



CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PROGRAM
Graduate Student Handbook

Brooks College of Health
Department of Public Health

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The UNF Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is approved by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

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Introduction

Welcome to the University of North Florida Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program, a [CACREP](#) accredited program. The University of North Florida is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral degrees.

Whether you have already been admitted or are just investigating various programs, this Student Handbook has been designed to provide you with specific information about the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.

Once you have been admitted to the Program please make a hard copy and save a file of the Handbook that is current when you begin your studies. Because the Handbook is revised on a regular basis, the version with the date noted on it will be your guideline throughout your tenure in the program. If there are any curricular or other program changes you will be notified sufficiently in advance. If policy changes are made in the Handbook at a later date, you should not be affected by them, and we will do our best to honor policies made when you entered the program.

NOTE: It is important that you familiarize yourself with the entire Handbook at the beginning of your program and you keep it as a reference throughout your graduate studies.

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Handbook does not replace the UNF Graduate Catalog or other official University documents, but rather supplements them. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Faculty in the UNF Brooks College of Health make every effort to maintain clear and consistent communication with students through the new student orientation, personal mentoring, timely email correspondence, announcements, practicum and internship seminars, and classroom discussions and other means of communication.

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Program Description

Program Mission Statement

The mission of the UNF Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is to provide an intellectually stimulating and supportive environment in which to prepare professional counselors to work in a variety of mental health settings including but not limited to, private practice, hospitals, community counseling centers, for profit and non-profit agencies, public health departments, and schools that offer therapeutic services. This preparation emphasizes academic rigor, excellence in counseling skills and techniques, and ethical and professional integrity.

Degree Awarded

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is housed in the Brooks College of Health, Department of Public Health. Upon completion of the program, graduates are awarded a Master of Science (MS) Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Accreditation

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at the University of North Florida is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The current curriculum follows the 2009 CACREP standards.

Professional Orientation

Professional Identity

As a counselor-in-training, it is vital that you begin to build your role as a professional, striving toward mastery of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are identified with the Clinical Mental Health Counseling profession as well as a professional person in the world of work.

Professional Affiliations and Service

An important part of building your professional identity is choosing activities of interest to you and participating in local, state, regional, national, and even international activities related to Clinical Mental Health Counseling. Finding your niche(s) can be an empowering and exhilarating addition to your professional identity as a counselor. Moreover, you will develop an important voice as an advocate for mental health and can become instrumental in exacting change at all levels where mental health policy is considered.

Professional Skills and Limitations

As a student, and later as a mental health professional, it is imperative that you understand the limits of your own abilities, knowledge, skills, and

authority, so you can communicate and present yourself accurately in an ethical and professional way that reflects the standards of the American Counseling Association, the American Mental Health Counseling Association, and the Florida State Statutes related to the Profession of Clinical Mental Health Counseling (or those of any state in which you reside).

Professional Attitudes and Independent Thinking

As a student and future professional it is important that you not only learn and understand the history, theoretical tenets, and skills of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling profession, but also that you think independently, exploring and challenging the conventional theories and practices of counseling. Freethinking is what has brought the profession to its standards of excellence throughout the many years of its existence.

Research

As the Profession moves ever continually toward evidence based outcomes in therapy, becoming familiar with and involved in the professional research in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is a must, not only so you can contribute to the Profession and its professional literature, but also so you can stay up-to-date and literate in current and historic research. There is often a disconnect between current counseling research and practitioners. You cannot count on your place of employment to keep counselors up to date on research findings. You can count on yourself to seek them out, resulting in “best practices” in counseling.

Disseminating Professional Knowledge

An important element of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Profession, for students, counselors, and counseling faculty, is disseminating professional knowledge to all interested parties in order to increase the effectiveness of the practice of mental health counseling and enrich the quality of life of those individuals who are served.

Demonstrating Leadership

As you move through the Program and evolve into a Clinical Mental Health Counseling professional, your ability to demonstrate leadership is important in order to build public visibility, credibility and trust, both with clients and other counseling professionals but also with professionals from various disciplines with whom you interact.

Ethical Accountability

As with those who are already working in the field, students are ethically accountable to the profession, to the public, and to each other.

Professional Counseling Post Graduate Requirements

In order to be licensed by the state of Florida, students completing the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Program must meet all the State educational requirements for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor (LMHC). As of January 1, 2001, all individuals applying for licensure or post-graduate counseling internship status in the State of Florida are required to have met the CACREP educational requirements. These include a total of 60 hours of combined academic and clinical instruction (1000 total clinical hours).

Other licensure issues and requirements -- including information regarding the licensure examination process and post-graduate supervision -- will be discussed during the course of your tenure in the CMHC program. Nonetheless, it is important that you keep up to date on current Florida laws related to post degree licensure.

Program Guiding Principles

A foundational guiding principle in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program and mental health counseling profession is that personal exploration and awareness is an integral part of the process, not only as a student but also as a lifelong practice.

The following principles have served to guide the development of the CHMC program's mission, policies and procedures, curriculum, course content and future direction:

- Professional counselors must value and honor diversity, equity and equality of opportunity for all individuals.
- A developmental and global perspective across the life span is integral to training professional counselors.
- Professional counselors must advocate for the mental wellness of all individuals regardless of age, socioeconomic status, disability status, culture and/or ethnicity, gender identity and expression, or sexual orientation
- Professional counselors are obligated to deal with their own internal beliefs, assumptions and behaviors with regard to sexism, ageism, racism, classism, disability, and homophobia, etc., and to explore the ways that those belief systems are manifested.
- Professional counselors are ethically obligated to strive toward their own optimal psychological health and to engage in self-care activities related to the emotional, physical, cognitive, spiritual and intra-psychic dimensions of life.

- Professional counselors have an ethical obligation to work at their highest level of competence and to do so only within their areas of expertise.
- The academic preparation process must emphasize the application of theory to practice and provide ample opportunities for experiential learning throughout the program.

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Admissions

GPA

A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited U.S. institution or its equivalent from a foreign institution with a preferable grade point average of 3.00 (B) or higher in all work attempted as an upper-division student, normally the 60 hours taken during the last two years of baccalaureate study.

Official Transcripts

Official transcripts of previous undergraduate and graduate work must be included with the application package.

GRE

Official, competitive GRE scores on the verbal and quantitative reasoning scales (300 and above), taken within the last 5 years are required. If you have completed a master's or higher degree from an accredited institution, the GRE may not be required.

Letter of Intent

The letter should minimally address: a) reasons for seeking admission to the CMHC program b) short and long-term educational, research, and professional goals.

Letters of Recommendation

Three recommendations, preferably with at least one from a current or former faculty member, are required. Recommenders must complete a rating form and may also submit a letter if they choose.

Acceptance Notification

Meeting the basic requirements for the CMHC Program does not guarantee acceptance into the program. If the application package is accepted, the applicant will be invited to participate in an on-campus interview with members of the CMHC faculty. If you live out of state, or too far away to attend the interview, it can be done via video or

telephone. Qualified applicants will be notified of admittance within 30 days of the interview. If denied admission, you are encouraged to examine your application, improve any deficiencies you can, and reapply the following year.

NOTE: Currently 24 students are admitted for the fall term each year as a full time cohort. The application deadline is **March 1st**.

Course Transfers

Admitted students may be able to transfer a total of 9 semester hours (3 courses) of graduate coursework to UNF. If the courses students wish to transfer were a part of an earned degree, we will only be able to waive the course requirement and students will still need to earn 60 credit hours at UNF in order to graduate. If the courses you wish to transfer were not included in a completed degree program, both the requirement and the credit will transfer to UNF. This is a university policy. Students are advised to discuss any transfer courses with the Program Director, who will determine if and which courses may be applicable.

Undergraduate Courses

Undergraduate courses are not accepted in the graduate program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Non-admitted Students Seeking Course Enrollment

Individuals who have completed masters' degrees in counseling from other graduate institutions sometimes request to register for courses in the CMHC Program in order to achieve eligibility for mental health licensure in Florida. Those individuals seeking licensure courses are required to submit the following: (a) a copy of the official letter from the Florida licensing board noting their eligibility status and specifying courses needed, (b) proof of completion of a current certified background check, and (c) submission of transcript of graduate study. Non-admitted students are allowed to earn up to 9 semester hours (3 courses). Registration in CMHC courses requires approval of the CMHC Program Director.

Current UNF graduate students may also be allowed to enroll in certain courses with the Program Director's approval.

Non-admitted students are not permitted to enroll in the following courses:

- MHS 6941 Clinical Counseling Skills
- MHS 6510 Introduction to Group Counseling
- MHS 6500 Advanced Practice in Group Therapy

- MHS 6800 Practicum in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
- MHS 6830 Internship in Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Second Master's Degree

An individual who has a master's degree and seeks to obtain a second master's in the Clinical Mental Health Program must apply and be admitted to the program. A second GRE is not typically necessary, but CMHC faculty reserve the option to require that it be taken again based on scores or the length of time that has transpired between the present time and when the GRE was taken. Once admitted to the program, students pursuing CMHC as a second master's degree will be required to complete a minimum of 51 semester hours. The Practicum and Internship courses cannot be waived.

Statement of Understanding

Upon admission, all students will sign a "Statement of Understanding" which pertains to the ongoing responsibility of the faculty to determine the appropriateness of the student for the program and the profession as noted above with the Student Progress Assessment, and through a review of their academic progress in the program. This signed statement will be placed in each student's file. (See **Appendix A**)

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Program of Study and Curriculum

Program of Study

The CMHC program is a full-time cohort program with in-person classes that meet in 3-hour blocks from 12:00-8:45 pm Monday through Thursday. Every effort is made so students are on campus only two days per week for classes. The program is designed to provide comprehensive training for individuals who wish to counsel diverse populations in a variety of mental health settings. Curricular experiences encompass opportunities to explore the developmental, social, and cultural foundations of behavior across the life span, practice psychotherapeutic and diagnostic skills, and complete extensive field experiences in order to apply knowledge and skills in professional settings. Curricular experiences occur in the classroom, the community, and in practicum/internship sites.

Curriculum

The curriculum meets the 2009 CACREP Standards by integrating the

eight core curriculum experiences and the six clinical mental health counseling domains.

CMHC Domains	Core Curriculum Experiences
Foundations	Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice; Human Growth and Development
Counseling, Prevention, and Intervention	Helping Relationships; Group Work
Diversity and Advocacy	Social and Cultural Diversity
Assessment	Assessment; Career Development
Research and Evaluation	Research and Program Evaluation
Diagnosis	Embedded in all eight

Major Requirements (51 Semester Hours)	
<u>Course</u>	<u>Semester Hours</u>
Semester 1 (Fall) 12 credit hrs.	
MHS 6486: Human Development Across the Lifespan	3
MHS 6404: Theories in Clinical Mental Health Counseling	3
MHS 6700: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Counseling	3
MHS 6941: Clinical Counseling Skills	3
Semester 2 (Spring) 12 credit hrs.	
MHS 6876: Clinical Research in Mental Health Counseling	3
MHS 6205: Assessment & Evaluation in Mental Health Counseling	3
MHS 6428: Counseling Diverse Populations	3
MHS 6510: Group Counseling	3
Semester 3 (Summer) 9 credit hours	
MHS 6070: Psychopathology	3
MHS 6305: Career Counseling	3
MHS 6401: Counseling in Community Settings	3
Semester 4 (Fall) 9 credit hours	
MHS 6450: Addictions Counseling	3
MHS 6800: Practicum (330 contact hours)	3
MHS 6430 Introduction to Family Counseling	3
Semester 5 (Spring) 9 credit hours	
MHS 6830: Internship (335 contact hours)	3
MHS 6490: Sexual Issues in Counseling	3
Elective 1: 3 credits- see semester schedule	3
Semester 6 (Summer): 9 credit hours	
MHS 6830: Internship (335 contact hours)	3
Elective 2: 3 credits-see semester schedule	3
Elective 3: 3credits-see semester schedule	3
Total	60 Hours

Electives 12 credit hours total; see semester schedule for these and other options

MHS 6402 Overview of Brief Counseling	3
MHS 6436 Counseling Military Families	3
MHS 6930 ST: Psychotherapy for Children and Adolescents	3
MHS 6930 ST: Expressive Arts and Creativity in Counseling	3
MHS 6930 ST: Animal Assisted Therapy: Theory and Practice	3
MHS 6930 ST: Grief and Loss	3

NOTE: MHS 6930 is a temporary course number for Special Topics (ST).
 Courses listed under this course number may vary.

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Practicum and Internship

The practicum and internship represent opportunities for you to put into practice the skills and knowledge that you gain in the classroom. As such, it represents the real world of counseling more closely than any other aspect of your program. This is an opportunity for students to practice and hone their skills while under the protection of ample supervision, both on site and at the university.

Please refer to the Clinical Practicum/Internship Handbook for more detailed information.

Electives

All electives are 3 credit hours and some are subject to change during any academic year. With advice of the student’s advisor and/or approval of the program director students may be allowed to take elective courses in other program areas. Some of these areas include nutrition, public health, health administration, psychology, and education.

Independent Study

MHS 6905 Directed Independent Study in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program affords students an opportunity to work with a faculty on a topic of interest to both of them. Typically an independent study is reserved for doing research with a faculty or for working on a project that is not addressed in a traditional course. If a student is interested in pursuing an independent study it is best that they outline a proposal, contact the professor or professors with whom they would like to work, and discuss the viability of the project. If the professor believes the project to be viable and gives tentative approval, the professor and student will then more thoroughly design the proposed work, specifically the syllabus — and submit it to the Program Director for final approval. The proposal will need to identify the following:

- 1) the core questions or problems being explored;
- 2) construction of a strategy for investigating them;
- 3) a map of readings, writings, and discussions or other activities aimed at achieving the proposed goals.

An Independent study proposal must be approved prior to officially enrolling in the Independent Study. There is a formal independent study contract that must be signed by the sponsoring faculty, program director and department chairperson. Once approved this contract is submitted to the advisement office so the student can register for the independent study.

NOTE: the CMHC Program Director must approve Out-of-Program Independent Studies.

The primary job of the faculty with whom the student will be working on an independent study is to: 1) provide preliminary feedback on the proposal and the accompanying assignments; 2) consult on revisions to the original proposal if necessary; 3) provide a preliminary end-of-the-semester review; 4) meet regularly with the student during the semester of the independent study; 5) assist with research methodology if appropriate; and 6) discuss and evaluate the final product to include feedback and a final grade.

Time Limits for Program Completion

Students must complete their degree within five years from the time they are admitted and begin their first semester of course work. When course work completed at UNF or elsewhere exceeds five years, the credit hours are rendered invalid. In order to be accepted, the courses must be submitted for revalidation by the Program Director according to the procedures found in the Graduate Catalog. If a course is not validated, additional course work will be required and added to the program of study. Students should make every effort to complete their degree within the time limits established.

Continuous Enrollment

Students who do not take classes for three consecutive terms are automatically dropped from the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program and must reapply for admission. If program requirements have changed after the student is dropped, the student will be obligated to meet new program requirements upon re-admission.

Incomplete Grades

Students who encounter extenuating circumstances that preclude their

completing all course requirements by the end of the term may, at the instructor's discretion, receive a grade of "Incomplete." The student must complete the course within the time limit set by the instructor, not to exceed one calendar year. To extend an incomplete beyond one year, the student must petition for a waiver of University policy.

University policy dictates that an "I" will be changed to a final evaluative grade of "F" after one year unless the student works with a faculty member to make a change. This "F" grade will be calculated into the student's GPA. Students cannot re-register for courses in which an incomplete grade is outstanding.

Course Validation

No course completed ten years prior to the date of graduation can be included in the program of study. Courses that are five to ten years old at the time of graduation may be validated, but this is decided on a case-by-case basis. Each student's mentor/adviser will advise them on how to validate these courses, which may include, but is not limited to, taking exams, retaking the course, completing selected assignments, or by interview and approval of the professor who originally taught the course.

Application for Graduation

Students must submit a formal graduation application to the Registrar's Office by the deadline date listed in the University Calendar on the University web site: www.unf.edu. Graduation application deadlines are also advertised in Osprey Update. You may apply online in [myWings](#). Please review the [Graduation Checklist](#) for detailed instructions.

Student Evaluation

The CMHC faculty members have an ethical obligation to both the students and to students' future clients. As such, it is the responsibility of the faculty to prepare students to become skilled and ethical counselors. Throughout each student's experience -- from the initial interview through the completion of the internships -- faculty members use both formal and informal means of observing, intervening, and guiding them in order to ensure that each student's potential is maximized and that future clients are protected. Students' competence and suitability for the program are subject to an on-going and broadly based evaluation by Program faculty. In addition to academic performance, students' professional competence and conduct will also be evaluated. Decisions regarding continued study are based upon demonstrated competence in each of the following areas: interpersonal skills, ethical judgment, and professional maturity and demeanor.

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Student Progress Assessment

The CACREP accreditation standards require that counseling programs maintain a developmental, systematic assessment of each student's progress throughout the program. Our program uses a combination of academic performance reflected by course grades, the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE), and an annual professional development and personal dispositions rubric to meet this standard.

Grade Requirements

Students are required to:

- Maintain a B average. Individuals who receive a “C” in three or more courses will be placed on academic probation for review. A student cannot graduate with more than 3 “C” grades in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.
- Retake the following classes if you make a grade of C:
 - MHS 6941 Clinical Counseling Skills
 - MHS 6810 Group Counseling
 - MHS 6800 Practicum & MHS 6830 Internship; while Practicum and Internship are graded on a Pass/Fail basis, the Program faculty and instructors maintain the right to examine student progress on a case to case basis and prescribe any remediation necessary to increase the quality of skills.

CPCE Examination

All students are required to post a passing score for the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) in the semester prior to practicum. An overall passing score must satisfy both of the following conditions:

1. Achieving a total score that is equal to or greater than the national mean for total scores.
2. Achieving a score that is equal to or greater than the national mean on at least six (6) of the eight (8) content areas.

Students must complete all CACREP core courses listed below prior to taking the examination. The CPCE is an online, 160 multiple-choice exam that test students' knowledge of the 8 CACREP content domains including:

1. Human Growth & Development
2. Social and Cultural Foundations
3. Helping Relationships
4. Group Work
5. Career and Lifestyle Development
6. Assessment

7. Research and Program Evaluation
8. Professional Orientation and Ethics

Students will be informed about test location, time, and payment when they are identified by the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE).

Score reports are printed immediately after students complete their electronic examination. However, because pass rates are determined using national averages, students will receive a formal letter from the Clinical Director or the Program Director informing them of their test results shortly after national exam statistics are released.

Students who do not pass the CPCE can take the examination one additional time. If a student does not pass the CPCE the student should meet with their faculty mentor/adviser to discuss how to work toward score improvement. If the student is unable to pass the examination after two attempts, the student may be granted an oral examination at the discretion of the Clinical Director. The oral exam will be scheduled by the Clinical Director at a mutually agreed upon time and place in front of the Oral Exam Committee which will be comprised of the CMHC faculty. If students are unable to pass the oral examination, the CMHC faculty will consider removing the candidate from the program.

Professional Development and Personal Dispositions

In addition to counseling knowledge and skills, professional behavior and personal characteristics consistent with the ACA Code of Ethics and CACREP standards are critical in the development of competent counseling professionals. As such, students' professional development and personal dispositions are addressed throughout the curriculum and are evaluated at the end of each year in the program. The faculty uses an assessment rubric to provide feedback to students on their communication skills, self-awareness, interpersonal relations including understanding and respecting diversity, adaptability, and dependability. The assessment rubric is completed by students' faculty advisor in collaboration with other faculty and in consultation with the student.

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Remediation

It is imperative that students demonstrate professional behavior that conforms to CACREP and university guidelines and the ACA Code of Ethics. Any student who demonstrates problems with professional competence and conduct may be required to complete remediation to address the concerns. Faculty will evaluate each student in the following competency areas:

Interpersonal and professional competence; examples of which include the following:

- Demonstrates respectful peer and faculty interactions
- Demonstrates respect for the ideas and integrity of others
- Demonstrates maturity in interactions with others
- Demonstrates ability to interact respectfully with people of diverse backgrounds
- Demonstrates ability to react with appropriate empathy and sensitivity

Sample behaviors that could result in remediation are:

- An inability to control anger
- Uses insulting or profane words
- Uses intimidating tactics
- An inability to tolerate cultural or lifestyle differences
- Dishonest or unethical behavior
- Lack of self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation
- A lack of awareness or inability to manage own limitations and responsibilities
- Turns assignments in late with some regularity
- Avoids responsibility for situations by blaming others
- Overt hostile reaction to supervision
- Refuses or is unable to adjust behavior in response to clearly communicated feedback
- Consistently fails to give appropriate credit to others
- Demonstrates a pattern of overreaction to a small slight
- An inability or refusal to accept academic inquiry or disagreement or to work collaboratively in a professional or academic environment

Program Dismissal

1. Students may be dismissed from the program for academic reasons (e.g., grades of C or lower, plagiarism, and/or verbal, non-verbal, or written communication problems).
2. Students may be dismissed for overt violations of the current ACA Ethical Codes and Standards of Practice.
3. Students may be dismissed for “personal unsuitability for the profession.” Examples of such behavior include:
 - Consistent inability to assess problem situations in a mental health or educational setting and determine how to negotiate/compromise or otherwise resolve the situation
 - Ongoing inability or unwillingness to recognize personal boundary/power issues which a) inhibit or prevent the student from learning appropriate professional behavior/counseling skills;

and/or b) have the potential to harm a client

- Ongoing inability or unwillingness to participate in learning activities designed to promote and improve self-understanding, self-analysis skills and interpersonal skills

Appeals Process

All members of the University community are entitled to fair and equitable procedures and have the right of appeal. A student who believes a University policy imposes an undue hardship, or has not met reasonable accommodations for a disability may submit a petition requesting waiver of the specific policy through the Registrar's Office. The student will be informed in writing of the results of the appeal.

Guidelines for grade appeals are in the Registrar's Office. Members of the community who believe that they have not been accorded rights under the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 may submit inquiries to Equal Opportunity Program Director, Room 2515, J.J. Daniel Hall, 620-2507.

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Policies

Diversity and Inclusiveness Recruitment Policy

The University of North Florida (UNF) Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program recognizes, acknowledges and values principles of diversity, inclusiveness, equal rights and social justice. Acceptance of these principles directs our need to maintain a commitment to equal opportunity in recruitment of students. Also important is our recognition of the need for a diverse faculty to be mentors and role models for students.

UNF strives to increase its recruitment and retention of a diverse student and faculty population. It is therefore the goal of the CMHC program to follow UNF's modeling to employ a variety of approaches for recruiting and retaining diverse populations and for maintaining openness to the importance of inclusiveness. With a focus on this goal, the following strategies are employed:

- Establishing outreach and personal contact with diverse populations
- Maintaining and increasing mentor accessibility with university academic advising offices, faculty, and staff
- Strengthening relationships with diverse communities
- Active involvement on various community boards

- Increasing attendance at community culturally relevant events
- Using holistic and equitable admissions requirements (i.e., using multiple criteria)
- Seeking to employ a diverse faculty
- Continuing to support a systematic university affirmative action program

Ethical/ Legal Awareness

CMHC students are required to adhere to the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics and the Ethical Standards of the Florida Department of Health licensing board. Since this program is practitioner-based students train with client/counselor roles. These roles are considered a simulation of the client/counselor relationship and, therefore, subject to ethical and legal regulations governing these types of relationships. Given the importance of ethics and the law, students are required to take MHS 6700: Legal, Ethical, and Professional Issues in Counseling during their first semester where they review professional and state licensing code of ethics and legal practice requirements. Students are required to sign statements of ethical and legal awareness prior to beginning all clinical experiences.

Student Endorsement Policy

Faculty members in the CMHC Program have adopted endorsement guidelines as provided in the current version of the *American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics*. Per the *ACA Code of Ethics* (2014), “F.6.d. Endorsement: Supervisors endorse supervisees for certification, licensure, employment, or completion of an academic or training program only when they believe supervisees are qualified for the endorsement. Regardless of qualifications, supervisors do not endorse supervisees whom they believe to be impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of the duties associated with the endorsement” (p. 14).

In the academic setting, endorsement includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- Approving a student for graduation clearance once he or she has completed all academic requirements of the CMHC Master’s Degree Program and has not demonstrated impairment as defined by the ACA Code of Ethics
- Preparing a letter of reference for a student for employment, a credential (e.g., LMHC, LPC), a doctoral program, etc.
- Fielding a telephone call, written, or digital request from a potential employer, credentialing body, institution of higher learning, etc., regarding a student’s potential for success in the field of clinical mental health counseling.

Program Endorsement Policy

At various times students require an endorsement – a verbal or written recommendation – from program faculty in order to:

- Obtain graduation clearance after application for graduation has been submitted and once all academic requirements of the CMHC Program are completed
- Secure a practicum or internship placement
- Gain employment after graduation from the program
- Obtain licensure as a mental health counselor or other counseling credential
- Apply for doctoral, professional, or other graduate degree programs

When students apply for graduation, advisors in the Brooks College of Health Academic Advising Office; the student’s program mentor; the CMHC Clinical Director; CMHC Program Director; and the Department Chairperson review their records. Care is taken to ensure that every student has completed the requirements of the program. If faculty and administration find the student has successfully completed all necessary course work, the student’s file is forwarded to the Registrar’s Office.

In accordance with the ACA Code of Ethics (2014; Section F.6.d.), students are endorsed by faculty only for a position or credential for which they have been prepared. Students should be aware of this policy and seek endorsement only for employment and credentials that are appropriate given the student’s training, coursework and supervised experience qualifications. Students should request verbal and/or written references well ahead of due dates and permit faculty reasonable time to prepare these.

Upon successful completion of the Master of Science degree in CMHC, students are eligible to become Registered Mental Health Counseling Interns in the state of Florida. Please visit the website for [The Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling](#) for details on obtaining full licensure as Mental Health Counselors (LMHC).

Non-Discrimination Policy Regarding Persons with Disabilities

The CMHC program adheres to UNF’s non-discrimination policies as stated on the ADA Compliance office website

<http://www.unf.edu/adacompliance/>. *“UNF is committed to creating a culture of sensitivity for individuals with disabilities where inclusion is essential to contributing towards a society that eliminates exclusion and segregation. It is UNF’s goal to continuously improve the accessibility of our campus, programs, and activities for*

individuals with disabilities. Promoting our goal to move beyond compliance is imperative to create an environment where access to programs and facilities appears seamless.”

In keeping with UNF’s philosophy, the CMHC program does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment, admissions and retention of students, faculty or staff. The CMHC program also adheres to specified federal laws and regulations in the operation of any of its program and all program related activities.

Background Check and Professional Liability Insurance

Students are required to apply for and pass a criminal background check and finger printing in your first semester of the program and a re-check in the fall of your second year. You cannot begin practicum or internship client contact until you have cleared the University required background re-check. Please refer to background check information on the CMHC Canvas for additional information.

Information revealed by a background check may:

- Prohibit participation in required practicum and/or field experiences.
- Prohibit students from taking required post-graduate state and national examinations for licensure and/or certification and/or post-graduate internships.

If you have concerns regarding a background check be sure and discuss this with the Clinical Director or the Program Director.

Students are **not** required to purchase professional liability insurance as long as they are enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Program. The Brooks College of Health covers this for students.

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Student Opportunities

Personal Counseling for Students

While individual counseling for each student is not required, students are strongly encouraged to participate in their own personal counseling. The UNF Counseling Center, located in Founders Hall, Building 2, provides individual counseling at no additional cost to students. This is important not only to help you understand the counseling experience from a client’s perspective but also to help you participate in self-care as you go through this Program, which may trigger personal issues. If you are doing any of your clinical experiences in the counseling center, the center staff can assist you with a referral in the community.

Professional Organizations

Students are encouraged to join local, state and national professional associations. Students are also highly encouraged to be active participants in their professional associations. This level of participation includes submission of papers and poster; participation on student specific committees and any other student let experience. The benefits of membership are networking with professional counselors and developing increased knowledge in the field from workshops, meetings, and relevant journal articles. Organizations of interest include:

- American Counseling Association-www.counseling.org
- American Mental Health Counselors Association -www.amhca.org
- Florida Counseling Association-www.flacounseling.org
- Florida Mental Health Counseling Association
<http://www.fmhca.org>
- North East Florida Mental Health Counseling Association
<http://www.nefmhca.com>

Chi Sigma Iota

Chi Sigma Iota is the International Honor Society of professional counseling. Its mission is to promote scholarships, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the profession of counseling. Invitation to apply to the UNF chapter of Chi Sigma Iota is based upon the following criteria:

1. Completion of one semester of full-time grade course work
2. Earned grade point average of 3.5 or higher
3. Recommendation of the membership by the Sigma Phi Epsilon chapter

For the further information contact Dr. Kassie Terrell, k.terrell@unf.edu Chapter Faculty Advisor; or contact Chi Sigma Iota at <http://www.csi-net.org>

UNF Information Technology Services (ITS) & Osprey E-mail Accounts

Information Technology Services (ITS), located in Hicks Hall, Building 53, Suites 2500 and 2340, provides computer and software support, academic technology, networking, information systems, IT training and outreach, and more to students, faculty, and staff at UNF. To learn more about technology available for students, visit:

http://www.unf.edu/its/For_Students.aspx.

All students are will be given their own osprey e-mail account upon enrollment in a UNF program. Students maintain their Osprey email accounts for life. Please review [Osprey Email Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[for more information](#). It is important to establish and regularly check your UNF email as all official university and program communication will be delivered to this address.

The ITS Help Desk (http://www.unf.edu/its/help_desk/), located in the Thomas G. Carpenter Library, is readily available by phone or via e-mail and is helpful in addressing computing issues and problems that arise. They are there for your use! Additionally, there are computer workstations on the 3rd floor of The Brooks College of Health, Building 39, Room 3064 for student use.

Library Facilities and Holdings

The UNF library is a 120,000 square foot facility covering four floors and containing more than 650,000 holdings including 52,000 audio/visual units, 1.2 million micro format units, and 2,520 subscriptions to journals. Students will find most of the top tiered and more nuanced counseling, psychology, and related resources in the library.

The entire card catalog is computerized and students have access to dozens of computers on each floor of the library. Computerized searches are accomplished easily through the library system, LUIS. The on-line catalog has both in- library and remote access. Interlibrary loans through the State University System are available to students at nominal charges. Many documents, including older journals and all ERIC documents, are maintained on microfiche.

Copy machines are available on each library floor. Additionally, the library staff provides group and individual instruction related to conducting computer searches, doing literature reviews, etc. They also offer a comprehensive guide to services available on-line and in hard copy. Students have access to word processing, data analysis, and other computer functions through the UNF Computer Center and the UNF Library.

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Faculty

Carlene Taylor, Ed.D., Visiting Instructor, c.taylor@unf.edu

Kassie Terrell, Ph.D., Assistant Professor & Faculty Advisor - Chi Sigma Iota, k.terrell@unf.edu

Tes Tuason, Ph.D., Professor & Clinical Director, ttuason@unf.edu

Richmond D. Wynn, Ph.D., Associate Professor & Program Director
rwynn@unf.edu

Robert Zeglin, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, r.zeglin@unf.edu

NOTE: Not included in the above list are the experts and scholars who offer their outstanding services as adjunct faculty to the program on an ongoing basis.

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Appendix A: CMHC Student Statement of Understanding

I understand that the successful completion of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program is dependent upon a healthy balance of personal and professional characteristics and skills required for effective interventions in counseling settings. These personal and professional characteristics include attitudes and behaviors as well as academic performance. I acknowledge that the program faculty members have an ethical responsibility to monitor my progress and to inform me when my skills, knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors are below standards expected for graduate students in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

I have reviewed the contents of this Handbook and agree to abide by the guidelines and policies incorporated into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Handbook under which I was admitted. I also agree to maintain ethical behavior per professional standards outlined in the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics.

If faculty members deem my performance in any area to be deficient, I may be directed to: personal counseling, writing or speech courses, withdraw from specific courses, desist temporarily from continuing course work, perform voluntary or paid work in a school or agency, repeat courses, or withdraw from the program permanently.

As a student, I have the right to appeal any of the decisions made by the faculty. I agree to follow faculty directives and to notify them if I intend to appeal.

A copy of this signed document will be given to the student's faculty advisor. A copy will also be placed in the student's clinical file.

Student – Print Name

Student Signature

Date