

Eastern Mennonite University

Graduate Counseling Student Handbook

M. A. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC)

2025-2026



Graduate Counseling Policies and Handbooks

All EMU graduate counseling students must read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies outlined in the following documents. All of these documents are available online and in hard-copy by request.

- **Graduate and Seminary Student Handbook**
Policies and procedures for all EMU graduate students.
- **Professional Practice Handbook**
Policies and procedures for practicum and internship field experiences.
- **Graduate Counseling Student Handbook** (this document)

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Mission Statement

We strive to achieve the highest standards of training for clinical mental health counselors, emphasizing applied clinical skill and professional readiness, counselor identity formation, service to the underserved, multicultural development and awareness, social justice through advocacy, reflective self-awareness, and celebration of diverse spirituality and values within a community environment.

Program Objectives

1. The EMU Graduate Counseling program prepares graduates who successfully integrate and implement counseling knowledge and skills
2. The EMU Graduate Counseling program prepares graduates who successfully integrate and implement appropriate counselor professional dispositions.
3. The EMU Graduate Counseling program evaluates barriers to graduation for graduate counseling students and designs and implements plans to reduce those barriers.
4. The EMU Graduate Counseling program cultivates a diverse learning community that values diversity, equity, inclusiveness, and belonging for students, staff and faculty by reducing barriers to recruitment, retention, and graduation.
5. The EMU graduate counseling program will maintain and develop new high quality partnering practicum and internship site placements, especially placements that serve high need and high demand (HN&HD) communities, such as rural and medically underserved communities.
6. The EMU graduate counseling program prepares students to effectively provide professional counseling in high need and high demand (HN&HD) areas, such as rural and medically underserved areas.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Accreditation

The Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) is the national accrediting body for professional counseling. To be accredited a program must demonstrate high standards in a wide variety of programmatic areas. www.cacrep.org

The MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at Eastern Mennonite University is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). This accreditation runs through October 31, 2025, and the program has applied for reaffirmation of accreditation.

Philosophy

The **Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling** curriculum encompasses a rich diversity of experiences, values, and perspectives. More than a sequence of courses, the curriculum includes advising and supervision processes that prioritize the development of each counselor-in-training's character and ethical identity. It also initiates students into a broader ethical community of counseling practitioners.

Peer collaboration and support are integral parts of the program, fostered through daily interaction and student involvement in professional organizations such as the **American Counseling Association (ACA)** and the **Virginia Counseling Association (VCA)**. The curriculum also extends into the community through practicum and internship placements—essential experiences that connect students to the realities of clinical practice.

Importantly, the curriculum is not confined to formal components. It reflects the shared life and values of a mentoring community of counselors committed to professional and personal growth.

The program models **self-aware, evidence-informed counseling practice**. Through community-based placements and layered supervision, students engage in extensive practice while receiving meaningful feedback. The curriculum's content courses are designed to develop students' ability to critically understand and apply counseling research, always seeking dynamic integration between research and practice.

While the curriculum emphasizes shared professional language and broadly applicable theoretical frameworks, it also honors the **sacredness of individual lives**. Students are supported in discovering and developing their own distinct gifts as future counselors. Throughout the curriculum, attention is given to the **particularities of clients' personal, familial, and cultural identities**, guided by systems perspectives that recognize the importance of individual, relational, and cultural uniqueness.

The program is housed within a university shaped by the **Anabaptist/Mennonite tradition**, which informs a commitment to mutual care, community-building, and social justice. This tradition encourages attention not only to clients' personal well-being, but also to their social contexts—and to counselors' own ethical development and sense of professional purpose.

Spirituality

We consider the awareness of and exploration of personal spirituality, faith, values and religious tradition and commitments to be crucial in counselor formation. We encourage and support students in exploring their own spirituality, both intrapersonally in their own practices, as well as interpersonally in their family and community systems. We ask our counselors in training to be attentive to, respectful of, and unafraid to meet clients wherever they are with respect to these dimensions of their lives. We recognize both that religious communities and families are often the most significant positive resource in a client's life and also that religious communities and families may be part of the presenting problem.

We strive to make our classes and our community safe for the exploration of spiritual and religious experience, both individually and in our conversations together. We welcome and value those who may as a matter of course ground themselves in religious texts, practices, and communities, and we welcome and value those who do not identify as religious - wanting for both, and for all, the openness to explore the otherness, both in others and in themselves. We want to be an open, encouraging, and safe community for this exploration, modeling how we hope we all can be in our professional practice and in our daily lives.

Ethics

The EMU graduate counseling faculty abide by the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics. All EMU graduate counseling students will also abide by the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, which is explicitly taught in COUN 507: PIFE and reinforced throughout the curriculum.

Focus on the Person

At heart, we are energized by the potential for interpersonal relationships to be sustaining, reparative, and therapeutic. The processes of inner awareness, empathic attunement, and transformation are central to our training in the EMU MA in Counseling program. We strive to do the work of counselor formation, attending to the whole person of the counselor-in-training and modeling how they too will attend to the whole person of each client with whom they work.

Counselor Formation

Counselor formation is the process of internalizing a professional counselor identity. Counselor formation refers to both inner and outer development, being inclusive of development in self-awareness and maturity in articulating personal identity as well as adequate ability in meeting professional standards in counseling and an organized and articulate reflection on one's own approach to counseling.

The performance of the student through this counselor formation process forms the basis on which the faculty assesses the level of character and competency required for admission to internship and nomination for graduation. These expectations are further defined in the following list of overarching student objectives.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Five overarching objectives guide our program training. A graduate of the Eastern Mennonite University Master of Arts in CMHC program will:

1. **Demonstrate applied clinical skill and professional readiness.** EMU Graduate Counseling students will be prepared academically and possess the requisite clinical and professional skills to begin work as Resident in Counseling (the name given to the graduate completing supervision hours before licensure) toward professional counseling licensure. Professional readiness is measured by the presentation of a completed Mastery Competency Portfolio [MCP] at the time of graduation. (KPIs: 1, 4, 7, 8, 9)
2. **Promote social justice through professional advocacy,** as measured by key and competency assignments (see MCP) throughout the program and particularly through the culminating Advocacy Project in COUN 610: Advanced Multicultural. (KPIs: 2, 4, 8, 9)
3. **Embody an ongoing commitment to multicultural awareness and competence,** as measured through key and competency assignments (see MCP) and reflection on results from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), which is taken twice, once in COUN 507: Professional Identity, Function, and Ethics and once COUN 610: Advanced Multicultural Counseling to facilitate self-awareness and intercultural development over time. (KPIs: 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9)
4. **Engage iterative self-reflective processes and make constructive use of supervision,** as measured through key and competency assignments throughout the program and particularly through the COUN 528: Practicum CAS-P-St, paper of readiness and admission to internship. (KPIs: 1, 3, 4, 9)
5. **Have internalized and be able to articulate an effective and theoretically grounded clinical mental health counselor identity,** as measured through key and competency assignments and Counselor Assessment Scales in COUN 528: Practicum, COUN 689: Internship 1, and COUN 690: Internship 2 and the capstone paper and presentation. (KPIs: 1, 5, 6, 7, 9)

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Nine Key Performance Indicators support the measurement of the EMU MAC SLOs through at least two associated *competency assignments* to be added to each student's *Mastery Competency Portfolio*. The first eight KPIs related to the 2024 CACREP Standards, Section 3, A-H, respectively, the Foundational Counseling Curriculum and the ninth KPI measures Section 5.C., the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialty Area.

1. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate knowledge of the scope of practice, ethics, and professional participation of professional counselors and act as mentors, supervisors, and advocates for the profession. (SLO 1, 4, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.A.)
2. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate knowledge of their own cultural identities, the effects of current and historical events on cultural and multigenerational trauma, and skills to establish and maintain culturally informed counseling relationships. (SLO 2, 3; 2024 CACREP 3.B.)
3. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate knowledge of individual, familial, and cultural development across the lifespan and skills to utilize developmentally appropriate interventions. (SLO 3, 4; 2024 CACREP 3.C.)
4. EMU Graduate Counseling students will be prepared to attain sustainable counseling employment and will have the knowledge and skills to empower clients to engage in culturally sustaining career and educational development and employment opportunities. (SLO 1, 2, 4; 2024 CACREP 3.D.)

5. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain effective, theoretically grounded, and culturally informed, counseling relationships. (SLO 3, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.E.)
6. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate the ability to understand clients through familial and systemic contexts and will be able to establish and maintain effective, theoretically grounded, and culturally informed, counseling groups for varied presentation topics and issues (SLO 3, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.F.)
7. EMU Graduate Counseling students will exhibit knowledge of ethical, culturally-informed, and empirically grounded assessment and diagnostic procedures and will demonstrate skills utilizing clinical interviews, testing instruments, and diagnostic criteria for providing diagnoses and creating treatment plans. (SLO 1, 3, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.G.)
8. EMU Graduate Counseling students will implement the knowledge and skills of research and data literacy to ethically inform counseling practice, advancing the counseling profession, and culturally informed evaluation of client outcomes and program functioning. (SLO 1, 2, 3; 2024 CACREP 3.H.)
9. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate exemplary applied clinical skill and professional readiness, utilizing self-reflective awareness and adeptly integrating supervisory feedback, and engaging culturally informed, theoretically grounded, ethically guided clinical mental health counseling (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 2024 CACREP 5.C.)

Professional Dispositions

Drawing from the work of Freeman et al. (2019), the EMU graduate counseling faculty assess 10 professional dispositions:

Conscientiousness: Behaviors associated with accepting responsibility, perseverance, dependability, capacity to plan, and self-discipline.

Self-Awareness: A conscious knowledge of one's own traits, emotions, and behavior, and the impact of one's behaviors on others.

Coping and Self-Care: Identifies and responds appropriately to personal stress, burnout, and situational impairment; uses positive coping mechanisms.

Interpersonal Skills: Demonstrates appropriate warmth, energy in interpersonal relationships, and the capacity to interact effectively with others.

Ethical Behavior: Integration of professionalism and ethical standards into day-to-day behavior

Emotional Stability: Ability to control negative emotions, such as anger and anxiety and to adopt a generally positive perspective; effective management of behaviors that could potentially interfere with professional functioning.

Moral Reasoning: Behavior reflecting academic honesty; reliable and truthful in dealings with others; engenders public trust.

Openness: Tolerance for ambiguity and lifestyles of others, imaginative, curious, open to new learning experiences.

Cultural Sensitivity: Behaviors that suggest tolerance for culture and lifestyle differences, cultural sensitivity to multiple factors that make up an individual's identity, awareness of one's own heritage and the potential impact of one's own culture on others.

Cooperativeness: Behaviors associated with accepting responsibility, perseverance, dependability, capacity to plan, and self-discipline.

These 10 professional dispositions are assessed during the admission to internship process (spring semester of the first year for full-time students on the 2-yr track or spring semester of the second year for students on the 3-yr track). They are assessed again during the Admission to Graduation Process (spring semester of the final year).

Freeman, B. J., Garner, C. M., Scherer, R., & Trachok, K. (2019). Discovering Expert Perspectives on Dispositions and Remediation: A Qualitative Study. *Counselor Education & Supervision*, 58(3), 209–224.
<https://doi-org.emu.idm.oclc.org/10.1002/ceas.12151>

Admission to the Program

The admissions selection process is designed to identify students who have potential for becoming a professional counselor. Students are admitted on the basis of many different expressions of their qualities and abilities: scholastic achievement, work experience, factors relating to character, personality and readiness, and respect for cultural differences.

Applicants must be a graduate of a regionally accredited college or university. Applicants are required to submit official transcripts of credit from all colleges and universities attended, three references, two of which must be academic, and a statement of purpose. Applicants seeking to complete the program on a 2-year basis must also submit a letter of readiness. Potential candidates will be invited for an interview.

Conditional Admission

Conditional admission is granted to a limited number of students each fall semester who come just below the requirements for unconditional admission, but who otherwise demonstrate the ability and motivation to adequately perform graduate level work. At the end of the fall semester their admission status is reviewed by the faculty and a decision is made to either lift the conditional status, extend conditional status, or deny continuing enrollment.

Conditionally admitted students receive focused and additional advising from a faculty member.

Requirements

Expectations include an undergraduate GPA of at least 3.00, references indicating clear support for graduate work, a clear and relevant essay, and the ability to present oneself clearly and effectively in the interview. Additional factors given consideration in the admission decision include undergraduate field of study, performance in previous graduate level study, related counseling work experience, and other evidence of success in academic and professional endeavors. The admissions committee may make exceptions to admission requirements in special cases.

Enrollment and class size

Part-time students are encouraged to apply. Part-time status is defined as taking fewer than nine semester hours in a given semester.

New students are admitted for the fall semester. The application deadline is January 15. After this deadline, the admissions committee will continue to review applications if space remains available.

While class sizes vary, the EMU Graduate Counseling program is committed to keeping FTE faculty to FTE student ratios below 1:10.

Scholarships

There are a number of scholarships and grants our students can apply for. These include the Laymon H. & Ruth S. Lantz Scholarship, the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant, and scholarships through the American Counseling Association and the National Board for Certified Counselors. Scholarship material is distributed to students as the information becomes available.

In addition, after licensure, students may apply for a loan repayment program through the National Health Service Corp [Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)], which offers tax-free loan repayment assistance to support qualified health care providers who choose to take their skills where they are most needed.

These programs include:

Nurse Corps Loan Repayment Program

For: Nurses (RN or APRN) or nurse faculty

Funding: 60% of qualifying educational loan balance

Serve: Two years full-time in an eligible facility

National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Loan Repayment Program

For: Clinicians in primary care medical, dental, or behavioral health disciplines serving in a health professional shortage area

Funding:

- Primary care medical: Up to \$75,000 full-time
- Dental or behavioral health: Up to \$50,000 full-time
- See details for part-time options, Spanish language award enhancement

Serve: Two years at an NHSC-approved site

NHSC Substance Use Disorder Workforce Loan Repayment Program

For: Clinicians trained and licensed to provide SUD treatment and serving in a health professional shortage area

Funding:

- Up to \$75,000 (full-time)
- See details for part-time options, Spanish language award enhancement

Serve: Three years at an NHSC-approved SUD treatment facility

NHSC Rural Community Loan Repayment Program

For: Clinicians trained and licensed to provide SUD treatment and serving in a rural health professional shortage area

Funding:

- Up to \$100,000 (full-time)
- See details for part-time options, Spanish language award enhancement

Serve: Three years at a rural NHSC-approved SUD treatment facility

NHSC Students to Service Loan Repayment Program

For: Students in their last year at an eligible medical, nursing, dental, or physician assistant school

Funding: Up to \$120,000 in loan repayment funds

Serve: Three years (full-time) at an NHSC-approved site

Substance Use Disorder Treatment and Recovery (STAR) Loan Repayment Program

For: Eligible substance use disorder (SUD) treatment clinicians and community health workers

Funding: Up to \$250,000

Serve: Six years (full-time) in a STAR Loan Repayment Program-approved facility

Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program

For: Eligible clinicians providing services in certain pediatric subspecialties or child and adolescent mental and behavioral health care.

Funding: Up to \$100,000

Serve: Three years (full-time) at an eligible Pediatric Specialty Loan Repayment Program-approved facility

Faculty Loan Repayment Program

For: Faculty members from disadvantaged backgrounds

Funding: Up to \$40,000

Serve: Two years (full-time or part-time) in an eligible health professions school

Transfer Credit for Newly Admitted Students

Transfer credits may be considered for inclusion in the program of study upon the approval of the director of the program. A grade of “B” or better must be earned in courses requested for transfer credit. Courses considered for transfer credit must be applicable toward a comparable degree at the institution offering the course. Application for consideration of transfer credit taken more than five years before the date at which the student is admitted must be accompanied by substantial documentation of prior work and evidence of continued and current competence. Transfer credit taken more than ten years before the date at which the student is admitted may not be used to satisfy degree requirements. No practicum or internship credits are eligible for transfer credit. Decisions with respect to the number of transfer hours accepted will be handled by the Admissions Committee on a case-by-case basis, but normally a maximum of 12 hours of credit obtained from an accredited college or university may be applied to the degree.

For newly admitted students transferring in courses:

1. The quality of the course in question should meet our program standards. A course from another CACREP program satisfies this criteria. For other courses, a copy of the syllabus for the course in question needs to be reviewed by the student's advisor and program director.
2. The student's advisor and program director must grant approval.
 - a. The primary consideration is that the course in question provided opportunities within the student's focal area of interest that we do not provide in our program.
 - b. The advisor should also explore directed and independent study options with the student.
 - c. If the transfer course is meant to replace a course with a competency assignment, the student's advisor will review the course requirements to determine if there is an assignment that matches the competency assignment. If there is one, the

assignment will be scored and added to the student's competency portfolio. If not, the advisor and student, in consultation with the program director will identify an alternate method that correlates with the identified key performance indicator the specific assignment addresses. This assignment will be evaluated and posted to the student's portfolio.

Application Process

Application forms are available on the MA in Counseling [Admissions page](#). Please contact Joanna Greenawalt (joanna.greenawalt@emu.edu) for further information. A complete application should contain:

1. A completed Graduate School & Master of Arts in Counseling online [application](#), which will ask for
 - a. **letters of reference**. Please supply the names and information of at least three references on the online application. At least two must be academic references. The references will receive an email directly with a link to complete the reference form.
 - b. a non-refundable **application fee** of \$50.00.
2. **Official transcripts** from each college or university attended, to be mailed to Graduate Counseling Programs, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802 or sent electronically directly to counseling@emu.edu.
3. **Statement of purpose:** write a narrative (1-3 pages) that describes your:
 - a. Motivations for pursuing counselor training
 - b. Academic/research interest and professional goals
 - c. Volunteer and professional experiences
 - d. Life experiences that have influenced your view of compassionate service and social justice
 - e. Applicants interested in the **2-year track** of study must also **submit a supplementary statement of intent** to do so. This letter should highlight the applicant's academic strengths, emotional maturity, and other pertinent factors supporting the applicant's readiness for the 2-year track load, such as relevant work experience and previous graduate study.
4. **In addition to the requirements above, international applicants should submit the following information:**
 - a. Nationality and country of birth (international applicants currently residing in the United States must indicate status with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services)
 - b. A completed International Student Sponsor Agreement if accepted into the graduate program. Please contact Sarah Pace at 540-432-4243 or sarah.pace@emu.edu for form and current costs.
5. **For applicants whose native language is not English:** We require that applicants receive at least a 79 on the internet-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). This compares to a 550 on the paper-based test and a score of 213 for the computer-based test. EMU's institutional code is 5181. Applicants who have studied and

received a degree from a college or university where all instruction is in English are not required to submit TOEFL scores.

Students are welcome to arrange a meeting with the program director or other faculty members when available to address questions regarding the EMU MA in Counseling program and professional counseling as a whole. Our administrative assistant will be happy to assist in making these arrangements.

Program Traditions

There are a number of traditions that have been passed along throughout the history of the program. These include orientation, department meals and potlucks, Capstone Day, and the Commissioning Service. This process of coming together to share a meal, recognize accomplishments, and join in reflection strengthens the connection among students and faculty and creates a deeper sense of community. Furthermore, there are six significant milestones of our program that mark the training process. They are *Admission, Orientation, Admission to Internship, Capstone Day, Culminating Interviews, and Commissioning*.

Admission

The admissions process is an important time to share accomplishments, vision, and personal readiness and to demonstrate an affinity for the profession and the program. Top applicants are invited to participate in a 4-hour interview process, which includes individual interviews with faculty members, a group interview, time to reflect on a writing prompt, and a group closing activity. We have developed an admissions interview procedure that involves applicants, faculty members and staff in an intensive sample experience of the training program.

All applicants are notified of admission decisions within two weeks after interview day. An official decision letter will be emailed to the address provided by the applicant. If you are admitted to the program, you must notify the Master of Arts in Counseling Administrative Assistant of your enrollment decision by email or mail within 15 days of your receipt of the acceptance letter. If we do not hear back from you by then, we will assume that you have declined the offer of admission, and your application record will be withdrawn.

Applicants who are notified of admission, have the option to defer their enrollment for one year. Those considering deferment are asked to counsel with the program director as well as complete an application for deferment form.

Orientation

At orientation students receive both information about our program and about university services as a whole. Our program orientation includes an icebreaker activity; an overview of the program, profession and pertinent documents; philosophy of the program and the process of training; and eligibility and requirements for licensure. Current students also participate in the orientation day by facilitating an experiential activity and by sharing lunch. Students then meet with their advisors. Prior to orientation, our administrative assistant sends a packet of information about how to register for classes, purchase textbooks, obtain your student ID, and acquire a parking pass. Students submit a form verifying that they read and understand the Graduate Counseling Student Handbook and the Graduate Catalog to the graduate counseling administrative assistant during the first week of classes.

Admission to Internship

Admission to Internship has its own section in this handbook, (pp. 19-21) but it is helpful to address it here, too, as it is a central point of our training program. “Admission to Internship” refers to the point in graduate studies when faculty decide whether a student is a suitable candidate for an internship placement.

Admission to Graduation: Culminating Interview

The purpose of this culminating interview process is for 1) students to concretely reflect on their growth throughout the program, 2) students to practice clearly articulating their clinical and academic perspectives (skills and knowledge) and work history in preparation for job applications, 3) and for faculty to approve students for graduation upon satisfactory completion of all program requirements. The culminating interview also serves as a time for closing with faculty and students as students transition from the academic environment to the professional counseling workforce. The culminating interview will be facilitated by two faculty members, one of whom is typically the student’s academic advisor.

Capstone Day

On the Wednesday of EMU finals week, students will prepare a 25-minute presentation to be shared with all EMU MA in Counseling faculty, students, and invited site supervisors (for the supervisors’ respective supervisees only). This presentation will mirror content discussed in the student’s culminating interview and will include:

- A discussion of the student’s development throughout the program, including an ethically-informed professional counselor identity,
- Clinical theoretical perspectives and models utilized in therapeutic work
- A case presentation covering
 - Deidentified (with client permission) or fictionalized case history and presentation,
 - Diagnosis, if applicable,
 - Ethical and legal considerations,
 - Case conceptualization and treatment planning,
 - Multicultural aspects of the client’s lived experience.
 - An exploration of dynamics in the therapeutic relationship.
 - Effective use of supervision, and
 - Termination process.

Commissioning

Commissioning is a very special event in our program that has been a tradition since the program’s very inception. It amplifies the training experience as a personal and collective journey signifying the completion of a transformational journey. Graduating students plan the commissioning service to include faculty involvement, blessings of graduates, involvement of current students, and student reflections. Sometimes music or a photo show is also included in the service and a program helps to tie everything together. The Commissioning Service always takes place on the Saturday before the Commencement ceremony at 1pm. Many students also choose to attend the University Commencement on Sunday.

Program traditions are essential to the vitality and thriving of our program; they contribute to the cohesive narrative of journey, development, growth, identity formation, and becoming. We

continue to craft each milestone as we receive feedback and insight from students, as training counselors is a dynamic and living process.

Degree Requirements

www.emu.edu/graduate-counseling/courses

The Master of Arts in Counseling, Clinical Mental Health Counseling, is a 60-semester hour program. The curriculum meets educational requirements for professional licensure in accordance with the regulations of the Virginia Board of Counseling.

The curriculum includes study in the areas of professional identity, counseling theories, group counseling, counseling techniques, psychopathology, psychological evaluation and assessment, career development, human growth and development, multicultural counseling, research, ethics, addictions, marriage and family counseling, supervised clinical work, and more.

All instruction is face to face, both in the classroom and in clinical supervision, with the exception of COUN 557: Assessment and Evaluation Procedures, which is offered online with optional in-person meetings.

To graduate, the student will have met all course requirements with a **minimum GPA of 3.0**, will have obtained **satisfactory internship references**, met program assessment criteria for competency (**Mastery Competency Portfolio**), and obtained the **formal approval** of the faculty for graduation.

Full-time students should be able to complete the program in two years (including \geq 5SH during the summer) or three years (including \geq 5SH over a summer semester). Many students report that a three-year plan of full-time study is helpful to integrative learning and practice. Full-time enrollment is defined as taking 9SH or more in a given semester. Part-time enrollment is defined as taking fewer than 9SH in a given semester.

Coursework

With the exception of COUN 557: Assessment and Evaluation Procedures (summer course, 3SH), all instruction is face to face, both in the classroom and in clinical supervision.

The content of the counseling coursework is largely structured through the standards of the Commonwealth of Virginia and CACREP. Copies of the Virginia standards are kept in the main office and may be obtained through the administrative assistant or program director. CACREP standards can be found on their website (www.cacrep.org). The CACREP standards in particular help to standardize educational requirements across states so that degree work should meet educational requirements for professional counselors in most states. There are differences among states, however, that the student should carefully research if they plan to work in another state. The American Counseling Association offers helpful tools to explore state differences on their website (www.counseling.org), and EMU's licensure disclosure page offers

information about which states a MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree prepares students to practice without further coursework.

Curriculum plans may be found in this handbook. For students doing the degree in two years, very little to no deviation from these plans is possible. **The two-year program is very demanding: students planning a two-year program should have the financial resources to permit full-time study and have a high degree of emotional maturity.** Otherwise, **faculty strongly recommend that students complete the program in 3 years of full-time study.** During the admissions process, faculty may choose not to admit a student to a 2-year track of study if the student is unable to demonstrate a strong history of academic success, relevant work history, a high degree of emotional maturity, and readiness for intensive counselor training.

Some classes have prerequisites that must be completed prior to taking these courses.

- COUN 508: Counseling Techniques, COUN 547: Theories, and COUN 507: PIFE classes are prerequisites for COUN 528: Practicum.
- COUN 508: Counseling Techniques is a prerequisite for COUN 518: Integrated Counseling Process.
- Admission to internship is a prerequisite for COUN 689 Internship 1 (including the Summer Internship elective, COUN 688: Summer Internship), which is a prerequisite for COUN 690: Internship 2 .

The rating sheet (example below) is the way course requirements and grades are documented within the program. The Rating Sheet is a helpful way to review curriculum course requirements and current status. The Administrative Assistant keeps each student's Rating Sheet up to date, and copies are placed in the student's departmental file upon graduation.



Name: _____
 Student #: _____
 Advisor: _____
 Plan: _____

Master of Arts in Counseling Rating Sheet

Baccalaureate Institution _____ Degree _____ Major _____ Date _____

Graduate school attended and credit earned if a transfer student:

	Trans	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
SH													
Cum SH	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GPA													

- COUN 507 Professional Identity, Functions & Ethics 3 SH _____
- COUN 508 Counseling Techniques 3 SH _____
- COUN 517 Human Growth & Dev 3 SH _____
- COUN 547 Counseling Theories 3 SH _____
- COUN 518 Integrated Coun Process 3 SH _____
- COUN 527 Psychopathology 3 SH _____
- COUN 528 Practicum 3 SH _____
- COUN 567 Group Counseling 3 SH _____
- COUN 617 Counseling Children and Adolescents 2 SH _____
- COUN 699A Topics: Innovations in Counseling 1 SH _____
- COUN 557 Assessment & Evaluation 3 SH _____
- COUN 587 Crisis Counseling 2 SH _____
- optional** COUN 688 Summer Internship SH _____
- COUN 536 Foundations in Research & Program Eval. 3 SH _____
- COUN 607 Multicultural Counseling 3 SH _____
- COUN 627 Marriage & Family 3 SH _____
- COUN 509 Supervision and Consultation 3 SH _____
- COUN 689 Internship I 3 SH _____
- COUN 530 Advanced Psychopathology 2 SH _____
- COUN 610 Advanced Multicultural Counseling 2 SH _____
- COUN 637 Career Development 3 SH _____
- COUN 690 Internship II 3 SH _____
- COUN 697 Addictions Counseling 3 SH _____
- COUN 699A Topics: Neurobiology of Trauma 1 SH _____

Professional Organization Membership: _____
 Admission to Internship Date: _____
 Certified for graduation on: _____

Residency

Students in EMU’s MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program devote a significant amount of time and energy to serving our communities through their practicum (minimum of 100 hours) and internship (minimum of 600 hours) experiences. These practicum and internship experiences cultivate students’ ability to work as professional counselors and prepare them, in

conjunction with their coursework, for Counseling Residency, a >3,400-hour (Virginia) post-graduation work period under clinical supervision before licensure as a Professional Counselor.

Curriculum Plans and Schedules

Two Year (full-time) Curriculum Plan ([pdf](#))

Three Year (full-time) Curriculum Plan ([pdf](#))

Fall, spring, and summer course schedules are posted under Schedules on the Current Students webpage (<https://emu.edu/graduate-counseling/current-students>) each year.

Admission to Internship

“Admission to Internship” refers to the stage in your graduate studies when faculty members, in collaboration with student self-evaluation and site supervisor evaluation, determine your suitability for an internship placement. This is a crucial step in advancing your journey towards becoming a professional counselor. The Admission to Internship process and decision are the responsibility of the faculty. Students are informed of the Admission to Internship requirement and process in the “Orientation to Practicum” meeting and the assignment is outlined and reviewed in the Practicum Syllabus. Each student will be evaluated based on multiple sources, including individual site supervision, a written evaluation from the site supervisor, consultations between the faculty group supervisor and the site supervisor, faculty discussions of class performance, advising conferences, and a student self-review submitted during the Admission to Internship process. These evaluations provide the faculty with sufficient information to make a final decision regarding Admission to Internship. However, the faculty reserves the right to seek additional input from the student or other sources if needed. Once the Admission to Internship decision is made, it overrides any subsequent steps outlined later in this document.

Admission to Internship Procedures

While enrolled in practicum, students must complete all components of the “**Admission to Internship**” assignment, which requires:

- **Demonstrating completion** of all Mastery Competency Portfolio (MCP) requirements to date, using the MCP checklist.
- **Submitting evaluative feedback** from your site supervisor using the *Counselor Assessment Scale*.
- **Providing self-evaluative feedback** via the *Counselor Assessment Scale*.
- **Composing a formal 3–4 page letter** addressed to the faculty, including:
 - Identification of significant moments of self-awareness related to both strengths and areas for growth.
 - A thorough analysis of feedback received in academic coursework, advisory meetings, and site supervision.
 - A comprehensive assessment of academic readiness and demonstration of professional dispositions, including: conscientiousness, self-awareness, coping

- and self-care, interpersonal skills, ethical behavior, emotional stability, moral reasoning, openness, cultural sensitivity, and cooperativeness.
- Reflection on the PIFE “counselor within” project and statement of intention, evaluating the ongoing evolution of your professional identity and career development.
 - A detailed “growth plan,” drawing from the strengths and growth areas identified above, outlining strategies for refining your professional identity, utilizing supervision effectively, engaging in academic studies, and fostering personal growth and wellness as you progress toward completing your training.

The student’s advisor will lead the faculty in reviewing the Admission to Internship materials. Based on this review, the faculty will either admit the student to internship or advise the student of a potential denial. The program director will notify the student in writing of the faculty’s decision.

If a decision is deferred or admission is potentially denied, the faculty will determine appropriate further review or decision-making processes. The program director will inform the student in writing of these procedures. If a student does not meet the criteria for admission, the faculty may, at their discretion, establish a plan and timeline for completing remedial work. Full admission to internship must be granted before a student begins any internship placement. Once the remedial work is completed, the program director will issue a final letter of either admission or denial.

Students must complete the Master of Arts in Counseling degree within **three years** of being admitted to internship.

Any exceptions to these procedures must be approved by faculty action. Alternate procedures and the rationale for them will be documented in the student’s academic record.

Transfer of Credits for Matriculated Students

A student should secure advance approval from the program director before enrolling in coursework with other universities where credit is to be transferred back to EMU for graduation. The graduate program reserves the right to limit the amount of transfer credit which may be applied to degree requirements. In all cases, the majority of credits must be earned through instruction offered by EMU. (from the Graduate and Professional Studies Academic Policies

Matriculated students taking electives at other universities

1. The course must not duplicate a course we offer.
2. The quality of the course in question should meet our program standards. A course from another CACREP program satisfies this criteria. For other courses, a copy of the syllabus for the course in question needs to be reviewed by the student's advisor.
3. The student's advisor must grant approval.
 - a. The primary consideration is that the course in question provides opportunities within the student's focal area of interest that we do not provide in our program.

- b. The advisor should also explore directed and independent study options with the student.
4. With the support of the advisor, and consultation with the director as needed, the student must complete a "Request for Graduate Transfer Credit Approval" form prior to enrolling in a course at another university. The form requires signature approval by the advisor, the director, and the university registrar.

See the Transfer Credit for Newly Admitted Students section above for additional information about transfer credit course requirements.

Advising

Each student enrolled in the program is assigned a faculty advisor prior to Orientation Day. The primary goal of academic advising is to provide students with feedback on their progress in the program to date, support for training issues and goal setting, and to address any questions the student might bring to the advising process. In the event that a student needs to alter their course plan from the traditional 3-year curriculum track, intensive 2-year curriculum track, or part-time curriculum track, academic advisors help the student with course planning. Students are asked to take responsibility to consult with their academic adviser as they have need. Note that the program's administrative assistant handles all routine registration matters and can respond to course scheduling questions.

Midway through the first semester in the program, the faculty advisor meets with their advisees individually to discuss personal strengths, growth edges, and goals. All students are required to meet with their faculty advisor at the midpoint of each semester. Additional meetings can be initiated by either the student or faculty member if there are identified needs or concerns.

Any issues regarding advising may be directed to the graduate counseling program director. If such issues involve the graduate counseling program director, they may be directed to the dean of the School of Health, Behavioral & Natural Sciences.

Mastery Competency Portfolio. Each student will maintain their own Mastery Competency Portfolio, to be available for faculty review. The Mastery Competency Portfolio is described more completely in the Counselor Formation Assessment section of this handbook.

Personal and Professional Development

Standards of Professionalism

Professional Academic Policy

The MA in Counseling program prepares individuals for professional success as counselors. Students are expected to demonstrate professionalism throughout their training by abiding by

standards required by the profession. To that end, it is expected that students treat the academic milieu as they would a professional setting—including their presentation and participation in the classroom. Program policy will abide by the following in all classes. Students are expected to:

Professional Etiquette

1. Students are advised to treat correspondence with faculty members as professional correspondence. This includes, but is not limited to, a clear subject line, appropriate salutation, clear body structure, professional language, and appropriate signature.
2. Students represent themselves as professional trainees in the community and at professional development events and trainings.
3. Students should be mindful of their public and personal representations on social media.

Classroom Expectations

1. Show up on time for all classes.
2. Attend all class periods and provide a suitable explanation and/or medical waiver for their absence in special circumstances that preclude class attendance. No more than 2 absences are allowed for any class during the semester.
3. Preparation: read, buy books, do their work and engage.
4. Dress and groom in professionally acceptable attire. Students may be casual, but must appear neat and well groomed for class.
5. Turn in all assignments on time. Any late assignments will receive a full letter grade deduction for the overall course grade for the semester. Professors will make only one contact regarding late assignments and a grade will be issued on the work received.
6. Requests for an incomplete grade must be discussed with the instructor and officially requested at least two weeks prior to the end of the semester.

Course Extensions and Outstanding Grades

For fall and spring semesters, all coursework is due by the end of the semester. If a student will not be able to complete a course on time, the student must submit a request one week before the end of the semester for an extension (up to 3 months), by emailing the instructor, academic advisor and the Program Director. If the request is granted the student will receive an “I (incomplete) for the course which will later be replaced by a final grade when the work has been turned in on the agreed upon date. If the request for an extension is denied, the student will receive a grade for the work that has been completed up until the time the course was expected to have been completed. If no work has been submitted, the final grade will be an F (or W under unusual circumstances and with permission of the Program Director). Extensions will be given only for legitimate and unusual situations. Extensions are contracted by the student with the program for up to a maximum of 3 months after the deadline for the course work. *PLEASE NOTE: Grades for coursework submitted late may be reduced at the instructor’s discretion and in line with their course policy on turning in coursework after the due date. If the extension deadline is not met, the instructor will submit the final grade based on what has been received to date.*

Diverse teaching and supervision styles

Faculty have been trained in a variety of different theoretical and pedagogical approaches. While expectations related to professional engagement, classroom etiquette, attendance and timeliness with assignments are consistent across the program, teaching styles vary. Students will experience a variety of teaching styles, including Socratic, feminist, experiential, person-centered and more. Each faculty member will be explicit in their teaching approaches and expectations for engagement at the outset of the class.

Similarly, students will experience a variety of supervision styles in the field. It is important that if the supervisor is not explicit about their style, that the student asks about expectations and how supervision will proceed. Faculty can offer guidance on how to do this.

Meeting with Faculty: What kind of meeting do you need?

When meeting with faculty, please consider the following, adapted from *Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom* (Hogan & Sathy, 2022):

- We *greet*: About 5 minutes; checking in, quick chat, relationship building; able to “drop in”.
- We *meet*: traditional (15-60 minutes, depending on need); help with course material, academic and professional planning, addressing issues, advising; schedule the meeting in advance.
- We *work*: Time frame varies; group work time on course material or addressing issues; schedule the meeting in advance.

Addressing Concerns

1. **Peer concern**: Students are encouraged to address peer concerns directly with each other. If directly addressing the concern is not possible or proves ineffective, then the student can ask a faculty member for assistance.
2. **Faculty concern**: Students are encouraged to address a concern about a faculty member with the specific faculty member. If a student feels the need to more formally address a concern, the student should refer to the formal university grievance policy: <https://emu.edu/policies/>.
3. **Student concern**: Faculty members are also encouraged to address concerns they have about a student directly with that student. Faculty also address student issues as they arise in consultation with one another and the full faculty during weekly faculty meetings. The following procedures outline response to student concerns related to program participation and clinical practice.

Gifts Policy

In accordance with the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, A.10.f states that "Counselors understand the challenges of accepting gifts from clients and recognize that in some cultures, small gifts are a

token of respect and gratitude. When determining whether to accept a gift from clients, counselors take into account the therapeutic relationship, the monetary value of the gift, the client's motivation for giving the gift, and the counselor's motivation for wanting to accept or decline the gift" (American Counseling Association, 2014, p. 6). Expanding on this code, the graduate counseling faculty take into consideration the professor-student relationship, monetary value of the gift, and the student's motivation for giving the gift. For this reason, counselor educators and staff will refrain from accepting gifts of a value greater than \$10 and may explore student motivations for gift-giving if it occurs with frequency and outside of typical gift-giving circumstances.

Personal Counseling

All students are **strongly encouraged** to undertake personal counseling work while enrolled in the program. EMU Counseling Services provides students with a certain number of free counseling services. EMU Career Services is another resource students may use for career counseling.

Program faculty do not provide personal counseling services to students in the program. Counseling program faculty can assist students in referral to professional counseling. A comprehensive list of mental health providers can be found here: <https://www.jmu.edu/chbs/gradpsyc/counseling/cdhms.shtml> or by searching "Find a Therapist" on the Psychology Today website.

Professional Development

Students are **required** to join a professional counseling association. The major professional organizations students have been affiliated with in the past include the American Counseling Association (ACA), the Virginia Counseling Association (VCA), and the Central Valley Counselors Association (CVCA). A record of professional membership is indicated on the student's rating sheet.

ACA is a professional membership organization representing professional counselors and human development specialists. Student membership is open to any graduate student enrolled more than half time. Students are required to obtain professional liability insurance prior to any fieldwork in the program, and students normally obtain this insurance as an automatic benefit of ACA student membership. As a student member of ACA, benefits include an annual subscription to the Journal of Counseling and Development and Counseling Today, ACA's official newspaper. At the end of the first year of membership, student members are required to join at least one division or organizational affiliate. ACA applications are available at www.counseling.org. Within the ACA, at the state level, Virginia counselors are organized as the Virginia Counseling Association. The annual VCA conference is held in the fall, and all students are encouraged to attend.

Other Professional Development Opportunities

Students are encouraged to take advantage of the multiple opportunities for personal and professional development. Tangible encouragement and support of selected seminars and conferences includes scheduling seminars as part of course content and working with peers and faculty to help arrange transportation to conferences. Significant conferences include the Virginia Counseling Association fall conference and the Networker conference. Students are encouraged to attend and present at VCA and at the annual Virginia Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (VACES) Graduate Student Conference each spring.

On-campus, students participate in hosting seminars, arranging special colloquia and forums, organizing social events, and planning the annual commissioning service for graduates.

In addition to events actively promoted or sponsored by the program, many other professional development opportunities are regularly posted on the departmental bulletin board. The bi-weekly Seminary chapel frequently hosts speakers of interest to counselors, as does the weekly series of undergraduate chapels, and Suter Science Seminars.

Research Opportunities

There are many opportunities for students to participate in research endeavors. They include class assignments, conference presentations and collaborating with faculty.

Over the years our students have presented at local and statewide conferences. Our students have presented at the *Virginia Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (VACES) Graduate Student* conference. In addition, we have had student teams participate in the *American Counseling Association Ethics Competition*, and three of these student groups have placed (third, first, and honorable mention). A majority of our students attend professional conferences throughout their tenure in our program.

Finally, students are invited to collaborate with faculty on research projects and will most likely do so when motivated to continue their studies in a doctoral program.

Counselor Formation Assessment

While the material in this section of the handbook may be redundant with material elsewhere, it is important to collate assessment information in one section.

Formative and Summative Assessment

The distinction between formative and summative assessment is important to understanding the process of counselor formation development. Formative assessment refers to the feedback to the student that is designed to foster awareness and growth, to give support and encouragement. This formative assessment is the most frequent type of assessment the student will experience. Summative assessment, on the other hand, is used to evaluate whether students have achieved key learning outcomes at the end of a course, semester, or program. These assessments are comprehensive and performance-based, often serving as gatekeeping tools to ensure readiness

for professional practice. Course grades, mastery competency assignments, admission to internship, and capstone presentations are examples of summative assessment.

Counseling faculty tend to prize formative assessment over summative assessment to support mastery of professional counseling knowledge and skills. Summative assessment may not offer as great an opportunity for personal and professional growth as formative assessment. For this reason, we offer as much formative assessment as possible to give students a clear understanding of their strengths and growth areas well in advance of critical summative evaluation points. Ideally, any summative evaluation will be just that, a summary of work and competencies, with no surprises.

In addition to course grades, the times at which the summative evaluation of the student comes into clearest focus are those times of decision by the faculty and staff regarding the students demonstrated competence and potential to succeed as a professional counselor: the process of admission to the program, the admission to internship decision, and approval to graduate. Each process involves documentation of preparation and readiness, and each process also involves the less quantifiable professional judgments by the faculty.

Coursework

Course grading is an important summative assessment. Most courses are given a letter grade. In cases where it is difficult or counter-productive to objectively quantify performance with respect to course objectives, pass and fail grades are given.

Admission to Internship Summary Sheet (AIS)

The Admission to Internship Summary sheet provides for quantification of four student performance areas - academic competency, professional dispositions, counselor identity, and counseling skills. The latter are expanded into four sub-measures, for empathic attunement, intervention skills, theory and case conceptualization and management. There is also provision for a summary narrative. The AIS is used by faculty in the Admission to Internship process, and an identical sheet is used for the Admission to Graduation decision. The AIS results apply to the assessment of individual student performance and are aggregated across students and years to provide one reference point for assessing program objectives



Admission to Internship Summary

Name: _____ Evaluator: MAC Faculty
 Date: April 9, 2025 Overall score: _____ Candidacy Criterion: **3**
 Approve for internship _____
 Remediation _____

Academic Competency	Professional Dispositions	Counselor Identity/Behavior	Identifier
Content mastery (MCP) <input type="checkbox"/>	Ethical behavior <input type="checkbox"/>	Identifies growth areas <input type="checkbox"/>	
Class participation <input type="checkbox"/>	Interpersonal Skills <input type="checkbox"/>	Counseling style fits theory <input type="checkbox"/>	
Oral communication <input type="checkbox"/>	Moral Reasoning <input type="checkbox"/>	Personal growth <input type="checkbox"/>	
Writing skills <input type="checkbox"/>	Coping and Self-Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Participation in professional orgs. <input type="checkbox"/>	
Meets due dates <input type="checkbox"/>	Cooperativeness <input type="checkbox"/>	Professional Advocacy <input type="checkbox"/>	
Articulates ethics <input type="checkbox"/>	Openness <input type="checkbox"/>	Seeks consultation <input type="checkbox"/>	
Integrates content <input type="checkbox"/>	Self-Awareness <input type="checkbox"/>	Uses supervisory feedback well <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Conscientiousness <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Emotional Stability <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Cultural Sensitivity <input type="checkbox"/>		

THIS SECTION TO BE FILLED OUT BY PRACTICUM SUPERVISOR

Empathic Attunement	Counseling Skills	Theory	Sample Data
Client feels respected <input type="checkbox"/>	<div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; padding: 20px;"> Add a series to start visualizing your data </div>	Emerging theoretical stance <input type="checkbox"/>	
Client feels heard & attended to <input type="checkbox"/>		Role of self as counselor <input type="checkbox"/>	
Develops rapport easily <input type="checkbox"/>		Conceptual framework <input type="checkbox"/>	
Meets client where they're at <input type="checkbox"/>		Systems perspectives <input type="checkbox"/>	
Counseling relationship <input type="checkbox"/>		Developmental perspectives <input type="checkbox"/>	
Appropriate boundaries <input type="checkbox"/>		Spiritual/religious dimensions <input type="checkbox"/>	
Empowers client <input type="checkbox"/>			
Feedback & reflecting meaning <input type="checkbox"/>			
Intervention Skills	Case Conceptualize & Manage		
Creates client ownership <input type="checkbox"/>	Integrated assessment <input type="checkbox"/>		
Good beginnings & endings <input type="checkbox"/>	Developmental awareness <input type="checkbox"/>		
Timing of interventions <input type="checkbox"/>	Risk analysis <input type="checkbox"/>		
Theory motivated intervention <input type="checkbox"/>	Strengths perspectives <input type="checkbox"/>		
Follows treatment plan <input type="checkbox"/>	Identify real problem <input type="checkbox"/>		
Counselor judgment <input type="checkbox"/>	DSM diagnosis as appropriate <input type="checkbox"/>		
Focused, effective intervention <input type="checkbox"/>	Case formulation <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Clear treatment goals <input type="checkbox"/>		
	Agency policy & procedures <input type="checkbox"/>		

Writing and Presentation Assessment

Professional writing and presentation skills are essential competencies for the counselor. Many classes provide opportunities to work on both writing and presentation skills. As noted earlier, the university adheres to standards for graduate level writing, and these standards are the basis for faculty assessment of student writing. To further inform faculty assessment of these skills, mastery competency assignments are evaluated using rubrics which correspond to each assignment. Instructors using these rubrics will inform you of them in class.

Group supervision is an important forum for working on presentation skills, particularly in the task of presenting case material to the group.

Other opportunities for professional presentations exist in classroom guidance, various educational group-work, and conference presentations.

The Capstone Project is the culminating opportunity to demonstrate competencies in a substantial paper and project presentation.

Writing Standards

The style standard for written work within the program is APA. A copy of the APA Publication Manual is kept in the main office for student use, and students are encouraged to purchase their own copy. A helpful synopsis of the APA standards may be found here: <http://www.apastyle.org/apa-style-help.aspx> .

The graduate programs of the university have also formulated [standard guidelines for quality graduate student writing](#), which serve as a reference point for professors' grading of written work.

While professors may be very helpful in editing written work, the expectation is that any work submitted is largely grammatically correct and structured in correct APA style. Professors have the prerogative of not accepting written work that falls substantially below these standards.

The Academic Support Center in the library provides assistance specially geared to graduate student writing.

Clinical Assessment – Supervisor Evaluation

The student's faculty group supervisor and the individual site supervisor have weekly opportunities to provide the student with formative evaluation through group and individual supervision. The evaluative work in these settings is the core of the assessment of student clinical competence and professional identity, and this ongoing and regular work is conducted in the context of the shared evaluative understandings described in the *Counselor Assessment Scale Form*.

The Counselor Assessment Summary is used by the faculty as a summary assessment instrument of performance in the clinical setting.

Additionally, student self-evaluation is an important part of the process of internalizing a counselor identity, and comparing self-perceptions with the professional evaluations of teachers, their advisor, and supervisors. Self-evaluation is a constant part of the clinical feedback process in COUN 528: Practicum (CAS-P-St) and COUN 689/690: Internship 1 & 2 (CAS-I-St). Students are also invited to engage in extensive self-awareness projects in many courses.

It is important to explicitly recognize that a high percentage of the criteria students are assessed on go beyond academic performance, and address the professional dispositions, personality and character of the counselor. While we value the importance of academic success and a solid grasp of concept and theory, we also feel that fostering personal growth and attending to professional dispositions are equally important and crucial to the formation of competent counselors. We therefore not only assist students with academic skills, but also address interpersonal dynamics and incongruencies as they relate to work with others in the program and to clinical work.

Student Competency to Practice

Counselor education programs have an ethical and legal obligation to assess student competency to practice, and to remediate or sanction impaired student counselors. The ACA Code of Ethics mandates that counselor educators and supervisors monitor student progress in the areas of both professional and personal development. CACREP standards state that it is the responsibility of faculty to counsel out students who are inappropriate for the profession.

Mastery Competency Portfolio

All of the formation assessments above, others as described in this portfolio section, and individual goals and activities negotiated between faculty and student are brought together in the student's Mastery Competency Portfolio.

Critical components of the degree program require demonstrated mastery level competence.

Clinical competence, as defined in the CAS, is assessed through the collaborative feedback/evaluation processes in practicum and internship, described in the Professional Practice Policies & Procedures section of this Student Handbook and the Professional Practice Handbook.

Academic competence is defined in course syllabi and assessed through course assignments and exams.

There is an additional cluster of competencies that extend beyond the boundaries of a particular course and/or serve to integrate all these components into professional level competence and professional identity. These include, but are not limited to, writing competence and use of APA style, demonstrated capacity to do both literature based research and project assessment/research, specific clinical skill/technique competencies, capacity to self-reflect with respect to personal/professional identity, appropriate professional dispositions, demonstrated

ability to write a clinical case conceptualization feeding into a coherent, theoretically grounded treatment plan, and demonstration of consistent professional behavior in all program settings.

It is each student's responsibility to keep a record of completed mastery competency assignments in a portfolio. This portfolio will be presented during each student's admission to internship process and prior to graduation during their culminating interview.

All these mastery competencies help faculty follow student progress toward admission to internship during the practicum semester, and nomination for completion of the program in the spring of the final year. The portfolio is the primary repository for documentation of work that is reviewed for admission to internship and nomination for degree completion.

Competencies that are anticipated to be met in courses are indicated as follows. Should a student fail to pass their mastery competency assignment, they are given feedback and one opportunity to revise and resubmit. The revised score becomes final. The full faculty are made aware of the status of the student's assignment.

Because competency assignments are key benchmarks for student performance, a student who fails their competency revision will automatically receive a grade of C or lower for the entire course. Failing a competency *revision* also triggers a formal remediation process which includes a mandatory 1SH independent study course in the same course material the following semester. The student will collaborate with the instructor whose competency assignment they failed and the independent study instructor to create a new competency assignment. This is an opportunity for the student to take ownership of their learning and actively demonstrate their mastery of the subject.

EMU Master of Arts in Counseling Mastery Competency Portfolio Checklist

The following documents comprise the EMU Graduate Counseling Mastery Competency Portfolio (MCP) for all Graduate Counseling students. Throughout the program, students will submit the competency assignments below in the respective courses. After receiving graded feedback from the course instructor, the student will scan and upload the graded assignment and, where appropriate, the respective graded assignment rubric (scored out of 5). All of the assignments below should be uploaded to the Google Drive account associated with the student's EMU student Google account. All documents should be uploaded and clearly organized in a folder titled "Mastery Competency Portfolio: Student Last Name, Student First Name", and shared with the student's academic advisor, the Graduate Counseling administrative assistant, and the Graduate Counseling program director.

2024 CACREP Standards, Section 3: Foundational Counseling Curriculum

A: Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethics

KPI 1: EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate knowledge of the scope of practice, ethics, and professional participation of professional counselors and act as advocates for the profession. (SLO 1, 4, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.A.)

- **COUN 507: Professional Identity Function and Ethics**
 - Ethics Case Literature Review

- **COUN 509: Supervision & Consultation**
 - Supervision experience, paper, and presentation

B: Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences

KPI 2: EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate knowledge of their own cultural identities, the effects of current and historical events on cultural and multigenerational trauma, and skills to establish and maintain culturally informed counseling relationships. (SLO 2, 3; 2024 CACREP 3.B.).

- **COUN 507: Professional Identity Function and Ethics**
 - Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) results and reflection paper
- **COUN 607: Multicultural Counseling**
 - Multicultural Advocacy Project Plan (CACREP 2024)
- **COUN 610: Advanced Multicultural Counseling**
 - Multicultural Counseling Case Conceptualization and Written Plan
 - Multicultural Advocacy Project Implementation
- **COUN 610: Advanced Multicultural Counseling**
 - Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) results and reflection paper

C: Lifespan Development

KPI 3. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate knowledge of individual, familial, and cultural development across the lifespan and skills to utilize developmentally appropriate interventions. (SLO 3,4; 2024 CACREP 3.C.)

- **COUN 517: Human Growth and Development**
 - Professional Presentation
- **COUN 617: Children and Adolescents**
 - Final Exam

D: Career Development

KPI 4. EMU Graduate Counseling students will be prepared to attain sustainable counseling employment and will have the knowledge and skills to empower clients to engage in culturally sustaining career and educational development and employment opportunities. (SLO 1, 2, 4; 2024 CACREP 3.D.).

- **COUN 507: Professional Identity Function and Ethics**
 - CV, Statement of Intent, and Professional Development Hours log 2024
- **COUN 528: Practicum**
 - Paper of Readiness for Internship
- **COUN 637: Career Development**
 - Professional Development Dossier

E: Counseling Practice and Relationships

KPI 5. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain effective, theoretically grounded, and culturally informed, counseling relationships (SLO 3, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.E).

- **COUN 508: Counseling Techniques**
 - Clinical Skill Demonstration (Session recording review)
- **COUN 547: Counseling Theories**
 - Final Theories Paper
- **COUN 518: Integrated Counseling Process**

Clinical Skill Demonstration (Session recording review)

F: Group Counseling and Group Work

KPI 6. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate the ability to understand clients through familial and systemic contexts and will be able to establish and maintain effective, theoretically grounded, and culturally informed, counseling groups for varied presentation topics and issues (SLO 3, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.F.)

- **COUN 567: Group Counseling**

- Formal Group Proposal
- **COUN 627: Marriage and Family Counseling**
 - Family Genogram and Analysis

G: Assessment and Diagnostic Processes

KPI 7. EMU Graduate Counseling students will exhibit knowledge of ethical, culturally-informed, and empirically grounded assessment and diagnostic procedures and will demonstrate skills utilizing clinical interviews, testing instruments, and diagnostic criteria for providing diagnoses and creating treatment plans. (SLO 1, 3, 5; 2024 CACREP 3.G.)

- **COUN 557: Assessment and Evaluation Procedures**
 - Comprehensive Clinical Assessment Report
- **COUN 530: Advanced Psychopathology**
 - Case Conceptualization and Treatment Plan
- **COUN 697: Addictions Counseling**
 - Case Study Report

H: Research and Program Evaluation

KPI 8. EMU Graduate Counseling students will implement the knowledge and skills of research and data literacy to ethically inform counseling practice, advancing the counseling profession, and evaluation of client outcomes and program functioning. (SLO 1, 2, 3; 2024 CACREP 3.H.)

- **COUN 557: Assessment and Evaluation Procedures**
 - Needs Assessment and Program Evaluation Report
- **COUN 536: Counseling Research and Program Evaluation**
 - Research Literature Review

2024 CACREP Standards, Section 5: Entry-level Specialized Practice Areas

C. Clinical Mental Health Counseling

KPI 9. EMU Graduate Counseling students will demonstrate exemplary applied clinical skill and professional readiness, utilizing self-reflective awareness and adeptly integrating supervisory feedback, and engaging culturally informed, theoretically grounded, ethically guided clinical mental health counseling. (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Specialty Area 5.C.)

- **COUN 528: Practicum**
 - Counselor Assessment Scale - Practicum - Self Evaluation
 - Counselor Assessment Scale - Practicum - Supervisor Evaluation
- **COUN 689: Internship 1**
 - Counselor Assessment Scale - Internship - Self Evaluation
 - Counselor Assessment Scale - Internship - Supervisor Evaluation
- **COUN 690: Internship 2**
 - Counselor Assessment Scale - Internship - Self Evaluation
 - Counselor Assessment Scale - Internship - Supervisor Evaluation
 - *Capstone Paper and Presentation*

Following the successful completion of all competencies in the final semester, students will be approved for **Completion of the Program and Graduation.**

CACREP Core and Specialty Areas	Assignment 1	Assignment 2	Assignment 3
A. Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice	COUN 507: PIFE, Ethics Case Literature Review	COUN 509: Supervision and Consultation, Supervision Experience, Paper, and Presentation	
B. Social and Cultural Identities and Experiences	COUN 607: Multicultural Counseling, Multicultural Advocacy Project Plan	COUN 610: Advanced Multicultural Counseling, Case Conceptualization and Written Plan ; 610: Advanced Multicultural, Multicultural Advocacy Project Implementation	COUN 507: PIFE, IDI Reflection Paper ; 610: Advanced Multicultural, IDI Reflection Paper ;
C. Lifespan Development	COUN 517: HG&D, Human Development Professional Presentation	COUN 617: Children and Adolescents, Final Exam	
D. Career Development	COUN 507: PIFE, Foundational Counseling Career Packet: CV, Counselor Within Paper and Collage, and Professional Development Hours Log	COUN 528: Practicum, Paper of Readiness	COUN 637: Career Development, Professional Development Dossier
E. Counseling Practice and Relationships	COUN 508: Counseling Techniques, Clinical Skill Demonstration	COUN 547: Counseling Theories, Final Paper	COUN 518: ICP, Clinical Skill Demonstration
F. Group Counseling and Group Work	COUN 567: Group Counseling, Formal Group Proposal	COUN 627: Marriage and Family Counseling, Genogram and Analysis	
G. Assessment and Diagnostic Processes	COUN 557: Assessment and Evaluation Procedures, Comprehensive Assessment Report	COUN 530: Adv. Psychopathology, Case Conceptualization and Treatment Plan	COUN 697: Addictions Counseling, Case Study
H. Research and Program Evaluation	COUN 557: Assessment and Evaluation Procedures, Needs Assessment and Program Evaluation Report	COUN 536: Counseling Research and Program Evaluation, Research Literature Review	
5.C. Clinical Mental Health Counseling	COUN 528: Practicum, CAS-P-Self and CAS-P-Supervisor	COUN 689 & 690: Internship 1 & 2, CAS-I-Self and CAS-I-Supervisor (each semester)	COUN 690: Internship 2, Capstone Paper and Presentation

Mastery Competency Portfolio Timeline

Orientation: Students are oriented to the portfolio assessment system during program orientation and during their first advising session.

Admission to Internship: Students will present their Mastery Competency Portfolio, completed to date, as an admission requirement for the admission to internship process.

Advising: Students will meet each semester with their advisor to review progress in the program and check in regarding competency portfolio materials.

Assignments: Each competency assignment is graded using a specialized rubric. Rubrics assess areas of content, synthesis, and rhetoric, which are respectively rated on a 5-point scale. For the majority of competency assignments, “4” is the minimum score to achieve competency. If a student scores below the competency threshold on a given assignment, the majority of competency assignments allow one revision for improvement. The score on the revision will be accepted as the final score.

Throughout: It is the student’s responsibility to add relevant materials to the portfolio in a timely manner. Students will keep documents in their own portfolio.

Graduation Approval: On the Tuesday of EMU’s scheduled finals week, students will prepare and present their Completed Competency Portfolio (final semester competency assignments are exempt from this culminating interview process).

Evaluations in the Program

Student Evaluation of the Program

The Master of Arts in Counseling program places a high priority on nurturing and mentoring students as they become professional peers and helping students evaluate other students as professional peers. This perspective is shared with students at orientation in discussion of how we understand students’ identity and relationship to faculty. We place a high emphasis on supportive mentorship from faculty to student and mentorship between students.

Translating these ideals and goals into practice requires both an atmosphere that conveys shared program ownership and concrete ways for students to participate in ownership activities. It is in this context **we consider student opportunities to evaluate the program as essential**. Our goal is to maintain a balance between formative and summative evaluation opportunities, and a balance between our soliciting affirming and critical feedback.

A standardized university course evaluation form is used in all classes. There are opportunities to rate the course and professors on several scaled dimensions, and also more open-ended questions. These course evaluations are administered online at the end of each semester. The instructor and program director are provided a summary tabulation after the course grades are recorded. A copy of each course evaluation summary is kept on file by the Institutional Research office.

Students provide the Professional Practice Coordinator with a completed evaluation of their site, site supervisor, and faculty group supervisor at the end of practicum and internship. These evaluations are treated confidentially within the program.

When the program deals with significant curricular changes, program policy, teaching or other professional issues, students are informed and involved through email correspondence and meetings called as needed. Students are also invited to have lunch as a group with the Program Director, once during the Fall and once during the Spring semester.

The Culminating Interview is also an opportunity for students to give an overall program assessment.

Student evaluation of supervision and faculty are processed in discussions between faculty and program director. The feedback from each of these assessments is shared among the faculty during weekly faculty meetings, and used to inform the annual review of curriculum, load planning, orientation, and advising.

Lunch with the Director

Once each fall and spring semester, the program director and administrative assistant host lunch meetings for students. In these meetings, the program director leads students through an opportunity to provide overall program feedback, and the administrative assistant documents spoken feedback from students. Students are also invited to submit written comments by email following the lunch with the director. Feedback from these meetings is shared with the full counseling faculty at the next weekly department meeting and stored with annual program evaluation data.

Mastery Competency Portfolio Evaluation: Annual Competency Evaluation Reports

Faculty review all mastery competency portfolio (MCP) assignments and rubrics annually during an annual review meeting. MCP assignments and rubrics are rated on a scale of 1-3 (1=unsatisfactory, 2=needs improvement, 3=satisfactory). Faculty discuss the rating of each assignment and rubric. If changes are needed, then action steps are assigned to faculty and staff. This review is published publicly on the EMU MA in Counseling website under “Program Evaluation”.

Public availability

Program evaluation data are publicly available on the EMU Graduate Counseling Program website: <https://emu.edu/graduate-counseling/graduates/#evaluation>. Here, the public may access the following report items:

- Alumni survey results
- Supervisor survey results
- Employer results
- Programmatic actions in response to survey feedback
- Annual Competency Assignment Evaluation reports

Site Supervisor Program Evaluation

Supervisors are in a unique position to provide program feedback, understanding the requirements of the professional work setting (like employers) as well as having an understanding of program philosophy and goals (like faculty). Supervisors have the opportunity to evaluate the program through their work with the evaluation of their students, in feedback to group supervisors, and through a more formal survey conducted annually.

Faculty and Staff Program Evaluation

Faculty and staff evaluate the program in an ongoing way through regular review of curriculum, both during weekly department meetings and in curriculum work retreats. The clinical instruction focus of the program is evaluated in faculty meetings, through annual reviews of the various evaluation results described above, through more focused review of the annual survey of supervisors, graduates, and employers, and during SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) and CACREP reviews.

External Program Evaluation

The program is evaluated externally in the SACS and CACREP accreditation reviews. A survey of supervisors, graduates, and employers is conducted annually to assess perceptions of the program and its graduates.

Job Search, References, and Licensure

Our graduates fare well in the job market, and graduation and employment rates (within 3 months graduation) are published on the EMU MA in Counseling website. All actively searching graduates have found employment in the counseling field within nine months after graduation. Increasingly, we have employers who contact us about job openings and opportunities. Faculty members also track openings and send out regular announcements. During the Career Counseling class, students will prepare a resume, cover letter, professional disclosure statement and a job description and will receive feedback on these materials in order to prepare them for the job search process. Additionally, EMU's Career Services, located in the University Commons, is an important resource to students and graduates. The Director of Career Services, Kimberley Phillips, comes to the Career Counseling class every year to introduce herself and explain their services, which includes an invitation to our students to review their search materials.

References

In addition to tracking job opportunities, faculty members also serve as references for employment. It is recommended that students ask a faculty member about serving as reference and notify the faculty member of each job, so that the faculty member is aware and prepared for the reference call or requested letter. In most cases, a faculty member will be delighted to serve as a reference for you. However, if for any reason a faculty member cannot give you a positive endorsement, they reserve the right to deny your request for a reference. In such cases, the faculty member will discuss the refusal with you. Please keep in mind that a faculty member can

offer an endorsement only for positions for which your program has prepared you to assume. Again, the faculty member will address this with you.

Finally, it is fundamentally recognized that your professional identity as a counselor begins when you enter our training program. Your professional behavior is critically important in establishing your reputation and helping to secure meaningful internship and ultimately professional work experiences. We therefore recommend that if you use social media, you do so thoughtfully, keeping in mind that potential employers, clients, and references may have access to what you, and your friends, post and share. Blogs and other forms of public discourse can reveal more than you intend and can enhance or diminish your professional reputation, so please be aware of the limitations and capabilities of these forms of communication.

Licensure

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Board of Counseling requires 3400 hours post-graduation in residency and a passing score on the National Clinical Mental Health Counselors Exam (NCMHCE) to be eligible for licensure. If students work full time, this can usually be accomplished in 2-3 years. Our program prepares students for licensure in Virginia, as our courses, practicum, internship and supervision requirements align with the Virginia Board of Counseling's requirements. The licensure process begins in Internship. Your internship hours must be verified by the program and sent to the VA Board of Counseling prior to beginning Residency and in conjunction with registering your supervisor. Faculty explain the licensure process throughout the program; initially, to acquaint students, then to inform students, and finally to show students how to apply for Residency successfully. Faculty members are also available for consultation throughout the Residency period and when they are ready to submit paperwork for examination. Residency requirements are specifically covered in COUN 507: PIFE, COUN 509: Supervision and Consultation, the annual Residency Meeting hosted by the professional practice coordinator, and in COUN 637: Career Counseling. We are committed to seeing you through your journey to becoming a professional counselor from beginning to end.

Endorsement and Recommendation Policy

The Eastern Mennonite University M.A. in Counseling program will only recommend and/or endorse students and graduates for employment or credentialing for positions for which they were trained.

Program endorsement for LPC licensure in any state will be granted only upon full completion of the M.A. in Counseling degree. The program will assist the graduate with the licensure application process and complete paperwork certifying satisfactory completion of the practicum and internship experiences required for licensure.

The program will recommend for counseling related employment in counseling agencies those qualified students, who, as part of their practicum or internship placements, have followed all the procedures for such placements described in this handbook.

Character references for employment for non-professional counseling positions will be given by individual faculty on the basis of their personal knowledge of the student or graduate.

Grievances

Student Complaint Policy

Eastern Mennonite University welcomes open communication from students regarding its policies and practices. Student feedback helps administrators determine effectiveness and clarify and improve processes and procedures. If a student has a complaint it should be communicated to the administrator responsible for the area of the complaint. Most complaints can be dealt with through informal communication between the parties.

When a student wishes to lodge a formal written complaint, the following student complaint form can be submitted: <http://emu.edu/about/student-complaint-form/>. This form is directed to the executive assistant to the president, who determines the appropriate person to respond to the stated concerns. A formal written response will occur within five business days of notification of the concern. This response will be copied to the executive assistant to the president.

In the event that a student is not satisfied with the response to the complaint, the student may choose to follow up by utilizing the [Conflict and Grievance Policy and Procedure](#) for resolution, available in student handbooks. The university recognizes its obligation to ensure that students who make complaints do not suffer adverse treatment as a result of the complaint. In the event that a student alleges such treatment, the student shall be referred to the Conflict and Grievance Policy and Procedure for resolution.

If an issue cannot be resolved by the university's internal processes, students may file a formal complaint with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV).

Conflict and Grievance Policy and Procedure

Conflict is a part of life in any healthy community. Conflict may arise whenever individuals work closely with each other. This may result from philosophical disagreements, personality differences, habitual behaviors, miscommunication, misunderstanding, or willful intent to promote one's own agendas with insufficient regard to others' well-being. When handled poorly, conflicts can create exclusion, harm, and violence; when handled well, they can produce growth, safety, and healthy community life.

For purposes of this document, grievances are specific and potentially more serious kinds of dispute. They may arise from inadequate or missing institutional policies, the misapplication of policies, or the failure to apply policies, which may result in discriminatory or harmful outcomes.

Eastern Mennonite University is committed to maximizing the positive energy of conflict while minimizing its negative consequences. To this end, we strive to create a community of conflict-competent persons living and working in systems that promote repair of harms and restoration of relationships as a preferred response to conflict.

At EMU, the first approach to any conflict or grievance should be non-adversarial, undertaken with careful attention to fostering understanding and promoting problem-solving. We hope that most conflicts or grievances can be resolved through an informal process of conflict resolution. Nonetheless, individuals have the right to request a formal process at any time.

The following informal and formal procedures apply to all students, faculty, and staff of Eastern Mennonite University and applicants for faculty, staff, or student status. These procedures are subject to amendment and/or pre-emption by the applicable law to the extent required to achieve compliance with existing or future regulations, statutes, or court decisions, and nothing herein is intended to deny or limit any person's right to any remedy under any state or federal law now or hereafter in effect. Furthermore, nothing contained in this document should be construed as legal advice. To the extent that another policy in the EMU handbook provides a specific process or procedure to be used in response to a conflict, the specific process or procedure found in the other policy will control. Persons are advised to seek legal counsel should they have specific legal questions or concerns.

Grievance procedures can be handled in the following ways, which are described in greater detail on the [EMU Conflict Grievance Policy and Procedure page](#):

1. Informal Resolution
2. Formal grievance procedure
3. Level I procedures - Mediation process
4. Level II procedures - Formal grievance committee

Technology

During your time in the Graduate Counseling program you will use technology in a few ways, including:

- Uploading assignments and accessing materials on Moodle, EMU's online course management system,
- Recording clinical sessions on a department-issued iPad (see Audiovisual Confidentiality and Recorded Session Guidelines below),
- Communicate with faculty via email,
- Access library resources (e.g. databases) online,
- Use word processing software and presentation software to complete course assignments.

Audiovisual Confidentiality

With regard to the use of recordings, please consider the following as our program policy on confidentiality:

1. Remember that the release form signed by your client is a legal document, so the assurance of all layers of confidentiality is extremely important.
2. It is ultimately your responsibility to ensure confidentiality of all recordings.
3. Do not place names or other identifying client information on recordings.
4. Never leave a recording unattended in an easily accessible manner.
5. Erase all media after use.
6. When you view recordings in a classroom in the department, make sure you have the display facing away from the door so no one walking by can see the screen.

7. The only persons permitted to view your recordings are your individual site supervisor, student supervisors, our program faculty, and your practicum/internship group.

Recorded Session Guidelines and iPad Contract

Intention

The ethics of our field, federal mandates under HIPAA and FERPA, and our program's principles and values for clients' rights call on us to be intentional and thoughtful in making, transporting and viewing client recorded sessions as well as sessions recorded during class workgroups. Below, please find policies and guidelines for creating, securing, and viewing clients' recorded sessions.

Gaining Consent

Recording of client sessions should be made only with the expressed and written permission of the client. Counselor trainees are encouraged to use consent forms already in place at their practicum or internship site so long as it is clear that recordings will be viewed on EMU's campus by a faculty supervisor and peers in the supervision group as well as by the site supervisor. If no consent form is available on-site you should make use of the template available in your student handbook and online.

Securing Recordings

All recordings must be maintained under two levels of locks. For example, an encrypted iPad with a password meets this standard. Recorded sessions secured in a locked box within a locked car trunk also meets this standard. It is against EMU policy to transmit recorded sessions via email or other internet platforms. Client recordings **may not** be stored in personal online storage such as iCloud. It is permissible to make use of HIPAA compliant storage available at your site and through EMU's HIPAA compliant storage options, however.

Before using an iPad for recording you must:

- Attend the EMU iPad training and sign the form indicating your understanding of iPad policies.
- Make use only of the iPad provided to you by EMU.
- Delete session recordings that have been reviewed.

External Application Privileges

Students will refrain from installing applications that request permission to access photos and videos from the iPad (e.g. Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, Facebook, X/Twitter, etc.) as this could violate the integrity of the confidential information recorded on the iPad. If you need to install additional applications on the iPad, confirm that such applications do not request photo and/or video privileges. Check with an EMU graduate counseling faculty prior to installation.

Viewing Recorded Sessions

Reviewing session recordings is an important part of your insight and skill development. You are encouraged to view recordings on site wherever possible so that recordings that will not be

shown to your faculty or site supervisor can be deleted rather than transported. However, when the recordings must be viewed elsewhere please keep the following in mind:

- It is your responsibility to follow HIPAA regulations and ACA ethical codes and to assure that no one other than your supervisors or fellow supervisees sees or hears any portion of these sessions.
- You are encouraged to review recorded sessions with headphones and with the screen facing away from doors or windows where they might be seen by unauthorized persons.
- Do not place names or identifying information on hardware or name a digital recording with identifying information.
- Do not share your iPads with confidential materials with unauthorized persons; never share your iPad password.

Complying with Agency Policies

It is important to remain in compliance with site agency policies. Your faculty supervisor or the professional practice coordinator can help you navigate any differences in policy that make taping or the transportation of recorded sessions difficult. It is your responsibility to let your faculty supervisor know immediately if you encounter challenges in meeting the policies of your site agency and EMU or if you are unclear about what HIPAA requires in a given circumstance.

Transporting Recorded Sessions

Recorded sessions must remain secure during the transportation of those recordings to and from supervision. Extra attention and intentionality should be given to transporting your client's sessions. See *securing recordings*.

Destroying Taped Sessions

You are encouraged to record and view your sessions frequently in order to enhance your learning. However, once you have viewed this recording or your supervisor has had an opportunity to view the recording, delete the recording immediately. All session recordings should be deleted at the close of practicum and internship.

EMU Security Measures

The iPads provided to EMU Graduate Counseling students are owned and managed by EMU and they are equipped with additional security measures. Such security measures include tracking the iPad in event of loss or theft, remote wiping and reset of the iPad, and an automatic wiping and reset of the iPad when a password is entered incorrectly three or more times. If you have any questions about these measures, please speak with the EMU graduate counseling Professional Practice Coordinator.

iPad Contract

The EMU graduate counseling program provides matriculated students with EMU owned and administered iPads for use in obtaining HIPAA compliant video recordings of client sessions for purposes of supervision (see *Recorded Session Guidelines* above). Students are responsible for ethically obtaining and using video recordings, and are responsible for protecting the iPad against loss, theft, and accidental damage. Repairs to an iPad in normal use will be covered by the program. Half of all costs associated with loss, theft, or accidental damage will be billed to the student. This iPad is property of Eastern Mennonite University and must be returned upon graduation or departure from Eastern Mennonite University's graduate counseling program. Students may choose to purchase their iPad from the university for a reduced cost upon completion of the EMU graduate counseling program.

Remediation Process

The counseling faculty considers students as whole persons and recognizes that difficulties may arise academically, professionally, or personally during training. When such difficulties reflect concerns about a student's qualifications or potential to become a competent and ethical counselor, the matter is reviewed by the faculty.

Concerns may be raised by the student, staff, faculty, field supervisors, or peers and may be identified through academic performance, clinical work, interpersonal process dynamics, and/or written/verbal evaluations. When a concern is noted, it is brought to the full faculty during the weekly faculty meeting for discussion. The faculty conducts a holistic review of the student's academic performance (including completion of competency assignments), professional dispositions, and interpersonal presence. The faculty continues to monitor and document student progress in subsequent meetings.

DEFINITION OF PROBLEMATIC BEHAVIORS

A student may be considered for remediation if they demonstrate:

1. Inability to maintain graduate-level academic performance;
2. Underperformance in key areas of clinical field placements; and/or
3. Deficiencies in professional dispositions as outlined below.

Mastery Competency Assignments

Mastery competency assignments and associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are critical benchmarks of student progress.

- Should a student fail to pass their mastery competency assignment, they are given feedback and one opportunity to revise and resubmit. The revised score becomes final. The full faculty are made aware of the status of the student's assignment.
- Because competency assignments are key benchmarks for student performance, a student who fails their competency revision will automatically receive a grade of C or lower for the entire course. Failing a competency *revision* also triggers a formal remediation process which includes a mandatory 1SH independent study course in the same course material the following semester. The student will collaborate with the instructor whose competency assignment they failed and the independent study instructor to create a new competency assignment. This is an opportunity for the student to take ownership of their learning and actively demonstrate their mastery of the subject.

Field Placements and Client Safety

Each semester, faculty practicum and internship instructors check in with site supervisors to receive updates on student progress. Site supervisors are also encouraged to reach out to faculty if they or their student needs additional support.

If a student's behavior in a field placement raises urgent concerns about client safety or well-being, any involved party may request immediate suspension of client contact. In such cases:

- The student is temporarily removed from client-facing duties.
- Faculty expedite the review and remediation process to minimize disruption and protect clients.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to demonstrate 10 core professional dispositions:

1. Conscientiousness
2. Self-Awareness
3. Coping and Self-Care
4. Interpersonal Skills
5. Ethical Behavior
6. Emotional Stability
7. Moral Reasoning
8. Openness
9. Cultural Sensitivity
10. Cooperativeness

Concerns in any of these areas prompt a faculty review and may lead to remediation. See the [Professional Dispositions](#) section for definitions.

Faculty responses to concerns range in intensity from informal interventions to formal university-level action:

LEVELS OF FACULTY RESPONSE TO STUDENT CONCERNS

1. Informal Interventions

Faculty or advisors address early concerns through direct communication and supportive feedback.

2. Informal Remediation

Used when concerns are more substantial or recurring. Faculty document concerns using a student concern form and collaboratively support the student in addressing the issue. This may involve increased advising or targeted support but does not require a formal written plan.

3. Formal Remediation

Initiated when informal measures are insufficient. A formal, written remediation plan outlines concerns, required changes, and a timeline. The student collaborates in its development.

4. Escalation to University-Level Action

If remediation fails or serious concerns arise, the student may be referred for university-level probation, withdrawal, or dismissal.

FACULTY RESPONSE

Informal Interventions

When appropriate, faculty attempt to resolve concerns informally. Examples include:

- Emails regarding late work, with reminders of relevant policies.
- Requests for assignment revision or resubmission.
- Meetings with the student's advisor to discuss early concerns and outline corrective steps.

Faculty document informal interventions, may copy advisors or the chair as appropriate on emailed reminders, and share outcomes during faculty meetings.

Informal Remediation

If concerns persist despite informal interventions:

1. The faculty member and student meet to develop strategies for the student to implement to address the concern (late work, class tardiness, consistent and timely communication with faculty, etc.).

2. The faculty member and student will discuss what "addressing the concern" will look like (such as turning work in on time, arriving on time for class, responding to email in a timely fashion, etc.)
3. This informal discussion will be collaborative and include student feedback.
4. The student is informed of potential consequences for unresolved issues.
5. The full faculty is informed of the concern and plan.

This step is supportive, collaborative, short-term and often avoids the need for formal remediation.

Formal Remediation (Adapted from the Ohio State University Counselor Education Program).
Formal remediation is initiated when informal measures are insufficient.

- The full faculty meet to review the issue.
- A written remediation plan is developed, reviewed by the full faculty, and shared with the student.
- The plan serves as a contract and includes student input.

Remediation plans are individualized according to student needs and *may* include any of the following interrelated approaches (adapted from Progressive Remediation, Retention, and Dismissal Policy – The Ohio State University Counselor Education Program):

A. Academic Remediation:

- Retaking courses
- Tutoring
- Study or test-taking skill support
- Writing lab use
- Language skills remediation
- Other interventions as deemed appropriate

B. Professional Skill Remediation:

- Retaking skills-based or ethics courses
- Removal or reassignment from placement sites
- Site-specific activities
- Additional supervision or reflection papers

C. Professional Disposition Remediation:

- Personal counseling
- Reflection or apology letters
- Additional supervision meetings
- Temporary leave of absence
- Other tailored interventions

Each remediation plan includes:

1. Description of the concern(s)
2. Specific activities required
3. Target measures for success
4. Timeline for completion
5. Assigned monitoring faculty
6. Schedule of check-in meetings
7. Student collaboration and feedback
8. Consequences for failing to meet target measures of success

Copies are retained by the student's advisor, monitoring faculty, program director, and student.

Escalation to University-Level Accountability Procedures

Counselor education programs have an ethical and legal obligation to assess student competency to practice, to remediate or sanction impaired student counselors, and to counsel out students who are inappropriate for the profession. *If departmental remediation efforts do not result in sufficient improvement, the program may initiate a formal process for probation or dismissal at the university level guided by EMU's Accountability Procedures.* In these situations, the goal is not to punish the student but rather to prevent harm to the student's possible future clients by dismissing them from the program if needed.

- The student has the right to a fair, thorough review, including the opportunity to present their perspective.
- All documentation is maintained in both the program director's and the student's file.

All EMU students and employees are expected to uphold and abide by [EMU's Standards of Conduct](#). Serious misconduct including academic dishonesty, harassment, or assault may be handled through [university-level Accountability Procedures](#), bypassing informal and formal remediation steps. These procedures are primarily focused on determining responsibility for a violation of university policy, repairing harm, and rebuilding trust rather than on punishment. However, possible outcomes of the Accountability Procedures include disciplinary withdrawal and permanent dismissal from the university where appropriate.

Office of Academic Access (Disability Services)

Web: emu.edu/academics/access/

Phone: (540) 432-4233

Office of Academic Access located in the Academic Success Center, Hartzler Library, 3rd floor.

EMU promotes equal educational opportunities and full participation for all persons. Students with disabilities are provided access to full educational opportunities through reasonable accommodations. According to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, "students with documented disabilities may request modifications, accommodations or auxiliary aids which will enable them to participate in and benefit from all post secondary educational programs and activities."

This was confirmed and strengthened by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Faculty and staff support individual students needing reasonable accommodations in classroom policies and procedures due to documented needs. The faculty and staff also foster the development and use of strategies which promote self-advocacy, independence and personal success.

Students with disabilities who desire services should [contact the Office of Academic Access](#) upon acceptance to EMU so that their need can be processed prior to registration and arrival on campus. However, students may contact the Office of Academic Access at any time throughout their educational career to discuss possible services. Disclosure of a disability is voluntary.

However, students need to identify their disabilities if they wish to obtain reasonable and appropriate accommodations.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies

Inclusive Communication Policy

Eastern Mennonite University expects all its faculty, staff, and students to adopt inclusive communication for everyone, e.g. race or ethnicity, gender, disabilities, age, and sexual orientation. We will use respectful language in all our official university documents, including those put forth by way of Internet communication, and throughout all academic coursework, inclusive of classroom presentations and conversations, course syllabi, and both written and oral student assessment materials.

Considerations:

- This policy does not attempt to cover all social practices that can create openness and hospitality or alienation and closing off of community. The focus of the policy is on language use within the EMU community of teaching, classroom discussions, research design and worship.
- This policy does not apply to personal conversations, although we encourage attentiveness to inclusive language use there as well.
- This policy does attempt to demonstrate current best academic practices; we recognize that acceptable academic language, living and continuously changing, includes some practices (e.g., the use of professional titles) that are locally contested. For examples, see the Best Practices for Inclusive Language in the Faculty Procedures for specific ways to practice this policy.
- Language should emphasize the agency of those who are being discussed. Even prior to writing, academic research needs to include reliable and valid data and the voices and perspectives of the groups or individuals under consideration. Best academic practices are defined as ones that include diverse individuals and groups, enabling us to see people as full humans without drawing attention to irrelevant or stereotypical differences.

See the [Inclusive Communication Best Practices](#) for a guide within the EMU community.

Bias Response Policy and Procedure

Eastern Mennonite University is a Christian institution that is committed to creating and maintaining an educational environment that fosters respect for others and is free from intolerance directed toward individuals or groups. The following ideals describe the learning community we aspire to be: Love for God and one another, wisdom, equality, sustainability, and accountability ([Life Together: Commitments for a Community of Learning](#), 2017). It is within the mission of Eastern Mennonite University to promote and develop an inclusive campus climate which seeks harmony and cross-cultural communication, encourages and embraces differences, recognizes values, and affirms all community members.

All university-enrolled students, parents of students, and visitors located on property-owned, leased, or otherwise controlled by Eastern Mennonite University are expected to comply with this policy.

While the university is equally invested in protecting freedom of speech, academic freedom, and the widest possible dialogue in the classroom and research, Eastern Mennonite University does not condone acts of discrimination towards individuals or groups based on the following classifications listed below:

race, gender, religion, ability, sexual orientation, perceived gender, gender identity, expression, ethnicity/national origin, age, ancestry, color, marital or family status, pregnancy, pregnancy-related conditions, physical or mental disability, genetic information, HIV/AIDS status, creed, military or veteran status, club affiliation, organizational membership, or perceived political ideas

A complete copy of these procedures is available in the [Bias Response Policy and Procedure](#) section of the Graduate and Seminary Student Handbook.

LGBTQIA+ Student Support Policy

Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) strives to create and sustain an inclusive, supportive, safe, and nondiscriminatory community for all students and employees. This policy applies to all university departments and organizations.

EMU does not exclude, separate, deny benefits to, or otherwise treat differently on the basis of sex any person in its educational programs or activities unless otherwise permitted to do so under Title IX or its implementing regulations for the safety and well-being of a student.

EMU's nondiscrimination policy reads: "Eastern Mennonite University does not discriminate on the basis of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, age, disability, and national/ethnic origin in administration of its employment and educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs."

Further, EMU expects community members to treat a person's gender identity as the person's sex for purposes of the non-discrimination policy. This means that community members may not treat a transgender person differently from the way they treat other persons of the same gender identity, regardless of the sex of the person assigned at birth.

A complete copy of this policy is available in the [LGBTQIA+ Student Support Policy](#) section of the Graduate and Seminary Student Handbook.

Counseling Suite and Equipment

The counseling suite includes a waiting room and three counseling rooms (one of which is a play therapy room) equipped with iPad wall mounts or recording stands. The play room has

observation capacity through a two-way mirror window. The entire suite was constructed to provide reduction of sound transmission. Classrooms are also equipped with video playback equipment.

The counseling rooms are furnished with upholstered chairs and sofas, and lit with table and floor lamps, to provide a comfortable and conducive counseling environment. A sand tray and various tools to use with that form of therapy are available.

The use of the counseling labs is regulated through a signup system managed by the administrative assistant. Use of the labs is restricted to counseling activities and in-class assignments.

Within the department, one faculty member and the administrative assistant are available to provide technical assistance. In addition, the support of staff from the Information Systems Department and Facilities Management is available as needed.

Counseling Lab Guidelines

1. Quiet please as you enter.
2. The waiting room is not a social or study area.
3. Sign up in the "Counseling Labs" google calendar to reserve the room.
4. If a door is closed and the sign is "in use," counseling is in session. Please be quiet..
5. When you are counseling, be sure to slide the sign from "vacant" to "in use" on the door.
6. When you leave, return furniture as you found it, clean up any trash, slide the sign back to "vacant" and turn off the light.

Building Information & Classroom Policies

Cell phones, laptops, tablets and other similar devices: Cell phones are to be turned off or silenced during class time. No text messaging, please. When the class is engaged in interactive conversation (e.g. large or small group discussion) laptop computers must be closed so as to remove the relational barrier they create.

The EMU MA in Counseling program, in accordance with a national professional conversation about the use of technology in counselor education, is supportive of a return to engagement and paper notebooks. As we are in the profession of presence and attunement, we want to be intentional about how we address this in our classes. Therefore, we will ask that you keep your phone and your computer/iPad/tablet/etc. in your bag, unless you are required to use it in class. We have been reading and researching about the impact of technology on the brain related to social engagement and learning, in addition to the strong correlation between writing and learning. We wish to promote an embodied learning and discovery experience and can only be successful to do so in a context that minimizes disruption and interruption. We recognize there will be times when access to a phone is necessary and want to encourage advanced planning and communication with faculty.

Photocopier/Printer: Located in the main lobby area. Directions for using the printer can be found in the [Printing on Campus](#) article from the Information Systems Helpdesk. This article includes a link to check your printing balance and add funds. Printing instructions are also

posted inside the cabinet door above the Work Counter. We strongly recommend that you download and use the [PaperCut Mobility Print](#) app option rather than email-to-print.

Work Counter: White copy paper is located in the cabinets above the work counter. You should be able to find the following items on the work counter at all times:

Stapler	Stapler remover	2 & 3 hole punch	Tape
Pencil sharpener	White out	Paper cutter	Paper clips

Computers: There are 2 computers at the north end of the hallway for student use. An additional student computer lab is at the north end of the first floor.

After-Hours Access: If the hall and stairwell doors are locked after hours, you can try the door on the main floor and then come down the elevator. Your ID card should also give you access to the hall and stairwell doors if they are locked.

First Aid: The first aid kit is located in the kitchen in the drawer to the right of the stove in the upstairs kitchen. The administrative assistant also has a small first aid kit in their office.

Class Schedules and Room Reservations: If you need to make any schedule changes (dropping or adding courses) please see the administrative assistant. If you need to reserve a classroom on the lower level please see the administrative assistant. There is a schedule for the counseling rooms in a Google Calendar available to MA in Counseling students. You will be further introduced to this by your faculty.

What Number Do I Call? When you need to report you will be absent you need to call the administrative assistant at (540) 432-4243 or the course instructor (depending on the instructor's preference).

In the event of an EMERGENCY call 911 first (from personal phone) or 9911 from a campus phone. Then contact campus emergency services at 4911 from a campus phone or 540-432-4911 from a cell phone.

Lending Library: Students in previous graduating classes have donated some of their used textbooks and other counseling-related books for you to use. The lending library bookshelves are in room SB025. Please be aware that there is no checkout system. We encourage students to only use the books on campus rather than taking them home for the whole semester so that more students can benefit from them. The lending library also includes DVDs that you are welcome to take home to watch and return within a week.

Study Rooms: There are study carrels in the study room on the first floor available to seminary and Graduate Counseling students. The seminary receptionist makes those reservations. There are also lockers in the study room for your use.

Coffee/Tea: There is a coffee maker located down the hall in our small kitchen area. Our department will supply coffee/sugar/creamer along with an assortment of tea. Please bring a mug from home to use and put your name on the bottom. Mugs are not to be left sitting around the lounge, classroom, or sink. Take them to the sink and wash them after each use. You may store them in our small kitchen or in your mailboxes. If you take the last of the coffee, please

make another pot or turn the burner off. There is a near boiling tap installed in the sink and an electric kettle available for student use.

Bulletin Board: Give items for the bulletin boards to the administrative assistant for approval. You can find training opportunities, open positions, general announcements, and more on the bulletin boards.

Faculty Mailboxes: Each faculty member has a mailbox on the bookshelf in the administrative assistant's office.

Student Mailboxes: Your mailboxes are located behind door 54a by the lounge. Campus mail runs once in the morning and once in the afternoon. There is an outgoing mail basket at the end of the administrative assistant's desk.

Care For Our Space: Please do your part to keep our space looking neat, warm, and inviting.

Climate Control: Wear layers! Temperatures vary throughout the department space and throughout the day.

EMU Counseling Center: The counseling center is located in the University Commons. 540-432-4317

Parking Permits/Bike Registration: Parking permits are free for students. If you plan to drive to school and park on campus you will need to fill out a Vehicle Registration Form. If you have a bike it is important for safety reasons to register it with the City of Harrisonburg so that there may be some chance of recovering it should it be stolen.

Email Addresses: Your EMU email address will be our **official way of communicating with you**. Make sure to **check it daily**.