Counselors	3	8 weeks	CNSL/503R
CCMH/510	Multi-Cultural Issues in Mental Health Counseling	3	6 weeks	CNSL/503R
CCMH/547	Basic Clinical Assessment and Psychometrics	3	8 weeks	CCMH/525, CCMH/510
CCMH/548	Psychopathology: Advanced Clinical Assessment	3	6 weeks	CCMH/547
CCMH/522	Psychopharmacology	3	6 weeks	CCMH/548
CCMH/551	Individual Counseling	3	6 weeks	CCMH/548
CCMH/568	Group Counseling	3	8 weeks	CNSL/503R
CNSL/513R	Residency II	1	2 weeks	CCMH/568, CCMH/548

### Advanced Counseling

Course ID	Course Title	Credits	Length	Prerequisites
CCMH/540	Career and Vocational Counseling	3	6 weeks	CNSL/513R
CCMH/561	Dependency and Addictions	3	6 weeks	CNSL/513R
CCMH/565	Family, Couple, and Child Counseling	3	6 weeks	CNSL/513R
CCMH/558	Crisis Intervention and Trauma	3	6 weeks	CCMH/561, CCMH/565
CMHC/551	Human Sexuality and Sex Therapy	3	6 weeks	CCMH/565
CCMH/581	Supervision/ Management in Clinical mental Health Counseling	3	6 weeks	CNSL/513R
CNSL/523R	Residency III	1	2 weeks	CCMH/581, CCMH/558, CMHC/551

### Clinical Placement

Course ID	Course Title	Credits	Length	Prerequisites
CCMH/592	Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	3	10 weeks	CNSL/523R
CCMH/597A	Internship A	3	15 weeks	CCMH/592
CCMH/597B	Internship B	3	15 weeks	CCMH/597A
CCMH/597C	Internship C (Utah and Nevada Only)	3	15 weeks	CCMH/597B

## Reference

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2017). *Occupational outlook handbook*. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/mental-health-counselorshttps://www.bls.gov/ooh/community-and-social-service/mental-health-counselors-and-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 College of Social and Behavioral Sciences MSC Online Program Handbook V002, and have read and understand the Master of Science in Counseling Program Handbook for the University of Phoenix MSC Degree program. I further state that I acknowledge and will adhere to the supplemental standards for College of Social and Behavioral Sciences students.

Student Signature (Name Typed here is Equivalent to a Signature)

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