

Master of Arts in Counseling  
(COUN)

Program Handbook

2021-2023

**Stockton University  
Counseling Handbook**

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## A. GENERAL INFORMATION

### PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

#### **Mailing Address:**

Director, Master of Arts in Counseling School of  
Social and Behavioral Sciences 30 Front Street  
Hammonton, NJ 08037

#### **Program Director:**

Sara M. Martino, Ph.D., LPC, NCC  
Professor, Director of Counseling (609) 626-  
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Sara.Martino@stockton.edu

### FACULTY AND STAFF

The Counseling program at Stockton University is housed in the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SOBL). The Counseling faculty have sole responsibility for the preparation of all Counseling students.

**Terrilyn Battle, Ph.D., LCMHC-A (NC), LCAS-R (NC), CRC**, *North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University*, Assistant Professor of Counseling, Impostor Phenomenon, mentorship, rehabilitation counseling, vocational counseling, underrepresented populations, cultural immersion and multiculturalism

**Sara Martino, Ph.D., LPC, NCC**, *Temple University*, Professor, Director of Counseling, psychology, illness-related stress disorders, female aggression, gender group identity, psychology of women, marriage and family therapy.

**Erin Sappio, Ph.D.**, *Temple University*, Assistant Professor of Counseling, mindset and mindfulness, assessment, school counseling.

**Elyssa Smith, Ph.D., Ed.S., LPC, NCC**, *University of Wyoming*, Assistant Professor of Counseling, psychodynamic theory, children and adolescents, narratives of counselors

#### **Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences:**

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## **Director of Graduate Enrollment Management:**

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## **FACULTY PRECEPTORS**

In order for students in entry-level programs to have an assigned advisor at all times during the program who helps them develop a planned program of study, each student will be assigned a faculty preceptor (or advisor) during which the student is enrolled in the counseling program. It is the student's responsibility to know who is serving as her/his faculty preceptor. This information may be found on the Stockton Portal Student Services tab. If a student wishes to change preceptors at any time, fill out a change of preceptor form and submit the form to Academic Advising for approval.

Your faculty preceptor is your primary source of contact and communication with the program. Therefore, the program encourages the formation of effective, professional relationships between students and their faculty preceptors. Please note that a large portion of the responsibility for the formation of such a relationship with your preceptor falls upon you. The program encourages you to show initiative in getting to know your preceptor.

## **ADJUNCT FACULTY**

Adjunct faculty members assist the program through the provision of instructional services, supervision of students in Practicum and Internship, or other activities necessary for the effective conduct of the program. Persons who hold this status in the program must be approved by the Director and faculty, as well as the Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SOBL) and are appointed on an annual or academic term basis.

## **STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONALISM**

The Counseling program is established to prepare graduates of the programs to enter "professions." The term professions in this context means (a) an occupation/career for which there is a known body of knowledge (both theoretical and research), (b) an identified set of appropriate skills, and (c) a set of behavioral standards adhered to by members of the profession. As a student admitted to the program, you are engaged in a professional preparation curriculum. Therefore, upon admission, the program accepts you as a professional and expects you to act in accordance with the highest professional standards. See also the section on professional dispositions for how professionalism will be measured throughout the program.

The most common manifestation of professionalism is adherence to professional ethical standards such as those of the (a) [American Counseling Association](#) (ACA), (b) the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, (c) American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), (d) American School Counseling Association (ASCA), and (e) the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). A link has been provided for the ACA code of ethics. Ethical codes for the other professional associations can also be found on their respective

websites.

Students are required to read and understand several different sets of ethical standards as a part of the coursework. The faculty expect students to be knowledgeable of these standards and to act in accordance with them. However, professionalism encompasses much more than just adherence to ethical and/or other written standards. It includes appropriate and effective ways of interaction with people, matters of personal conduct and self-presentation, and respect for people, property and processes.

If you have any concerns regarding professionalism, you should speak directly with your preceptor immediately. If you do not feel that your preceptor is the appropriate person to contact, then you should contact the Director of the program.

## **CHI SIGMA IOTA**

Chi Sigma Iota is an Academic and Professional Counseling International Honor Society. CSI is an honor society of counseling professionals and counseling professionals-in-training dedicated to excellence in scholarship, research, and clinical practice in counseling. The primary purpose of CSI is to promote and recognize exemplary attainment in the study and practice of counseling. The Counseling program will establish a Chi Sigma Iota chapter once CACREP accreditation is complete.

Students in the program who anticipate becoming counselors *may be* eligible for membership in CSI. Stockton University, at the time of this handbook, has not yet applied for CSI membership due to pending accreditation. The eligibility criteria include completion of a minimum of twenty-four (24) program-applicable semester credit hours, a graduate grade point average of at least 3.5, and approval by the CSI Chapter membership committee, which has yet to be formed.

## **FINANCIAL AID AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Financial Aid Office (for all questions related to tuition, scholarships, and loans)

<https://stockton.edu/financial-aid/index.html>

Phone: 609-652-4203

Email: [Finaid@stockton.edu](mailto:Finaid@stockton.edu)

Graduate assistantships are available on a semester basis. The number of credits awarded will be determined by the program faculty in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies. A graduate assistantship requires 1.5 hours of service per week for each credit of waived tuition. The tuition waiver is granted for graduate courses in which a student is enrolled during the semester that an assistantship is held. Only students who have been formally accepted into the COUN program will be eligible to apply for graduate assistantships. Applications and supporting information, including requirements, may be found on the graduate studies website. Applications are due by March 31<sup>st</sup> for the fall semester and October 31<sup>st</sup> for the spring semester.

A panel of four COUN faculty will review applications and nominate qualified applicants for funding to the graduate studies office. Students will be notified of decisions by December for spring and by April for the fall.

## **B. COUNSELING PROGRAM**

### **PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

The Master of Arts in Counseling program is designed to educate students about best practices in mental health and human services and train students in the skills necessary to work with clients in a variety of settings, such as hospitals, social service agencies, residential treatment centers, community mental health centers, and other organizations. The goal of this program is to prepare graduate students for success in the field upon graduation and to successfully achieve their professional goals.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

According to the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code for Mental Health Counseling, it is a program that prepares individuals to provide evaluations, referrals, and counseling services to help people prevent or remediate personal problems, conflicts, and emotional crises. The program will provide instruction in human development, psychopathology, individual and group counseling, personality theory, career assessment, patient screening and referral, observation and testing techniques, interviewing skills, professional standards and ethics, and applicable laws and regulations.

Students will gain the knowledge and skills necessary to create and maintain helping relationships, facilitate change on an individual or systemic level, and function professionally in human service organizations. Graduates will be prepared to enter the workforce in entry-level positions in counseling and social services. Cooperative arrangements will be established with external agencies to provide practicum and internship placements for students to gain practical experience while enrolled in the program.

The MA in Counseling program is under review from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the nationally recognized body for establishing standards for counselor education programs. CACREP has established clear standards and the program is designed according to these new standards.

### **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

#### **Program Objectives**

The program aims to educate students regarding best practices in counseling. Curriculum will focus on the eight core areas delineated by CACREP standards: professional counseling orientation and ethical practice, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, career development, counseling and helping relationships, group counseling and group work, assessment and testing, research and program evaluation.

The objectives for the program are:

- a. To provide meaningful educational experiences to prepare graduates with foundational skills, critical thinking ability, and dedication to the counseling profession,
- b. To prepare graduates for employment, licensure, and certification by meeting the standards set by the appropriate accrediting and licensing agencies,
- c. To inspire graduates to become advocates for their clients and leaders in their profession,
- d. To encourage patience, sensitivity, and understanding in the delivery of counseling services to diverse communities,
- e. To prepare graduates for a commitment to ethical professional practice, and
- f. To prepare students to use research as a guide for identifying effective counseling techniques (Chwalisz, 2003).

These program objectives are met through the achievement of the following Student Learning Objectives in the areas of knowledges, skills, and professional dispositions:

*Knowledge Objectives:* Students will develop knowledge and the ability to apply the knowledge in their work with clients in the 8 CACREP Core Content areas of:

1. Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice
2. Social and Cultural Diversity
3. Human Growth and Development
4. Career Development
5. Counseling and Helping Relationships
6. Group Counseling and Group Work
7. Assessment and Testing
8. Research and Program Evaluation

*Skills Objectives*

1. Developing sound clinical mental health counseling and assessment skills to facilitate change in clients.
2. Demonstrating ethical and legal approaches to counseling, assessment, and research.
3. Displaying socially just and multiculturally competent practices.

*Professional Disposition Objectives*

1. Professional Readiness: The principles of cultural competence, ethical practice, and professional motivation and identity as clinical mental health counselors.
2. Personal Readiness: A means for personal management, self-reflection, and self-exploration to effectively maintain, manage, and foster therapeutic relationships with clients.
3. Interpersonal Readiness: Interpersonal effectiveness, appropriateness, and ability to give, receive, and integrate feedback including receptiveness to supervision.

Program goals and objectives prepare students to take the National Certification Exam and become licensed in the state of New Jersey.

*National certification.* Graduates of the program will be qualified to take the National Counselor Exam (NCE), which is administered by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC).



Passing the NCE exam qualifies graduates as a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC). See the section on *Accreditation* below to verify the proposed program’s eligibility for CACREP accreditation.

*State licensure.* Graduates who have passed the NCE will also be qualified to apply for licensure in the State of New Jersey as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) after an additional 4,500 hours of supervised experience. This license allows them to work as counselors in non-profit organizations, for profit organizations, or in private practice in New Jersey. Graduates will also be eligible to apply for a specialty designation in any of the following: clinical mental health, addictions, career, school counselor, or gerontology.

## **ACCREDITATION**

The program is designed in accordance with the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2016 Standards. The program will begin the accreditation application process in the fall of 2020. Students who graduate from a program that has not yet received accreditation will have eighteen months AFTER graduation to be considered graduating from a CACREP program. The program will be assessed using the following methods:

- i. Graduates will demonstrate competence in the core areas related to the program objectives as described in Appendix B. Students will take the NCE exam during the spring of their final year, so the program will have access to data regarding students’ success on the exam.
- ii. The program faculty will evaluate the program objectives using (1) aggregate student assessment data that address student knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions; (2) demographic and other characteristics of applicants, students, and graduates; and (3) data from systematic follow-up studies of graduates, site supervisors, and employers of program graduates, including the percentage of graduates who take the NCE and the percentage who pass.
- iii. The program faculty will provide evidence of the use of program evaluation data to inform program modifications via its Annual Report and Five-Year Program Review.
- iv. The program faculty will disseminate an annual report that includes (1) a summary of the program evaluation results, (2) subsequent program modifications, and (3) any other substantial program changes. The report will be published on the program website and students currently in the program, program faculty, institutional administrators, and personnel in cooperating agencies (e.g., employers, site supervisors) will be notified that the report is available.
- v. The faculty will annually post the number of graduates for the past academic year, pass rates on credentialing examinations, completion rates, and job placement rates (based on alumni surveys) on the program’s website.
- vi. The faculty will have written procedures for administering student evaluations of faculty (IDEA Student Evaluations) within the faculty standards.
- vii. Students will have opportunities to evaluate program faculty through anonymous student evaluations of teaching (using the Student Ratings of Instruction or SRI created by IDEA) at the end of each semester.
- viii. Students will have regular, systematic opportunities to formally evaluate practicum and internship supervisors. Questions will be added to the IDEA Student Evaluation instrument in order to provide

data for this assessment from the practicum and internship course instruments.

- ix. Students will be asked upon graduation to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and values they gained during the program and provide feedback for program improvement.
- x. Supervisors of student practicums and internships will be asked to evaluate how well the program prepares students to function in their agency or organization.

For more information on CACREP and the accreditation process, you may view their website <https://www.cacrep.org/>

## **MATRICULATION REQUIREMENTS**

Please visit the Counseling website for the most updated information on specific matriculation requirements. At minimum, applicants will need to have a 3.0 GPA from their undergraduate program, a major in Psychology or related field (or meet the minimum requirements of taking Abnormal Psychology and have experience in Statistics and/or Experimental if not a Psychology major) and provide three letters of recommendation. Applicants are required to participate in a group interview process, if selected by faculty in mid-March. Applicants are notified of acceptance in April.

## **TRANSFER OF CREDIT POLICY**

The Counseling program will transfer COUN credits from other colleges or universities. A maximum of nine (9) credit hours taken within the last 6 years with a grade of B or higher can be accepted, with the program director's approval. The program reserves the right to accept or reject courses previously taken (including Stockton courses) by the student as part of the counseling program. Under no circumstances will Practicum and Internship courses transfer.

## **MAINTENANCE OF MATRICULATION**

Once admitted to a degree program, graduate students must either be continuously registered for credit each semester (excluding summer terms) until they complete degree requirements, or they must apply for and receive Maintenance of Matriculation status and pay the requisite fee in lieu of tuition. Graduate students who neither register for credit during a fall or spring term nor apply for and receive Maintenance of Matriculation status and pay the requisite fee will lose their student status and must apply for readmission to the University and be reaccepted in order to continue their graduate work.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

Students are expected, as part of the Counseling program, to work on their personal competencies to be competent to practice in the mental health field. Students are expected throughout their coursework to be open and self-reflective, be able to receive feedback from classmates, professors, and supervisors.

The 2014 ACA *Code of Ethics*, Section F.5.b. states in part, "Students and supervisees monitor themselves

for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others. They notify their faculty and/or supervisors and seek assistance for problems that reach the level of professional impairment, and, if necessary, they limit, suspend, or terminate their professional responsibilities until it is determined that they may safely resume their work.”

The Counseling program fully endorses the [ACA Code of Ethics](#) and the elements of a competent and ethical counselor. Counseling not only demands the highest levels of performance, it also subjects counselors to stresses and challenges that may threaten individuals’ coping abilities. Therefore, students are encouraged to seek professional assistance if they feel that their work is being affected. Additionally, the faculty recommend that students notify their course instructors and faculty advisor if they feel their work is being affected. The University does provide counseling services free of charge through the Wellness Center on the Galloway Campus.

The faculty will notify students if their performance requires additional self-assessment and self- reflection. Failure to address the concerns and improve their performance may result in disciplinary action including a review by a Student Retention Committee. The faculty reserves the right to exact grading penalties for any unprofessional or unethical behaviors and discuss ramifications with the faculty.

## **ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Students are required to attend and participate in all lectures, labs, field trips and other scheduled activities. Excused absences may be necessary due to significant illness, death in the family, or accident. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the course instructor prior to the scheduled class/activity, and upon request, furnish the instructor with the necessary documentation, such as a medical note. Excessive absenteeism, lack of preparation, and/or tardiness may adversely affect a student’s grade. Specific attendance policies are up to the discretion of each individual faculty member.

## **TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES AND COMPETENCIES**

Information Technology Services provides technical support for instructional learning and electronic communication. Students should refer to the Technology Services webpage to request help in working with different programs and electronic communication. All students have access to a professional Zoom account as students in the program and will need to participate in telehealth training to familiarize themselves with electronic methods of counseling services.

## CURRICULUM

See the bulletin for specific course requirements. The following table provides a guideline for program completion indicating required courses:

<b>YEAR 1 COURSES (30 CREDITS)</b>			
<b>FALL</b>	<b>CREDIT</b>	<b>SPRING</b>	<b>CREDIT</b>
COUN 5110 - Pre-Practicum	3	COUN 5135 - Assessment and Testing	3
COUN 5115 - Theories of Counseling	3	COUN 5140 - Statistics and Research	3
COUN 5120 - Psychopathology	3	COUN 5210 - Multicultural Counseling	3
COUN 5125 - Legal and Ethical Issues	3	COUN 5130 - Lifespan Development	3
COUN 5205 - Foundations of clinical mental health counseling	3	COUN 5900 - Practicum	3

<b>YEAR 2 COURSES</b>			
<b>FALL</b>	<b>CREDIT</b>	<b>SPRING</b>	<b>CREDIT</b>
COUN 5215 - Group Counseling	3	COUN 5225 – Career Counseling	3
COUN 5220 - Couples and Family Counseling	3	COUN 5230 - Substance Abuse Counseling	3
COUN 55XX - Elective	3	COUN 55XX - Elective	3
COUN 55XX - Elective	3	COUN 55XX - Elective	3
COUN 5901 - Internship I	3	COUN 5902 - Internship II	3
		COUN 5999 - Comprehensive Exam	0

## PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP

The field placement experience at Stockton University is divided into a three-credit practicum (COUN 5900) and up to six credits in clinical internships (COUN 5901, COUN 5902). The practicum (COUN 5900) is the student's first off-campus counseling experience. As such, it is likely to be the first time the counseling student meets with a real client and the first time the student applies the body of knowledge of the counseling profession to helping another person. During the practicum, the student counselor is steered through initial experiences of counseling with intense supervision provided by both an off-campus site supervisor, and an on-campus faculty member in group settings in a weekly class. The goal is to reach a higher level of autonomy, confidence, counseling knowledge, and skills.

The clinical internship (COUN 5901, COUN 5902) assumes that the goals of the practicum have been successfully accomplished. During the clinical internship, the student is again provided individual supervision by a qualified site supervisor and weekly group supervision by a Stockton faculty member. The goal of the clinical internship is for the student to become a confident, independent, and knowledgeable counselor, who is able to support clients and integrate her/his own skills with input from other appropriate sources. In both the practicum and the internship, students are evaluated both by their site supervisors and the supervising Stockton faculty members. The feedback from these evaluations provides useful input to guide further professional growth. Students in the program are required to complete two semesters of clinical internship.

For complete information regarding both the practicum and internship experience, including the student checklist for both, please refer to the [Clinical Handbook](#).

### KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

Faculty assess students' knowledge and skills regularly through a review of student performance on assignments designated assignments referred to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Students are expected to demonstrate a mastery level of 83% or higher on the following KPIs:

Num bers	Course	KPI Assignment	When?	Target for Students
1	COUN 5125 Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling	Professional Counselor Identity Reflection Paper	Year 1, Semester 1	83% or better
2	COUN 5205 Foundations of Mental Health Counseling	Advocacy Proposal	Year 1, Semester 1	83% or better
3	COUN 5125 Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling	Reflection Paper on counselor advocacy	Year 1, Semester 1	83% or better
4	COUN 5210: Multicultural Counseling	Cultural Immersion Assignment	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
5	COUN 5130 Lifespan	Group Presentation	Year 2, Semester 1	83% or better
6	5901/5902 Internship I/II	Internship Counselor Evaluation (Counseling, Prevention and Intervention Item 3)	Year 2, Semester 2	83% or better
7	COUN 5225 Career Counseling	Career Self-Assessment	Year 2, Semester 2	83% or better

8	COUN 5225 Career Counseling	Comprehensive Exam	Year 2, Semester 2	83% or better
9	COUN 5900: Practicum	Case Staffing & Transcription	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
10	COUN 5901/2: Internship I/II	Clinical Case Presentations	Year 2, Semesters 1/2	83% or better
11	COUN 5215: Group Counseling	Support Group Observation Paper	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
12	COUN 5215: Group Counseling	Comprehensive Exam	Year 2, Semester 2	83% or better
13	COUN 5120: Psychopathology	Diagnostic Report	Year 1, Semester 1	83% or better
14	COUN 5135: Assessment and Testing	Test Administration Interpretation Reports	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
15	COUN 5135: Assessment and Testing	Instrument Critique	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
16	COUN 5140: Statistics and Research	Article Critique	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
17	Coun 5900: Practicum	Counseling Skills Evaluation	Year 1, Semester 2	83% or better
18	COUN 5901/2: Internship I/II	Internship Counselor Evaluation	Year 2, Semesters 1/2	83% or better

## KEY PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Applicants and students in the Counseling program should develop and demonstrate key professional dispositions in the three categories: professional readiness, personal readiness, and interpersonal readiness. Students will be made aware of the dispositions and the review of the dispositions measure at orientation and at their first preceptor meeting. Faculty may identify unethical or unprofessional behaviors (e.g., violates ACA ethical standards; does not abide by university requirements) in students' functioning, provide constructive feedback to them, and require a remediation plan to address those difficulties.

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The program requires 60 credits for completion. Students will typically take a total of 20 three-credit courses to achieve that goal. Forty-eight of the 60 credits will be taken in a required core that introduces the student to mental health counseling. The remaining credits will be earned in elective courses selected from a variety of offerings. The program requires students to take and pass a comprehensive exam prior to graduation.

## GRADING SYSTEM

Grades awarded in graduate courses at Stockton are assigned by the following chart. Students must successful pass course work with a B or better in order to complete the graduation requirement of a 3.0. Quality point equivalencies are:

A	=	4.0	C	=	2.0
A-	=	3.7	C-	=	1.7
B+	=	3.3	D+	=	1.3

B	=	3.0	D	=	1.0
B-	=	2.7	D-	=	0.7
C+	=	2.3	F	=	0.0

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

Each student must take a final comprehensive examination. To be eligible, a candidate must (1) have earned a cumulative average of 3.0, (2) will have completed all program requirements by the end of the semester in which he/she is taking the exam, (3) be enrolled in the last semester of studies, and (4) have cleared all “Incomplete” and “In Progress” grades for completed semesters. The examination is administered once a year (March/April) and assesses the students’ ability to synthesize the knowledge and skills required to complete the graduate program. In the registration period prior to the final semester of studies, students should enroll in the non-credit COUN (5999) Comprehensive Exam.

Comprehensive Examination Preparation Guidelines are distributed to students during the practicum experience. Currently the four-hour comprehensive examination consists of 120 (multiple-choice) questions and two comprehensive essay questions. Students are permitted two (2) attempts to successfully pass this examination. Students will be notified of the need to attempt the comprehensive exam within one week of taking the exam and will be allowed one additional attempt prior to the end of the term. Students who are unsuccessful in passing their comprehensive exam will be dismissed from the program. Students may appeal the outcome as per the University Appeal-Graduate Policy listed below:

## PROGRAM COMPLETION TIMELINE

Students must complete all aspects of the program within six years of matriculation, not including time spent on school-approved leave of absence. Please see the *University Bulletin* for details on the leave of absence policy or refer to the section “Leave of Absence” found below. Students who do not complete all of their graduate work over the six years of matriculation will be dismissed from the program. Students who are preparing for the comprehensive exam but not taking any classes must remain on Maintenance of Matriculation Status.

## GRADUATION

Students review their graduation status with their preceptors in their second year of the program. All students who intend to apply for graduation must do so at the beginning of the semester they will graduate, using the online system on the go portal.

## **C. REGULATIONS AND POLICIES**

### **INCOMPLETE GRADES**

A student who is unable to complete coursework for a significant reason, such as an illness or emergency, may be given a grade of (I) Incomplete at the discretion of the professor. The student must work with the professor to fill out the Incomplete agreement form (given by the professor) and arrange the completion of coursework in a timely manner. The form must be approved by the Dean prior to approval of the incomplete. The I grade must be changed prior to applying for graduation.

### **ACADEMIC APPEAL POLICY**

If students have a grievance related to a course in the program, they are required to:

- Step #1: Discuss the matter with the faculty member or faculty advisor directly and attempt to resolve the problem.
- Step #2: Write a letter or email to the Program Director only if Step #1 has been unsuccessful.
- Step #3: Contact the Dean of the School of Social and Behavioral Sciences if the problem has not been resolved through steps #1 and #2.
- Step #4: If the dean is unable to resolve the matter, the student may appeal to the Office of the Provost by submitting a letter and other written materials presenting a strong rationale and compelling evidence that legitimate grounds for a grade appeal exist. This appeal process must be initiated no later than three months after the date of grade posting for the term in which the grade was originally assigned. Written appeals will be reviewed by the Provost or his/her designee and in those cases where appropriate, will be assigned to the Advisory Board on Grades and Standing. The Advisory Board on Grades and Standing will review the matter, including hearing testimony and evidence from both the instructor and the student. This Board will make a recommendation to the Provost, whose decision is final.

Grade determination is the prerogative of the instructor and will not be reviewed unless there is compelling evidence of inequitable treatment, discrimination, or procedural irregularity. Students should consult the university bulletin for further details about grade appeals.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Academic honesty is a very serious issue. Unless specifically designated otherwise, all work is expected to be the student's own, independent effort. When in doubt about how to complete an assignment properly, students need to consult with the appropriate faculty member.

In cases involving charges of academic dishonesty, [University policy](#) calls for procedures with up to six steps, beginning with the faculty member determining alleged academic dishonesty. It is the responsibility of each student to review the policy. Those who are found to be guilty of academic dishonesty may face failure of coursework.



## **STUDENT EVALUATION**

Evaluations of student knowledge, skills and professional dispositions are ongoing throughout a student's time in the program. This takes place in each course, during clinical supervision, and during faculty meetings. Core faculty regularly consult with supervisors and adjunct faculty about student progress and performance. Additionally, the faculty conduct an annual formal review of each student. In this review, faculty will consider how students are meeting academic and non-academic expectations. The purposes of the reviews are to assist students in assessing their own development, to support student growth, and to ascertain the possibility that a student is inappropriately placed in the program. At any time during a student's enrollment, a formal evaluation may be conducted, and individual meetings requested by the faculty and/or individual student to discuss expectations and performance.

## **WRITTEN ENDORSEMENT**

The faculty will recommend students who have completed all necessary requirements to NBCC so that they may be considered for the NCE examination. Once the endorsement and verification is complete, the student will be responsible for registering for the examination. In addition, students may request endorsement or recommendation for employment, given they have completed all requirements and are a strong candidate for the position.

## **REMEDATION AGREEMENTS**

Students are assessed throughout the program across course objectives and key professional dispositions. If a student is not meeting those goals and objectives, the procedures for retention and remediation are enacted. One faculty member is designated to schedule a meeting with the student of concern and then complete the **remediation template form** along with the student's preceptor. The remediation plan must be signed by the faculty member, the preceptor, and the director. The faculty member who initiated the plan will follow up with the student on a weekly basis until the concerns are resolved.

## **STUDENT RETENTION POLICY**

At any point if a faculty member determines that a student's behavior may be a violation of graduate student conduct, academic honesty policies, or deficient in key performance indicators, the faculty follows the procedures indicated in these policies to intervene with the situation. Such decisions may be made in consultation with the Director, program faculty members, and representatives from the Division of Student Affairs and/or Academic Affairs.

If a student's behavior may be a violation of any of the ethical standards or university policies, the following steps are taken (according to the student's right to due process):

1. The faculty member who has become aware of a problem meets with the student and offers suggestions for possible changes in the student's behavior. The faculty member will ask an additional SOBL personnel or faculty to attend the meeting.
2. The faculty member will write a letter to the Director concerning the meeting with the

student and copy the student on the letter.

3. If after the meeting with the student, the student's behavior is determined to constitute a violation that could result in suspension or dismissal from the program, the Director will appoint a retention committee and collect all relevant materials prior to determining a date for the Retention Committee meeting. The Retention Committee will be composed of three faculty members to investigate all aspects of the situation and to make recommendations concerning the student's eligibility to remain in the program and, if permitted to remain in the program under what conditions. The student is always informed, in writing, of these proceedings.
4. The Retention Committee will only be convened within either a fall or spring academic term. The Retention Committee will complete its investigation and provide its report to the program faculty within 30 days of the committee's appointment. In the event the committee cannot convene because of an academic break (e.g. summer or winter break), the committee will convene within 14 days of the start of the next academic term.
5. In the interest of protecting the health, safety and/or welfare of the University, or any member of the University community, or any off-site activities associated with their academic program, the program may temporarily suspend a student from the program until the proceedings of the Retention Committee have been completed.
6. The Retention Committee's report, including recommendations and/or requirements, is presented to the program faculty, who are then responsible for implementing the recommendations.
7. When the faculty members have acted upon the retention committee's report, the Director and the student's preceptor meet with the student to convey the program's decision(s) and/or recommendations. The Director and the student preceptor subsequently monitor the student's progress in carrying out the program's recommendation for the student. If this student's Retention Committee recommends that the student no longer continue in the program, the program will dismiss the student.

If the student is not satisfied with the student retention policy, he or she may pursue an appeal by following the student affairs policies:

<https://stockton.edu/policy-procedure/documents/procedures/2019.pdf>

## **GATEKEEPING**

Gatekeeping is the legal authority and responsibility of counselor educators to determine whether a student or potential student has the capability and willingness to uphold the counseling profession's standards of care and ethical protocol. Counseling professional organizations expect counseling training programs to screen and monitor competencies of student counselors. The purposes of gatekeeping in the counselor education profession revolve around ensuring that a counselor-in-training is suitably competent and prepared to effectively and ethically interact with clients, colleagues, and the community in a professionally appropriate manner. Counselor educators must be mindful of any behavior, characteristic, or disposition, which may negatively impact the work of a counselor-in-training. Ultimately, the protection of the public and the profession is the goal.

Our *Student Retention Policy* (see previous section above) defines the expected Academic and Non-Academic Performance Standards. A student's acceptance into the program does not guarantee his or her fitness to remain in that program. As counselor educators, we have an ethical and professional responsibility to protect current and future clients/students, the profession, and our program by insuring to the best of our ability that all students consistently meet the professional and ethical standards of the field. The faculty is responsible for assuring that only those students who continue to meet program and professional expectations are allowed to continue in the program. Our goal is to be transparent about this review of student performance.

## **APPEALING AN ACADEMIC AND/OR A NON-ACADEMIC DISMISSAL**

An academic dismissal can be appealed by a student to the Office of the Provost via [academic.appeals@stockton.edu](mailto:academic.appeals@stockton.edu). The Office of the Provost will hear cases of dismissal based solely on procedural grounds. The Dean of the school where the graduate program resides will consider appeals of dismissal based on non-academic grounds. Appeals of non-academic dismissals will be considered based solely on procedural grounds.

## **CLASSROOM EVALUATIONS**

The program and University value effective classroom instruction, and believe that one way for classroom teaching to be improved is for course instructors to receive feedback on teaching methods and activities. Therefore, program policy stipulates that faculty members, and others who teach courses for the program, must obtain student's evaluations of their teaching. In order to obtain student's evaluations of teaching, the program uses the University-wide online student evaluation form, the IDEA Student Evaluation instrument. Instructions for the completion of evaluations will be provided by the faculty member teaching the course.

## **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended and Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, students with a documented disability and need accommodations, are encouraged to register with the Learning Access Program (LAP). Registration for support services is strictly voluntary and on a confidential basis. Support services provided by LAP are meant to help students devise strategies for meeting the University's educational demands and to foster independence, responsibility, and self-advocacy.

--The Learning Access Program can be found on the main Galloway campus in room J-204 or online at [www.stockton.edu/LAP](http://www.stockton.edu/LAP). Please call 609-652-4988 or send an email to [LAP@Stockton.edu](mailto:LAP@Stockton.edu) for more information. Once you have received an accommodation letter from LAP, please contact your instructor to privately discuss your needs as soon as practical to ensure that reasonable accommodations are implemented.

## **STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES**

The Wellness Center is on the main Galloway campus. The Wellness Center offers basic health services to students, access to a nutritionist and health educator. Health Services personnel can be reached at (609) 652-4701 in WQ-108. The Counseling Center is located in J-204 on the main Galloway campus and offers counseling services in person for

students at the Galloway campus, as well as telehealth services. The Counseling Center provides individual counseling, group counseling, education and outreach programs, as well as crisis intervention services. Students may contact Counseling services via phone at 609-652-4722.

## **PROGRAM DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION POLICIES**

The Stockton faculty are committed to facilitating honest and respectful discussions regarding different points of view pertaining to values and cultural issues. This is increasingly important as the diversity of our population continues to change and issues of difference continue to rise in the counseling field. Further, the University provides information regarding their [commitment to diversity](#).

Consistent with the American Counseling Association's *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*, the Counseling program requires that its students commit themselves to respecting the dignity and promoting the welfare of, as well as affirming individuals from diverse populations.

The program further recognizes the culturally competent counselor, or counselor-in-training, is one who is actively (a) in the process of becoming aware of his or her own assumptions about human behavior, biases, preconceived notions, and personal limitations, (b) attempting to understand the worldview of his or her culturally different clients, and (c) in the process of developing and practicing appropriate, relevant, and sensitive intervention strategies and skills in working with his or her culturally different clients.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Although the university has a Maintenance of Matriculation requirement for graduate students, a Leave of Absence may be granted, normally for medical reasons. A Leave of Absence is the process of leaving school temporarily for up to one year, generally used for family medical leave or military service. A Leave of Absence is valid for one year and is renewable yearly, for a maximum of five years, by notifying the Office of the Registrar in writing before the Leave expires. Students should request a Leave of Absence Form from the Office of the Registrar, and submit it to that office

## **RESEARCH AND ETHICS**

If faculty and/or student research or scholarship involves contact with human or animal subjects, the research project requires pre-approval from the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) before conducting the research. In addition to the IRB guidelines, Stockton's counseling faculty and students must adhere to the American Counseling Association's code of ethics regarding research. The complete code of ethics may be found at the following website: [https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/2014-code-of-ethics.pdf?sfvrsn=2d58522c\\_4](https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/ethics/2014-code-of-ethics.pdf?sfvrsn=2d58522c_4)

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

In the event of severe weather or other types of emergencies, check the university's website for information on class cancellations. Area radio and television stations may also announce the status of the university. Students may "opt-in" to the Emergency Text Messaging System which enables select administrators to make emergency announcements. Students may access the text alert signup on the Stockton Portal.

## **D. PROFESSIONAL ISSUES**

### **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The program faculty members recognize that students' financial resources are limited. Therefore, the faculty do NOT require that you become a member of one or more professional organizations pertinent to your professional goals. However, the faculty believe that membership in professional organizations is an important aspect of professionalism, and therefore strongly encourage you to join professional organizations if you have the financial resources to do so. A listing of some of the pertinent professional organizations may be found here:

American Counseling Association (ACA)  
American College Counseling Association (ACCA)  
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)  
Association for Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Bisexual Issues in Counseling (AGLBIC)  
Military and Government Counseling Association (MGCA) formerly (ACEG)  
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)  
American Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)  
Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)  
Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)  
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) Association  
for Adult Development and Aging (AADA)  
Association for Spiritual, Ethical and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)  
Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)  
International Association of Addiction and Offender Counselors (IAAOC)  
National Employment Counselors Association (NECA)  
National Career Development Association (NCDA)  
Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC)  
Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)  
Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (ACAC)  
Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC)  
International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC)

### **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE**

The counseling faculty believes it is prudent in today's working environment, and therefore requires, students (as professionals-in-training) to obtain professional liability insurance before beginning their practicum and internship experiences. For students enrolled in the program, professional liability insurance can be obtained (at no cost) through student membership in

professional organizations such as ACA. Note: Fees for professional liability insurance are waived only while one has student status in specified professional organizations, thereafter such fees are often required in addition to membership fees. If a student would like to talk about professional liability insurance in general, he or she is welcome to contact their preceptor, or the Internship coordinator. Students who wish to obtain specific information about professional liability insurance can do so by contacting the membership service of the professional association in which they wish to join.

## **PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS**

A “certification” is a professional credential awarded by a certifying agency to persons who have applied for the certification and who have met the eligibility criteria for the certification. Most professional certifying agencies are national (or international) in origin and scope and thus are distinguished from state-level certifying agencies.

The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC) is the professional certifying agency for counselors. Professionals who attain certification by the NBCC may refer to themselves as National Certified Counselors (NCCs). The NCC designation reflects a “generic” certification. That is, this certification is available to counselors who have met what are considered to be the general, minimum academic and experiential preparation standards appropriate for all persons who refer to themselves as “counselors,” regardless of individual professional specializations.

As part of the requirements to obtain NBCC certification applicants must take the National Counselor Exam. The exam is generally offered in April, a few weeks after the comprehensive exam. Students who will be graduating in that Spring semester are generally able to qualify for the exam. More information is provided about the NBCC exam during the last year of study.