

---

**DEPARTMENT OF  
COUNSELOR EDUCATION  
(CNE)**

**COUNSELING STUDENT HANDBOOK**

---

(Revised April 9, 2015)

**For Students Admitted for the  
2015-2016 Academic Year**

*M.S.Ed. in Counseling*

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

Western Illinois University - Quad Cities  
3300 River Drive  
Moline, IL 61265  
phone: 309/762-1876  
fax: 309/762-6989  
[www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/index.php](http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/index.php)



**WESTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY**  
*Quad Cities*



WESTERN  
ILLINOIS  
UNIVERSITY  
*Quad Cities*

## Department of Counselor Education Counseling Student Handbook

*Welcome to the Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University. This document is designed to provide you, the master's level student, with information about the personal and professional journey upon which you are about to embark.*

*This handbook is to serve as a supplement to the Graduate Catalog and The Professional Counselor: Portfolio, Competencies, Performance Guidelines and Assessment (4<sup>th</sup> edition). It is your responsibility as student or prospective student to become familiar with the contents of the Graduate Catalog under which you will be entering graduate work, the expectations set out in The Professional Counselor (4<sup>th</sup> edition) and the contents of this Counseling Student Handbook. To confirm that you have received, read, and understood the responsibilities, policies, and procedures outlined in this manual, please sign the Agreement Contract at the end of this handbook and submit it to your advisor for inclusion in your student file at new student orientation. Please note that the requirements from the Department of Counselor Education are subject to change at any time based on changes in Department, University, licensure, and/or accreditation standards. You may be required to adhere to some of these changes.*

*If you should have changes in your contact information (name, address, cell, home and/or work phone numbers) at any time during your program, please contact the Department of Counselor Education at 309-762-1876 to update your file.*

*Good luck on your journey as a counselor-in-training.*

*Sincerely,  
Western Illinois University  
Department of Counselor Education*

*Note. The policies, procedures, and information in this Handbook are subject to change.*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	5
Accreditation and Approval.....	5
Our Vision.....	5
Our Mission.....	5
Our Philosophy.....	5
Program Objectives.....	6
School Counseling Program.....	6
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program.....	6
Criminal Background Investigation Policy.....	6
Field Experience Disclosure Form.....	11
Departmental Policies.....	12
WIU E-mail.....	12
Counselor Education Department Listserv.....	12
Professional Comportment.....	12
Ethical Behavior Statement.....	13
Statement of Expectations.....	13
Academic Dishonesty Policy.....	13
Grade Appeal Policy.....	14
Personal, Professional, and Academic Dispositions.....	14
Departmental Continuous Review Procedures.....	16
Review Policy.....	17
Remediation and Retention Procedures.....	18
Remediation Policy and Procedures including the Professional Development Plan.....	18
Retention Policy and Procedures.....	19
Retention Hearing Procedures.....	21
Advising and Degree Plan.....	23
Curriculum.....	23
School Counseling Option.....	24
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Option.....	24
Course Offerings by Term (subject to change).....	24
Thesis.....	25

Field Based Experiences.....	26
Completion of Clinical Courses.....	27
Professional Liability Insurance.....	27
Exit Requirements and Graduation.....	27
Application for Graduation.....	27
Comprehensive Examination Policies.....	28
Commencement and Conferring of Degrees.....	32
Certification and Licensure.....	32
Endorsement Policy.....	33
Professional Organizations.....	34
Student Organizations.....	34
Additional Information.....	36
Inactive Status.....	36
Financial Assistance.....	36
Appendix.....	37
Helpful Hints.....	38
Department of Counselor Education Faculty and Staff.....	40
Department of Counselor Education Agreement.....	41

## **INTRODUCTION**

This *Counseling Student Handbook* is intended to provide graduate students enrolled in the Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University with basic information about the Department. The faculty has created courses and related experiences, which conform to accepted practice in Counselor Education and are consistent with our accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). Students may select from two program options: School Counseling or Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

## **ACCREDITATIONS AND APPROVAL**

1. Council for Accreditation for Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)
2. National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)
3. Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)
4. North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools

## **OUR VISION**

The Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University – Quad Cities will be the leader in educational quality, opportunity, and affordability among its peers.

## **OUR MISSION**

By enacting our values and supporting the synergy between instruction, research, creativity, and service, the Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University – Quad Cities prepares a socially responsible, diverse student, faculty, and staff, population to lead in the global society.

The Department of Counselor Education prepares counseling professionals in school counseling and clinical mental health counseling.

## **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

The curriculum, aligned with our mission:

1. Emphasizes applied and conceptual skills;
2. Affirms diversity of values, ideas, and persons; and
3. Promotes educational excellence and ethical commitment.

The faculty provides a challenging and supportive environment that encourages personal growth and development.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

### School Counseling Program

Students preparing to work as school counselors will demonstrate the professional knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to promote academic, career, and personal/social development of all **K-12** students. See **CACREP Accreditation Manual 2016 Standards** for additional information.

([www.cacrep.org](http://www.cacrep.org))

### Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program

Students preparing to work as clinical mental health counselors will demonstrate the professional knowledge, skills, and practices necessary to address a wide variety of circumstances within the clinical mental health counseling context. See **CACREP Accreditation Manual 2016 Standards** for additional information. ([www.cacrep.org](http://www.cacrep.org))

## CRIMINAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION POLICY

(required of all students)

### Policies Regarding Criminal Background Investigations

**As a part of the admission process to the Department of Counselor Education, all students are required to undergo a criminal background investigation, as many school/agencies require a criminal background check before considering students for clinical field experiences.** Students offered admission to the Department of Counselor Education are expected to comply with the Illinois State Police and FBI fingerprint background investigation requirements as set forth by the Department of Counselor Education, Background Investigation Policy. **Students who do not comply with the policy will not be allowed to register and/or attend *classes* in the Department of Counselor Education.**

As of August 1, 2011, the Department of Counselor Education requires a fingerprint-based Illinois State Police and FBI criminal background investigation for all students entering into a degree program, field experience, or courses where you have direct exposure to potential clients. Questions regarding this policy and procedures should be directed to the Chairperson of the Department of Counselor Education (309)762-1876.

Students may be prohibited from completing fieldwork, by their field placement site, if background investigations reveal certain criminal offenses, arrests, and/or convictions.

**It is not the responsibility of the Department of Counselor Education, the College of Education and Human Services, or Western Illinois University to guarantee that students pass criminal background checks. It is not the responsibility of the Department of Counselor Education to locate a site that does not require criminal background checks. If a student fails a criminal background check, or if a site fails to place a student because of the results of a criminal background check, it is not the responsibility of the Department of Counselor Education, the College, or this University to locate an alternative site that does not require criminal background checks.**

A student who fails to pass a background check may not be able to complete the program or obtain licensure as a professional counselor or as a school counselor. The Department of Counselor Education is not responsible for a student's inability to complete the program, obtain licensure or certification.

### **Procedures for Criminal Background Investigation**

The Department of Counselor Education has contracted with the Illinois Bureau Henry Stark Regional Office of Education (ROE) for the completion of criminal background investigations in Illinois. Applicants invited into the program must complete an Illinois State Police and FBI background fingerprint investigation through this ROE prior to the Mandatory CNED New Student Orientation. Invited applicants will be provided with an electronic copy of the required Authorization Form to initiate the Criminal History and Background Check in the email containing the invitation for admission into the program and notification of the Orientation.

Invited applicants must complete a background investigation through the Illinois Bureau Henry Stark Regional Office of Education (ROE) in Atkinson, IL. Background investigations are conducted 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The cost for a background investigation at this office is \$50.00 (cash or money order only (no debit/credit cards). Cost is subject to change.

It is located at the following address: 107 S. State St. Atkinson, IL 61235 309.936.7890

**No other location may be used for this process.** Nor may prior background checks be used in lieu of this process. Invited applicants must complete the investigation at the Illinois Bureau Henry Stark Regional Office of Education (ROE) location. Invited applicants must complete the Authorization Form that is attached to your invitation into the program. You must provide one form of Government-issued ID (e.g., Drivers License or US Passport—a School ID Card is NOT an acceptable form of identification). You may be required to fill out additional paperwork at the BHS ROE. You should CALL AHEAD to ensure someone will be available to do the printing. Same day appointments are available. You are responsible for the total cost of the background check.

It is important for students to be aware that some schools/agencies may have additional requirements for students prior to acceptance at their field site. As a result, additional investigations and costs may be necessary dependent upon field experience requirements. Students are responsible for any costs incurred by additional requirements of schools/agencies.

### **Department of Counselor Education Procedure for Criminal Background Investigations**

1. Invited applicants will receive their Authorization Form as an email attachment with their invitation into the program.
2. Invited applicants complete Applicant Information on the Authorization Form, secure appropriate identification, and payment method.
3. Invited applicants take the Authorization Form, Government issued identification, and payment to the approved site to initiate background investigation.
4. Invited applicants must bring the completed Authorization Form (with verification that they have submitted their fingerprints to the ROE in Atkinson, IL) to the Mandatory CNED New Student Orientation.
5. You will be contacted by the department program coordinator once results are available.



6. If there are no convictions and/or concerns you will be asked to pick up your results. Those with convictions and/or concerns will be required to meet with the department chairperson to discuss their results and possible implications.

7. Invited applicants will not be formally admitted into the program until they have completed procedure step 6.

8. Students may share the results with each school/agency that he/she will be completing observations or field work.

9. Additional background checks may be requested at the discretion of the Department.

### **Department of Counselor Education Policy/Procedure for Criminal Background Investigations**

Upon the completion and receipt of criminal background investigation the following may occur:

1. In cases where the student's record is clear, a student's file will reflect that the investigation was completed and deemed satisfactory. No further action is required on the part of the student.

2. If information that may negatively affect licensure/certification or field placements is noted:

a. Invited applicants will meet with the Program Coordinator to review and discuss the results of the background check. The handling of all information will be strictly confidential and will adhere to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

b. The Program Coordinator will discuss with you the potential difficulties that may occur from a positive background check and help you plan accordingly. You will sign a document indicating that this discussion was held and that your field placement site will be notified that there were conviction(s) on the background check.

c. If the information presents potential difficulty for licensure/certification, field placement, or the safety of faculty, staff, or other student, the Coordinator of the Department may meet, in

conjunction with the Department Personnel Committee, (the DPC) for further review.

Information regarding student rights and responsibilities can be found at the following site:

<http://www.wiu.edu/provost/student/>

3. All students (degree and non-degree), regardless of the initial criminal background investigation, will be required to complete a Field Experience Disclosure Form prior to the semesters of clinical/school field experiences. The forms will be completed during the last week of the semester prior to enrolling in CN 544 Counseling Children and Adolescents, CN 593 Counseling Practicum, and CN 597 & 598 Counseling Internships. The disclosure status form will indicate whether or not a student's criminal background status has changed and what changes occurred. Non-degree students must also complete a full criminal background check (please see Program Coordinator and/or CNED website for Authorization Form) prior to taking the above noted courses.

**Department of Counselor Education  
Western Illinois University  
Field Experience Disclosure Form**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print or type)

I understand that withholding information or giving false information may make me ineligible for admission to school/clinical field experiences, or continuation in the Department of Counselor Education. I certify that all information is true, correct, and complete. Falsification of any part of this document may result in automatic dismissal from the Department of Counselor Education.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) **I affirm that since completing the initial background investigation for acceptance into the Department of Counselor Education on \_\_\_\_\_ I have not**  
(date of initial background check) **incurred any criminal charges, convictions from prior charges, sentences from prior charges, warrants of arrest, investigation for possible criminal charges, or other activities that may prevent me from engaging in school/clinical field work or working with potential clients.**

OR

\_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) **I have incurred the following changes since my initial background check that was conducted on \_\_\_\_\_:**  
(date of initial background check)

**Change 1:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Change 2:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Change 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other pertinent information:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I am enrolling in the following course for the next term (circle appropriate course(s)):**

**CN 544      CN 593      CN 597      CN 598**

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES

### WIU E-mail

The WIU email address is the **only** way the University and the Department will communicate with students regarding schedules, registration times, grades, announcements, and other important information. As such, it is imperative that students activate their WIU ECOM email account in order to receive this important information. The directions for activation of your account are on the Department webpage or call the UCSS helpdesk 309/298-2704.

### Department of Counselor Education Listserv

All students will be added to the Counselor Education Listserv, which is used to communicate advocacy and public policy information, topic discussion, educational exchanges, and other relevant information. Additionally, this is a medium for the department chairperson and faculty to post upcoming schedules, changes, reminders, and important department announcements. Students are responsible for checking their WIU e-mail accounts on a regular basis (at least twice per week) and being aware of information presented through this means of communication.

### Professional Comportment

Professional comportment is a highly professionalized standard to which the Department of Counselor Education requires strict adherence during class time and counseling sessions; and in some cases, outside the classroom. Students are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to their working environment and assigned responsibilities. The faculty of the Department of Counselor Education reserves the right to establish, identify, and enforce guidelines for dress and appearance. Students who work or train in clinical or school settings should consult with their supervisor, advisor, or faculty about attire specific to the environment. Some guidelines for appropriate professional dress attire are:

- No cut off t-shirts/ muscle shirts/ tank tops
- No sagging pants or shorts
- No torn, frayed, or holey shirts, shorts, or pants
- No head apparel (hats, scarves, bandanas, baseball caps, etc.)
- No see-through or revealing garments
- No tube tops, halters, or bare midriffs
- No backless dresses or shirt

## **Ethical Behavior Statement**

All students are expected to adhere to the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association. An ethical violation is viewed by the faculty of the Department of Counselor Education as a serious offense and may result in dismissal from the program. The Department uses the latest version of the ACA Code of Ethics. Additional ethical requirements are listed in individual course syllabi. It is the student's responsibility to be knowledgeable and act in accordance with these standards. [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)

## **Statement of Expectations**

The Department of Counselor Education is charged with the dual task of nurturing the development of counselors-in-training and ensuring quality client care. In order to fulfill these dual responsibilities faculty must evaluate students based on their academic, professional, and personal qualities. A student's progress in their program may be interrupted for failure to comply with academic standards or if a student's interpersonal or emotional status interferes with being able to provide ethical services to clients. For example, in order to ensure proper training and client care, a counselor-in-training must abide by relevant ethical codes and demonstrate professional knowledge, technical and interpersonal skills, professional attitudes, and professional character. These factors are evaluated based on one's academic performance and one's ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, and accept personal responsibility, and be able to express feelings effectively and appropriately (**including interactions using electronic and social media platforms**). Any student deemed by their instructor, supervisor, or other Departmental Personnel to be exhibiting inappropriate, disruptive, or offensive behavior during class or on field placement, holding side conversations, or exhibiting attitudes inconsistent with that of a counseling professional may be dismissed immediately from class and/or their field placement and may not return until remediation has been completed.

## **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty at the graduate level is considered a serious offense and may result in dismissal from a graduate program. For a complete statement of the WIU Graduate School's Academic Dishonesty policy, please see [www.wiu.edu/grad/resources/guidelines.php](http://www.wiu.edu/grad/resources/guidelines.php)

## **Grade Appeal Policy**

Western Illinois University's Grade Appeal Policy can be found at [www.wiu.edu/policies/gradeapp.php#rntwo](http://www.wiu.edu/policies/gradeapp.php#rntwo)

### **PERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL, AND ACADEMIC DISPOSITIONS**

The Department of Counselor Education believes that a professional counselor is strongly committed to the counseling profession and possesses personality characteristics that enable him/her to establish and ethically maintain a responsible therapeutic relationship that helps facilitate client growth. For a complete list of personal and professional dispositions, please see the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics and *The Professional Counselor: Portfolio, Competencies, Performance Guidelines and Assessment*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, (Engels, Barrio Minton, & Ray, 2010).

The skills of a professional counselor include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### **Maintain Good Mental Health**

1. Expresses a clear understanding and ability to manage own personal needs, values, strengths, areas of growth, feelings, and motivations that may impinge upon effectiveness as a counselor.
2. Demonstrates a constructive attitude towards feedback from faculty, supervisors, and other students and incorporates feedback to make appropriate changes in behavior and attitude.
3. Experiences self as a person of worth, dignity, and self-sufficiency.
4. Remains aware of potential unrealistic expectations placed on self and on others and makes efforts to respond effectively
5. Develops an awareness of unresolved personal issues and the potential impact on others and shows a willingness to resolve those issues through counseling, when recommended or required.
6. Stays mentally prepared to deal with the reality that they are not always going to be liked by others.
7. Maintains the mental maturity and courage to help clients (actual and practice) explore painful, sensitive, and difficult issues.

### **Remain Professionally Competent**

1. Understands personal and professional strengths and limitations.
2. Practices self-discipline and presents a professional demeanor at all times.
3. Effectively manages personal assets, such as knowledge, skills, energy, health, and time.
4. Communicates and interacts with others in an appropriately assertive manner that demonstrates emotional awareness, emotional control, and mutual respect.
5. Works collaboratively with professional and paraprofessional colleagues (including faculty, staff and students).
6. Acknowledges counselor trainee misperceptions, mistakes and limitations as well as astute insights, successes, and potential.

### **Academic Retention Standards**

In addition to the requirements listed in the *Western Illinois University Graduate Studies Catalog* for Satisfactory Progress, the following requirements apply to counselor education students:

1. Students are expected to demonstrate a commitment to achievement and academic proficiency mandated of graduate studies.
2. A graduate degree in counseling will not be awarded to a student who earns grades of C, D, F, or U in more than six semester hours of graduate level work.
3. Students must earn an A or B in the following courses: CN 500, CN 549, CN 581, CN 593, CN 597, CN 598 and CN 600. Students may repeat a course one time to achieve the minimum grade required. Students must have a minimum of a 3.0 grade point average in order to enroll in CN 593: Counseling Practicum and CN 597/598: Counseling Internship.

## DEPARTMENTAL CONTINUOUS REVIEW PROCEDURES

As trainers of professional counselors, the faculty of Counselor Education expects prospective counselors to be concerned about other people, to be emotionally stable and psychologically well-adjusted, to be effective in interpersonal relationships, and to be able to receive and give constructive feedback. Further, we expect students to be committed to personal growth and professional development through opportunities such as those provided in course work, group labs, supervision, self-selected readings, and personal therapy.

The Department of Counselor Education believes that it is ethically imperative that counselors be willing to do in their own lives what they ask their clients to do. Therefore, the Faculty has an ethical obligation to students, the profession, and the eventual consumers of counseling services provided by CNED graduates, to monitor not only students' academic progress, but also the personal and professional dispositions of students which will impact their performance in the field. These factors are evaluated based on student's academic performance and ability to convey warmth, genuineness, respect, and empathy in interactions with clients, classmates, staff, and faculty. Students should demonstrate the ability to accept and integrate feedback, be aware of their impact on others, accept personal responsibility, and be able to express feelings appropriately and resolve conflicts effectively.

The CNED faculty believes that participating as a client in individual or group counseling can be both a growth experience for graduate students and a significant educational aspect of training to prepare mental health professionals. Experience as a client in personal counseling is, therefore, strongly recommended for students in the Department of Counselor Education. In some circumstances, professional counseling may be a requirement of students in a degree program (see Professional Development Plans). Individual or group counseling should be conducted by a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, or a Licensed Clinical Psychologist. Personal counseling may be required by the Department at any time for the student to continue in the training. The student has the right to choose his/her own licensed professional from those listed above for this requirement.



## **Review Policy**

Throughout the student's matriculation in the Department of Counselor Education's programs, a continuous process of advisement and assessment occurs. As a result of this process, both students and faculty members are provided many opportunities to assess the student's compatibility with the program and the student's progress towards completing a graduate degree. The Department of Counselor Education faculty hopes that the result of this review process will produce a high level of congruence between the goals of the student and the objectives of the programs. The continuous review process occurs in the following formats.

Academic Evaluation: Each student is evaluated in the traditional manner through grades. Because several of the core classes require successful completion at an "A" or "B" level in order to be admitted to the next level of courses, students should consult the Graduate Catalog for specific pre-requisite information. The grade of incomplete "I" in a clinical course must be removed *prior* to enrollment in the next sequential clinical course. A student who receives the grade of "C" in a clinical course, CN 500, CN 581, or CN 593 may re-enroll in the course one time and have the retake grade computed into the overall grade point average. Students receiving a grade of C or below in more than six (6) hours of coursework will be removed from the program.

Personal and Professional Dispositions Evaluation: Each student is evaluated by the faculty on a regular basis and provided with information about that evaluation through instructor response, personal interview, and formal, written notification. This evaluation provides students with an assessment of their progress, addressing strengths and weaknesses, encouraging improvement, and offering plans for remediation.

Annual Review: Once yearly, the Department of Counselor Education faculty conducts a review of all students admitted to the Department. Academic progress is assessed; students' evaluation on the criteria for admission to the department is reviewed; personal and professional dispositions are evaluated; viewpoints and information are shared; and recommendations are made at this review. Students are notified of satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress in writing. Students whose progress is unsatisfactory are directed to meet with their advisors to discuss resolution of problem areas.

*See student evaluation and remediation requirements in: 2009 Standards Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs; ACA Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association; and Ethical Guidelines for Counseling Supervisors of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision.*

## REMEDIATION AND RETENTION PROCEDURES

The student Remediation and Retention Policies of the Department of Counselor Education enable the faculty to formally monitor student progress. If, at any time, a faculty member raises questions about a student's suitability for the program, believes that the student has failed to demonstrate the required skill level or has knowledge of a serious incident of unethical behavior, the faculty member may request an interview and review of the student's retention in the program. Students also have an ethical responsibility to act upon a situation involving perceived concerning behavior on the part of their fellow students or instructors.

### **Remediation Policy and Procedures including the Professional Development Plan**

1. When a faculty member has concerns regarding a student's academic, personal and/or professional dispositions, (see *The Professional Counselor: Portfolio, Competencies, Performance Guidelines and Assessment*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, (Engels, Barrio-Minton, & Ray, 2010), a meeting will be held with the two members of the faculty, the student and the student's faculty advisor (or other faculty representative, as appropriate). During this meeting, all present will have an opportunity to address concerns. The three faculty members will constitute the Professional Development Plan committee.
2. At this meeting, a Professional Development Plan will be established to address areas of concern. The Professional Development Plan will be corrective rather than punitive, relevant to the specific areas of concern, and appropriate to the unique needs of the individual student. All Professional Development Plans will have a timeline in which expectations need to be met. Professional Development Plans will be signed by all members of the committee.
3. The Committee Chair will provide a written copy of the Professional Development Plan and a letter summarizing the meeting to the Department Chair. The student and the faculty advisor/representative will also receive copies of the letter and Professional Development Plan, with appropriate signatures.
4. The execution of the Professional Development Plan will be monitored by the Chair of the Professional Development Plan committee.

5. Upon expiration of the Professional Development Plan, the student, faculty advisor or representative and the concerned faculty member will meet to assess student progress. A letter will be sent to the Department Chair summarizing the meeting, outlining progress made and indicating what, if any, steps are to be taken to continue to monitor student progress. The student and faculty advisor/advocate will receive copies of this letter.
6. If the student has made satisfactory progress with Professional Development Plan, a letter of completion will be sent to the student from the Department Chair. If the student has not made satisfactory progress the Department Chair, in consultation with the full faculty, may choose to convene a Retention Committee for further assessment or make additional recommendations to the Professional Development Plan Committee.

### **Retention Policy and Procedures**

The student Review and Retention policy of the Department of Counselor Education enables the faculty to share information about student progress. If, at any time, a faculty member raises questions about a student's suitability for the program, believes that the student has failed to demonstrate the required skill level, despite attempts at remediation (e.g., personal therapy, or has knowledge of a serious incident of unethical behavior) the faculty member may request an interview and review of the student's retention in the program. The student also has an ethical responsibility to act upon a situation perceived involving unethical behavior on the part of their fellow students or instructors. When information is possessed that raises doubt as to the ethical behavior of professional colleagues, the Department advises students to speak first with the individual whose behavior is in question. If satisfactory resolution is not reached, then the student should speak with his/her faculty advisor or the Department Chair about the concern.

The Retention Process and Policy of the Department is as follows:

1. When a faculty member has determined that a student has breached conduct befitting a counseling graduate student, the faculty member meets with the student to inform him/her of problem areas that have come to the faculty member's attention. Suggestions for resolution of these problem areas are discussed, and the student's willingness to pursue change is assessed.

In the event that concerns are raised regarding the appropriateness of retaining the student in the Department based on perceived shortcomings, the chairperson will assign the student's advisor to meet with the student about the concerns, resolution of the problem areas, and the student's willingness to change.

2. The faculty member may also write a letter to the Department Chair concerning the meeting with the student. If so, the student should also be notified, in writing, of this action.
3. If the Department Chair believes the student's problem to be serious enough, he/she appoints a Retention Committee to investigate the situation. A Retention Committee is composed of two current, regular Department faculty members and the student's advisor.
4. The student whose behavior is in question is notified, in writing, of the committee appointment. At this step the *Counselor Education Department Student Hearing Procedures* become effective. The student is provided a copy of these procedures. As soon as is reasonably practical, a hearing date will be set. The student will be notified of the date, time, and place by the Retention Committee chair.
5. If the student withdraws from the department or university, the Retention Committee will meet without the student's participation and will make a recommendation to the chair on whether the student, if he or she reapplies, should be readmitted to the program.
6. When recommendations are made by the Retention Committee, the student's progress in successfully carrying out the recommendations is monitored by the Committee. Failure to comply with the recommendations or successfully carry out the recommendations may lead to dismissal from the program and the Department.
7. If the student is not satisfied with the Retention Committee's decision, he/she may utilize the appeal procedures of the University (consult with the Department Chair).

## **Retention Hearing Procedures**

1. The Department of Counselor Education Retention Committee is appointed by the Department Chair to investigate concerns about students and whether students should be retained in the graduate program. The Retention Committee may conduct hearings as outlined in this document.
2. Members of the Retention Committee will serve as an impartial hearing panel, judging cases fairly and solely on the evidence presented. Its decisions and recommendations will be by a majority vote of the Retention Committee.
3. Retention Committee hearings will be closed to the public.
4. The presiding chairperson of the Retention Committee will exercise control over hearings.
5. The Committee need not observe formal rules of evidence and may exclude unduly repetitious or irrelevant evidence.
6. A single record of proceedings (audio recording) will be made of hearings. Such records will be the property of the University and will be used for deliberations and appeals. No other recordings, audio or video, will be permitted.
7. Participants in Retention Committee hearings are expected to treat all others with courtesy and respect. Any person who disrupts a hearing or fails to adhere to the procedural rulings of the chairperson may be excluded from the proceedings.
8. A student will be provided advanced written notice at least five days before a Retention Committee hearing.
9. Should a student fail to appear at the hearing after proper notification, the hearing will be conducted in absentia. The Retention Committee will review available information and make appropriate determinations.
10. The Retention Committee may request the appearance of witnesses and/or solicit written materials relevant to the concern. Documentation should be provided to the Retention Committee chairperson

and students at least three days before a hearing. Relevant information gathered after that time may be introduced and considered at the hearing, at the discretion of chairperson.

11. All information made available for examination by the Retention Committee will be made available to the student. The student may be in attendance throughout the hearing except during committee deliberations. The student may not ask questions or make comments directly to witnesses. Questions may be submitted in writing to the committee; the committee will determine relevance of any question.
12. An advisor may accompany a student to assist at the hearing. The role of an advisor will be limited to providing advice to and consultation with the student. Advisors will not participate in or disrupt the hearing process.
13. Each witness will be given 10 minutes to make an opening statement. Witnesses will be subject to questioning by the Retention Committee. Witnesses may submit a written statement to accompany their verbal statement. Prospective witnesses will be excluded from the hearing during the testimony of other witnesses.
14. The responding student will be afforded 20 minutes to address the situation and explain why he or she should be retained in the program. The student may ask witnesses to appear before the committee and/or provide relevant materials in support. The names of witnesses and copies of relevant materials must be provided to the Retention Committee chairperson at least three days before the hearing.
15. The Retention Committee will render a decision as soon as is practicable, usually within three working days of the hearing. The Retention Committee will communicate the decision and/or recommendations in writing to the responding student and the Department Chair.

## ADVISING AND DEGREE PLAN

Upon admission each student is assigned a faculty advisor. It is important for the student to maintain contact and work closely with his/her advisor to be sure of adequate progress through their program. The advisor helps the student to understand the intricacies of the program and Department and resolve difficulties that may arise. Any change of advisors requires the approval of the Department Chair and Program Coordinator.

Students should meet with their advisors as soon as possible after acceptance into the Department of Counselor Education for assistance in completing a tentative course schedule and *Graduate Degree Plan*. Once completed, the *Graduate Degree Plan* is then forwarded with the advisor's approval to the Graduate Committee Chairperson for the Department. **All academic deficiencies must be removed before the student is admitted to candidacy and the student must have at least a 3.0 GPA on all graduate coursework. A degree will NOT be awarded to any student who earns grades of C or lower in more than six (6) semester hours of graduate work. If you do not follow your tentative course schedule, you must meet immediately with your advisor to update your tentative course schedule.**

Once a student's *Graduate Degree Plan* has been approved by the Graduate Council, changes can be made only by petition. The student should consult with her/his advisor regarding any petition to amend the *Graduate Degree Plan*. With the advisor's approval, petitions are forwarded to and processed by the Graduate Committee Chairperson for the Department. Degree Plans can be found on the CNED website at [http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/current\\_students/forms.php](http://www.wiu.edu/coehs/qc/cned/current_students/forms.php)

## CURRICULUM

The Counselor Education courses are designed to address the eight core areas as outlined by CACREP. Several courses have prerequisites or enrollment guidelines, so students should consult the Graduate Catalog for these details. NOTE: It is wise for you to keep the Graduate Catalog for the year students are admitted to the Department for future reference). Students should be aware of the sequential nature of several courses to maximize learning and skill-building. Advisors help students plan their course sequence so all prerequisites are met. If students deviate from this plan, they risk not being able to take a course when desired because the prerequisites are not met. This can delay program completion.

**Curricular Requirements (subject to change)**

## School (K-12) Counseling Option

A grade of A or B is required for the following courses: CN 500, CN 581, CN 548, CN 593, CN 597 & CN 598.

- I. Required Core Courses:..... 42 s.h.
  - 1. EIS 500 Methods of Research (3)
  - 2. CN 500 Pre-Practicum (3)
  - 3. CN 519 Crisis and Trauma Counseling (3)
  - 4. CN 540 Marriage, Family, and Relationship Counseling (3)
  - 5. CN 541 Lifestyles and Career Development (3)
  - 6. CN 542 Assessment Techniques in Counseling (3)
  - 7. CN 545 Counseling Theories and Applications (3)
  - 8. CN 549 Professional, Legal, and Ethical Issues in Counseling (3)
  - 9. CN 552 Counseling/Helping in a Multicultural Society (3)
  - 10. CN 554 Counseling Across the Lifespan (3)
  - 11. CN 581 Group Counseling: Theories and Procedures (3)
  - 12. CN 593 Practicum: Counseling (3)
  - 13. CN 597 Internship I (3)
  - 14. CN 598 Internship II (3)
  - 15. CN 655 Comprehensive Exit Exam (0)
  
- II. Required Directed Concentration Courses..... 9 s.h.
  - 1. CN 544 Counseling Techniques for Children and Adolescents (3)
  - 2. CN 546 Developing and Managing Comprehensive School Counseling Programs (2)
  - 3. CN 556 Developmental Counseling (3)
  - 4. CN 602 Principles of Mental Health Diagnosis and Pathology for Practitioners in School Settings (1)

**TOTAL SCHOOL PROGRAM..... 51 s.h.**

*Additional Coursework will be required for licensure for non-teacher certified school counseling candidates. Please see your advisor.*

## Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Option

A grade of A or B is required for the following courses: CN 500, CN 547, CN 549, CN 581, CN 593, CN 597, CN 600, and CN 604.

- I. Required Core Courses:..... 42 s.h.
  - 1. EIS 500 Methods of Research (3)
  - 2. CN 500 Introduction to Counseling Skills and Practice (3)
  - 3. CN 519 Crisis and Trauma Counseling (3)
  - 4. CN 540 Marriage, Family, and Relationship Counseling (3)



5. CN 541 Lifestyles and Career Development (3)
6. CN 542 Assessment Techniques in Counseling (3)
7. CN 545 Counseling Theories and Applications (3)
8. CN 549 Professional, Legal, and Ethical Issues in Counseling (3)
9. CN 552 Counseling/Helping in a Multicultural Society (3)
10. CN 554 Counseling Across the Lifespan (3)
11. CN 581 Group Counseling: Theories and Procedures (3)
12. CN 593 Practicum: Counseling (3)
13. CN 597 Internship I (3)
14. CN 598 Internship II (3)
15. CN 655 Comprehensive Exit Exam (0)

II. Required Directed Concentration Courses . . . . . 18 s.h.

1. CN 520 Foundations and Professional Orientation to Clinical Mental Health Counseling (3)
2. CN 521 Standards of Care and Management in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (3)
3. CN 522 Psychopharmacology in Counseling (3)
4. CN 551 Counseling for Addictions (3)
5. CN 600 Diagnosis (3)
6. CN 604 Psychopathology (3)

**TOTAL CMHC PROGRAM. . . . . 60 s.h.**

Pre- and co-requisites for courses are subject to change. Please make sure that you are informed of any changes and how they may impact you.

In addition to curricular and experiential requirements, students are required to successfully complete a [Comprehensive Examination](#) prior to graduation. The Comprehensive Examination Policy can be found on the CNED website.

**Thesis (CN 601)**

CN 601 Thesis (3 credit hrs) is an optional course for clinical mental health counseling and school counseling majors interested in pursuing original research on a topic relevant to the counseling field. Students interested in doctoral work in counseling are advised that completion of a thesis is advantageous. At least two semesters prior to registration for CN 601, students will consult with their advisor and obtain a copy of the Guidelines for Preparation of a Thesis for the Counselor Education Department. Completion of EIS 500 Research Methods is a prerequisite to CN 601 Thesis. *Students must not register for CN 601 before they have conferred with the Program Coordinator!*

## **FIELD BASED EXPERIENCES**

Field-based experiences include CN 593 Practicum, and CN 597 & 598 Internship. Arrangements for field-based experiences are made by the student with assistance from the Program Coordinator. Sites are to be consistent with the program emphasis of the student and include appropriate on-site supervision personnel. Sites may include elementary or secondary schools, mental health centers, addiction treatment centers, and special community agencies, (i.e., domestic violence centers, hospitals, or gerontology programs).

Students will not be permitted to enroll in Internship until they have satisfactorily met the requirements for Practicum and are ready to work more independently, as is required in Internship.

Students will not successfully complete Internship until they have satisfactorily met the requirements and are ready to function independently as a professional counselor as assessed by the Internship Instructor.

The Department of Counselor Education requires an updated Field Experience Disclosure Form prior to placement for both practicum and internship. More information about obtaining the background check will be available during the clinical course sequence. Depending on the information obtained in the criminal background check, students may be denied placement in a field site by that site and/or may not be eligible for certification or licensure. Please see your advisor if you have concerns about the criminal background check. Information regarding the Criminal Background Check Policy can be found on the CNED website.

## **COMPLETION OF CLINICAL COURSES**

Current clinical courses in CNED include: CN 500, CN 581, CN 593, CN 597 & 598. These courses require a grade of an “A” or “B” for satisfactory completion. Students who receive a grade of “C” will be allowed to retake skills courses once. Failure to make a grade of “B” at the completion of the retake will result in removal from the Department of Counselor Education.

### **Throughout Counselor Education training, counselors-in-training must demonstrate:**

- Attitude of openness and receptivity to individual and group supervision;
- Non-defensiveness with regard to supervisor direction;
- Use of pre-session, post-session personal preparation/review process; and
- Awareness and compliance with established ethical guidelines concerning client counselor relationships, supervisor-supervisee relationships.

## **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Litigation involving practitioners in mental health professions has increased dramatically in the last few years. Clearly, the best way to avoid involvement in litigation is to adhere to professional ethical standards, as well as to demonstrate high standards of personal and professional conduct. Professional liability insurance is a necessity.

Students as professionals-in-training are required to obtain professional liability insurance before beginning Techniques of Counseling (CN 547), Counseling Techniques for Children & Adolescents (CN 544), Practicum (CN 593) and Internship (CN 597) experiences. See [www.ilcounseling.org](http://www.ilcounseling.org) as well as the American Counseling Association insurance (800-347-6647, ext. 284), or CPH & Associates Insurance Agency, Inc. (800-875-1911), [www.cphins.com](http://www.cphins.com).

## **EXIT REQUIREMENTS AND GRADUATION**

### **Application for Graduation**

Candidates for graduation must complete the Application for Graduation form and submit to the School of Graduate Studies at least eight weeks before the end of the student’s final term. This form is available from the School of Graduate Studies or on-line at [www.wiu.edu/grad](http://www.wiu.edu/grad)

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAM POLICIES

The comprehensive examination (i.e., comps) is an exit examination required of all Master's degree counseling students admitted for the 2011-2012 academic year and on. It is taken while students are enrolled in CN 597 Internship near the end of their program. In order to be eligible for the comprehensive examination, students must have completed all the core courses, have an overall average of 'B' or better, and be a student in good standing (i.e., not on probation or in remediation). Core courses include the following:

Content Area	WIU CORE Course Equivalent
Human growth and development	CN 554 Counseling Across the Lifespan
Social and cultural foundations	CN 552 Counseling/Helping in Multicultural Society
Helping relationships	CN 545 Counseling Theories and Applications <u>and</u> CN 500 Pre-Practicum
Group work	CN 581 Group Counseling: Theories and Procedures
Career and lifestyle development	CN 541 Lifestyles and Career Development
Appraisal	CN 542 Assessment Techniques in Counseling
Research and program evaluation	EIS 500 Methods of Research
Professional orientation and ethics	CN 549 Professional, Legal, and Ethical Issues

### Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE)

The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Examination (CPCE) is used as the Department's comprehensive exam. The CPCE is researched, developed, and distributed by both the Research and Assessment Corporation for Counseling (RACC) and the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE), two affiliate corporations of the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). It is a highly valid and reliable way to make judgments about a student's progress toward mastery of the subject matter of professional counseling.

#### Benefits of Using the CPCE

1. Allows master's programs with a comprehensive exam to better meet psychometric standards.
2. Gives programs an objective view of the knowledge level of their students.
3. Allows programs to examine student functioning in various curricular areas.
4. Promotes longitudinal self-study.
5. Compares a program's results to national data.
6. Stimulates integration of knowledge learned in separate courses.
7. Gives students comparative strength/weakness feedback.

## **Administration and Evaluation**

The purpose of the examination is to determine whether students have attained the level of knowledge in the field of counseling that can ensure minimal competence in the field. The CPCE is typically scheduled for a Saturday or Sunday prior to Spring Break. Students must submit a money order made out to CCE for \$50.00 (subject to change) at the time of the exam.

The CPCE, a national standardized test, is administered by a counseling program faculty member or representative. After each examination, upon obtaining the results from the CPCE examination office, the department's comprehensive examination committee establishes cut off points for passing and failure. Typical cut points are 1.5 *SD* below the National Mean for Exit Exams for the Total Score.

Students who fall below the cut point for the Total Score on the CPCE must adhere to the following:

1. If the total Score on the CPCE is below the cut point and you failed 3 or less of the content areas (cut point for content areas are established using the same procedures as the Total Score cut point) you may complete an essay examination (developed by the content area faculty expert) for each of the content areas you failed (up to 3) prior to the end of the that same semester. You must pass all the essay examinations in order to advance toward degree candidacy. Students who do not pass all the essay examinations may retake the CPCE once during a future schedule exam date (typically the following Spring semester). You must pass the retake in order to advance toward degree candidacy. Students who do not pass the retake may petition the department's comprehensive examination committee and request a 3rd opportunity to take the CPCE. With the committee's approval, students will first be required to retake the associated core courses related to the area(s) that were not successfully passed during the retake prior to this administration (typically the following Spring semester). Students who do not pass this administration of the CPCE will be dismissed from the department and will not be awarded a degree in Counseling.
  
2. If the Total Score on the CPCE is below the cut point and you failed 4 or more of the content areas (cut points for content areas are established using the same procedures as the Total Score cut point) you may retake the CPCE once during a future scheduled exam date (typically the following Spring semester). You must pass the retake in order to advance toward degree candidacy. Students who do not pass the retake may petition the department's comprehensive examination committee and request a 3rd opportunity. With the committee's approval, students will first be required to retake

the associated core courses related to the area(s) that were not successfully passed during the retake prior to this administration (typically the following Spring semester) Students who do not pass this administration of the CPCE will be dismissed from the department and will not be awarded a degree in Counseling.

Note: Regardless of the results, students must complete all degree requirements, including successful passage of the CPCE within a 6-year time frame. Multiple failures may result in automatic dismissal due to time limitations. “The work required for a graduate degree must be completed within six consecutive calendar years for master’s students, including transfer courses. Students may petition the Graduate Council for an extension of time for outdated courses. Evidence must show that such courses have been revalidated by examination or some other means as determined by the department. Transfer courses must be revalidated by instructors from the credit-granting institution. Graduate courses with grades of C or lower may not be revalidated” (Academic Guidelines and Graduate School Policies).

Students will be provided with their results by their Internship Instructor. Any student wishing to appeal the grade on the comprehensive examination must comply with the same procedures for grade appeal outlined in the University Catalog and the CNED Student Manual.

## Preparing for the CPCE

The CPCE will cover the eight Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) common-core areas as defined by their *Standards for Preparation*:

1. PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION AND ETHICAL PRACTICE - studies that provide an understanding of all aspects of professional functioning.
2. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY - studies that provide an understanding of the cultural context of relationships, issues, and trends in a multicultural society.
3. HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT - studies that provide an understanding of the nature and needs of persons at all developmental levels and in multicultural contexts.
4. CAREER DEVELOPMENT - studies that provide an understanding of career development and related life factors.
5. HELPING RELATIONSHIPS - studies that provide an understanding of the counseling process in a multicultural society.
6. GROUP WORK - studies that provide both theoretical and experiential understandings of group purpose, development, dynamics, theories, methods, skills, and other group approaches in a multicultural society.
7. ASSESSMENT - studies that provide an understanding of individual and group approaches to assessment and evaluation in a multicultural society.
8. RESEARCH AND PROGRAM EVALUATION - studies that provide an understanding of research methods, statistical analysis, needs assessment, and program evaluation.

The content addressed in the CPCE is covered in the core courses students complete in your master's degree program at WIU. As a result, a review of core course materials with a focus on information that might be included in multiple-choice questions is the best way to prepare for the exam. There are no published study materials available for the CPCE; however, the exam content is similar to the NBCC National Counselor Examination. Students may obtain information regarding study guides at the following web site: <http://www.nbcc.org/study>. Please note that neither NBCC nor Western Illinois University endorses any study materials for these exams.

The CPCE consists of 160 multiple choice items with 20 items per CACREP area. Of the 20 items per section, 17 will be scored; the remaining three will be pretest items that are not identified to the student. The purpose of imbedded pre-testing is to generate actual score performance data on items. This allows CCE to select items for future test construction that have the most desirable psychometric attributes. Scores for each section and a total score will be reported for each student. The CCE will provide statistics on the program's students as well as national data. Each institution is responsible for determining a minimum criterion score for their students. A demographic questionnaire will be included on the answer sheet for research purposes. Students are allowed four hours to complete the examination. The Xi Chapter of Chi Sigma Iota offers study seminars to assist master's student in preparing for the comprehensive examination and for the NBCC examination. Contact the Xi Chapter faculty advisor at [cned@wiu.edu](mailto:cned@wiu.edu) for additional information.

NOTE: Please make sure that you have taken and passed all **core courses** listed on the first page of this document prior to the term that you plan to take the exit exam. Students may not take the exit exam if this requirement and others listed are not fully satisfied.

### **Commencement and Conferring of Degrees**

Degrees are conferred in December, May, and August. Commencement exercises are held in May (QC & Macomb) and December (Macomb only). Students wishing to attend commencement exercises must indicate this on the application for graduation. ALL graduating students must apply for graduation through the department of graduate studies in order for degrees to be conferred.

## **CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE**

Graduates of WIU Counselor Education Department are strongly encouraged to seek national certification and state licensure. Many state licensure boards including Illinois and Iowa, require a licensure examination in addition to academic and supervised experience. Students should contact individual state professional counselor licensure boards about licensure and certification matters.

National certification is obtained through the **National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC)**, offering certification as a National Certified Counselor (NCC). The NBCC also offers specialty certifications in school, gerontological, career, and addictions counseling. Many states, including



Illinois, use the NBCC examination as one of their licensure requirements. NBCC board examinations are given through special arrangements for WIU students in April. Students must be enrolled in internship to qualify to sit for the examination.

### **School Counseling Basic Skills and Content Examination Requirements**

School Counseling students please read the attached memo from the [Illinois State Board of Education](#). As we are an Illinois school all school counseling students are expected to adhere to these requirements regardless of state of residence or state of employment.

Prior to beginning Internship in the spring, all school counseling students will need to TAKE and PASS the school counselor content exam.

To register for the content test please see the following website: <http://www.icts.nesinc.com>

Please remember that you are required to pass this exam prior to the start of the semester you take internship regardless of which state you are a resident of or have your field placement/employment.

**NOTE: The Basic Skills Test is an application requirement for school counseling degree/certification seeking students.**

### **Endorsement Policy**

The Department curriculums are specifically and carefully designed to prepare counselors who are competent to enter work in professional settings. Further, specialized preparation is essential for graduates to become effective and fully functioning professionals. Therefore, endorsements for counselor education graduates can be given only for professional positions and position levels appropriate to the respective program completed by graduates.

Graduates of the School Counseling option will be endorsed for counseling positions in K-12 schools. *Students will only be endorsed for provisional school counseling certifications/licensure (temporary certification/licensure) when they have completed ALL coursework except Practicum and Internship, as mandated by the states of Illinois and Iowa.* Graduates of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling option will be endorsed for agency/clinical positions upon completion of that degree.

Students must complete a Request for Recommendation form for each letter of recommendation or reference they are requesting. These can be found at:

<http://www.wiu.edu/advising/docs/recommendation.pdf>

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Students and graduates are encouraged to join and to become active in professional organizations, such as American Counseling Association (ACA), ACA divisions, Illinois or Iowa Counseling Associations, and/or state divisions. Application forms are available in the Department office.

### **Student Organizations**

In addition to a number of student organizations available to WIU- Quad Cities students, the Department of Counselor Education sponsors two program-focused student organizations.

#### Chi Sigma Iota

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) is the international honor society for counseling students, counselor educators, and professional counselors. Its mission is to promote scholarship, research, professionalism, leadership and excellence in counseling, and to recognize high attainment in the pursuit of academic and clinical excellence in the field of counseling. Western Illinois University houses the Xi chapter of National Chi Sigma Iota.

Membership is by invitation only to students and graduates of the WIU Department of Counselor Education and to Professional Counselors in the community and university. Students must have completed at least 18 hours of graduate coursework in the program, have earned a grade point average of 3.50 or better, and be recommended for membership in Chi Sigma Iota by the chapter and the Department faculty. If you are interested in additional information, contact faculty advisor Dr. Tiffany Stoner-Harris at [td-harris@wiu.edu](mailto:td-harris@wiu.edu) or [cned@wiu.edu](mailto:cned@wiu.edu)

Western Illinois University-Quad Cities (WIU-QC) Counseling Association

The WIU-QC Counseling Association promotes counselor development through education and community involvement. The Executive Council consists of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Social Director. The Counseling Association's Social Committee, led by the Social Director, organizes and promotes educational and social events at the WIU campus and in the community.

All students enrolled at the WIU-QC campus are eligible to become a member of the Association. If you are interested in becoming an Executive Council member or an active member in this association, please contact the faculty advisor for the Counseling Association, Dr. Carrie Alexander-Albritton at [C-Alexander-Albritton@wiu.edu](mailto:C-Alexander-Albritton@wiu.edu) or [cned@wiu.edu](mailto:cned@wiu.edu)

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Inactive Status

Students are able to move to “inactive” status for a period of no more than 2 years. After two years, the individual will have to reapply to the Department and is subject to the same process as new applicants.

This applies regardless of how far along the student is in their respective counseling Program specialization and how many credit hours they have earned. To initiate the inactive status, students must write a letter to the department stating they wish to be inactive.

### Financial Assistance

Financial assistance is available as graduate assistantships, scholarships, and low-interest loans. Graduate assistantships are academic-merit-based award programs, which provide students with work opportunities in a job closely related to their academic field of study. Students with full-time graduate assistantships will receive a stipend and a waiver of tuition. There are Department and externally funded assistantships available. Students may contact the School of Graduate Studies regarding assistantships in areas other than the Counselor Education Department. Graduate assistantship applications are available at [http://www.wiu.edu/graduate\\_studies/positions.php](http://www.wiu.edu/graduate_studies/positions.php)

Students applying for an assistantship in Counselor Education must also provide an application letter, resume, and three professional letters of recommendation to the department. Selection of assistantships is completed during spring semester. Students must be enrolled full time to qualify for an assistantship.

Students may contact [wiu.edu/qc/financial\\_aid/](http://www.wiu.edu/qc/financial_aid/) regarding the various forms of financial assistance. For more information contact Alex Hall, Financial Aid Advisor, at 309-762-3999 Ext. 62235 or [AS-Hall2@wiu.edu](mailto:AS-Hall2@wiu.edu) .

WIU- Quad Cities Financial Aid can assist you with the following:

- Questions regarding you Financial Aid status
- Questions you may have about your Financial Aid forms
- Readjusting your Financial Aid award due to *unusual* or *special circumstances*
- Understanding the different loan options

## **APPENDIX**

## **HELPFUL HINTS**

### **Academic**

1. Ask lots of questions. You are here to learn.
2. Be flexible and open to new and various ideas, perspectives, lifestyles, clients, and types of problems, as well as other issues and concerns.
3. In practicum and clinical courses, don't be afraid to make mistakes, take risks, and try out new things. In addition, it is not helpful to compare yourself to your peers. Each individual's journey is unique with different personal and professional experiences.
4. Keep up with your reading in class; if you're not on top of this, you can easily fall behind.
5. Make appointments with professors so they can get to know you and you can get to know them. Later you may need them for letters of recommendation.
6. Expand your horizons by taking electives in areas that interest you as well as those with which you're unfamiliar.
7. You can learn a lot by observing others doing counseling. Observe counseling sessions by watching counseling tapes from the counseling department library or media library.
8. Keep your syllabi from each course taken as well as the Graduate Catalog. You may later need to furnish employers, licensing boards, and other graduate programs with information on the content of courses you have taken in your master's program.
9. Subscribe to professional journals and read them as well as other counseling related materials. In addition, you can write an article with a professor who has an area of interest that is similar to yours and then submit the article for publication in a journal.
10. Attend professional conferences both to stay current in your professional knowledge as well as to network with other mental health professionals.
11. Begin to prepare your vita or resume by keeping a list of your special skills and experiences.

## **Non-Academic**

1. Keep a journal while you are in the program to document your feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and experiences in the program and trace your progress in areas such as personal growth and theory development.
2. Take advantage of personal growth experiences in your course work. The more you learn about yourself, the better counselor you'll be.
3. Make friends in the program to lean on for support, to have fun with outside of class, and to "blow off steam" together. With these friends you can explore your beliefs about counseling, theories, nature of people, and other topics.
4. Keep connections with family and friends outside the program and Department. They can also be a valuable source of support.
5. Graduate school can result in substantial personal growth that may interfere with personal relationships. The best way to counteract potential difficulties is to keep spouses and significant others apprised of your growth and, when possible, invite them to join you in growth activities. In addition, it is helpful to prepare them for your level of time commitment. Write out a schedule and leave it with them so they know where to contact you.
6. Maintain a balanced lifestyle. Have a hobby and involve yourself in physical activity. For instance, some of your professors enjoy golf or jogging; others enjoy recreational reading.
7. It behooves a mental health professional to model the behaviors we espouse. Therefore, during times of stress, seek support including personal counseling.
8. Keep perspective. Commit to only as much as you can do well. Laugh and enjoy yourself.

*Reprinted with permission from the Master's Student Handbook Program in Counseling, University of North Texas.*

## DEPARTMENT OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION FACULTY AND STAFF

### Department Faculty

Leslie W. O’Ryan, Ed.D.  
Professor  
University of South Dakota

Holly J. Nikels, Ph.D.  
Professor & Program Coordinator  
University of South Dakota

Rebecca Newgent, Ph.D.  
Professor  
The University of Akron

Carrie Alexander-Albritton, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
Idaho State University

Tiffany Stoner-Harris, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor  
University of Iowa

### Adjunct Faculty

Matthew J. Beck, MS.Ed.  
University of Iowa Doctoral Student in Counselor Education & Supervision

### Office Manager

Diane Heisner

## **Questions?**

**Call: (309) 762-1876**

**or**

**Email: [CNED@wiu.edu](mailto:CNED@wiu.edu)**



## DEPARTEMENT OF COUNSELOR EDUCATION AGREEMENT CONTRACT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (student name) have received and read the CNED Counseling Student Handbook from Western Illinois University's Department of Counselor Education. I understand the policies and procedures as stated in the Handbook. I agree to fulfill the requirements as stated and to abide by the policies set forth herein.

I further agree that the Faculty of the Department of Counselor Education at Western Illinois University has the right and responsibility to monitor my academic progress, my ethical behavior, and my personal and professional dispositions.

I further assume full responsibility for meeting the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies and the College of Education and Human Services as outlined in the WIU Graduate Catalog. I recognize that the requirements from the Department of Counselor Education are subject to change at any time based on changes in Department, College, University, IDHE, and/or accreditation and licensure standards and that in certain circumstances I will be subject to these changes.

I am aware that neither Western Illinois University nor the Department of Counselor Education will provide or pay for my legal counsel in the event I am sued for malpractice while doing my counseling practicum and internship or other related laboratory experiences. Nor will the University pay damages or other costs incurred by me in the event I am found liable. I hereby agree to provide proof of malpractice insurance and notification of any changes in my insurance coverage in my clinical courses. I will hold Western Illinois University harmless in the event I am sued and found liable.

If in the opinion of the faculty, any and/or all of the above stated points are in question, I agree to abide by the faculty's decision as to whether or not I will continue in the Department of Counselor Education.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please sign and date this form. Bring it with you when you attend the required new student orientation meeting.*

*This form is to be turned in and will be added to your student file.*