

**MASTER OF ARTS
CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**



PROGRAM HANDBOOK

2025 / 2026

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Disclaimer

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Guide contains information specific to students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at South University. It is the responsibility of all students to be knowledgeable about the policies, procedures, regulations, and expectations contained within. If at any time there is a conflict between the Program Guide and the [South University Academic Catalog](#), the Academic Catalog will take precedence. All policies included in this Program Guide that are also in the Academic Catalog will include a link to the Catalog.

This Guidebook has been prepared by the CMHC program. Information in it may be modified, supplemented, or discontinued with or without notice.

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WELCOME

Welcome to South University and the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program! We commend your decision to pursue graduate education with the goal of becoming a professional counselor¹.

Counselor training is truly a transformative journey of personal and professional development. Training to become a counselor will require your full investment in a rigorous graduate curriculum with supervised counseling practice with feedback. You may expect to be challenged and well-supported as you develop the knowledge, awareness, skills, and dispositions required of counselors.

This Program Guide outlines the policies, procedures, and expectations specific to the CMHC program at South University. It serves as a supplement to the South University Academic Catalog and South University Student Handbook, which detail university-wide program-level requirements. Together, these documents provide a comprehensive overview of the academic and professional standards you are expected to meet.

We encourage you to read this Program Guide in its entirety and refer to it often. Familiarity with both this guide and the University's broader resources will be essential as you progress through your coursework and clinical training. While this guide is designed to be a helpful resource, it does not replace the official policies outlined in the Academic Catalog or the personalized guidance you will receive from faculty and advisors.

Please note that this Program Guide is considered a living document. As a CACREP accredited program, we are committed to aligning with current best practices, ethical standards, and developments in counselor education. Therefore, this guide is periodically reviewed and updated to reflect evolving expectations in the field. Student feedback is always welcome and valued as we work to ensure the guide remains accurate, relevant, and useful.

We are excited to welcome you to the South University community and look forward to supporting your journey as a developing counselor and future contributor to the mental health profession².

¹ Licensure is required to act as a professional counselor. Students must review the national and state licensure requirements and the eligibility criteria to sit for licensure exams. South University cannot guarantee each graduate will pass the required licensure examinations.

² South University does not promise or guarantee employment or that students will pass licensure exams.

SOUTH UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

South University is a student-centered institution committed to cultivating a dynamic learning environment that fosters professional readiness and a sense of social responsibility. Our culture of academic excellence empowers students, faculty, and staff to reach their full potential and contribute positively to their lives, professions, and communities.

ACCREDITATION INFORMATION

Institutional Accreditation

South University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate, bachelor, master, and doctorate degrees. South University also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of South University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Program Accreditation

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling programs at South University's campuses in Columbia, SC, Richmond, VA, Savannah, GA, and West Palm Beach, FL, are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 1001 North Fairfax Street, Suite 510, Alexandria, VA 22314, (703)-535-5990.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Program Mission

The Master of Arts program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at South University is intended to train professional counselors for evidence-based practice to meet the needs of a diverse population³. This program highlights advanced theories, principles, and evidence-based practice within the counseling field. Students cultivate necessary skills for effective assessment and treatment, but also attain competence in navigating ethical, legal, and professional nuances.

Program Objectives

Graduates will:

- Employ culturally responsive assessments and develop evidence-based treatment plans.
- Apply counseling theories and research findings to case conceptualization and treatment planning across diverse clinical issues and populations.
- Utilize ethical and effective technology in counseling practice, and crucially evaluate emerging tools and trends in the field.
- Practice professional counseling behaviors, develop a clear professional identity, and apply the ACA Code of Ethics in decision-making.

Program Student Learning Outcomes/Key Performance Indicators

Students are assessed regularly on their achievement of learning outcomes and demonstration of professional dispositions, both of which are essential to becoming a successful counselor. The nine Program Student Learning Outcomes/Key Performance Indicators are listed below.

PSLO/KPI 1 – Professional Counseling Orientation and Ethical Practice: Apply aspects of professional functioning, to include ethical standards, legal implications, advocacy and social justice, counselor roles, and professional credentialing.

PSLO/KPI 2 – Social and Cultural Diversity: Demonstrate the ability to apply multicultural research and core theory to issues and relationships in the context of culturally competent counseling.

PSLO/KPI 3 – Human Growth and Development Through the Lifespan: Apply research and core theory to the needs of diverse individuals across the lifespan, to include atypical personality and neurological development, addictive disorders, family and social relationships, and crisis response.

PSLO/KPI 4 – Lifestyle and Career Development: Demonstrate implementation of research and core theory related to the processes of decision-making in career development and planning in the context of the psychology of work.

³ Licensure is required to act as a professional counselor. Students must review the national and state licensure requirements, as well as the eligibility criteria, to sit for licensure exams. South University does not guarantee each graduate will pass required licensure examinations, nor guarantee employment.

PSLO/KPI 5 – Counseling and the Helping Relationship: Apply the major theories of change, consultation practices, diagnostic impressions, and evidence-based interventions to a diverse clientele for the delivery of effective and ethical treatment.

PSLO/KPI 6 – Group Dynamics and Group Work: Apply culturally appropriate group skills, techniques, and theory-based interventions in the context of group counseling dynamics while exploring effective facilitation styles.

PSLO/KPI 7 – Assessment and Appraisal: Analyze historical and current testing and assessment methods for implementing ethical and accurate appraisal of diverse clients by individual or group methods.

PSLO/KPI 8 – Research and Program Evaluation: Apply needs assessment, program evaluation, and research methods to ethical and effective practice and to add to the body of literature in the counseling profession.

PSLO/KPI 9 – CMHC Specialization: Plan, implement, and evaluate evidence-based programs and counseling approaches that are designed to treat psychopathology and promote optimal mental health.

See [Appendix B](#) for complete programs of study.

Program Length and State Requirements

The length of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program varies in accordance with the licensing requirements of the states in which the program is offered. As a result, the program may not meet the licensing requirements in all states. Students should contact the licensing board in the state they anticipate seeking licensure to ensure the program aligns with that state's educational criteria.⁴

For example, the CMHC program track offered at the Columbia, Richmond, and Savannah campuses consist of 91 credit hours and is designed to meet current counseling licensure requirements in those respective states. In Florida, the Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage & Family Therapy, and Mental Health Counseling requires additional coursework in Human Sexuality. Accordingly, the program track offered at the West Palm Beach campus includes 95 credit hours to meet Florida-specific licensure standards.

Program Delivery Options

The delivery structure of the CMHC program supports student success and expands educational access. Through on-campus, online, and hybrid program options, the university accommodates diverse learning needs while supporting students' academic, professional, and personal commitments.

On-Campus Programs

The Columbia and Richmond CMHC programs are delivered in person at a physical site/location, requiring students and faculty to attend classes and activities on-site. Classes

⁴ South University does not guarantee graduation from the program or passing of licensure.

generally meet weeknights and on Saturdays. Each quarter, classes are held weekly for a 10-week period with the 11th week designated for final exams. In this modality, the instructor and student are present and together for 100% of class time.

Online Program

The Savannah CMHC program is an online program offered in an online asynchronous format where all learning and engagement occurs through digital tools and platforms via the internet. This allows students the flexibility to access course materials, recorded lectures, readings, discussion boards, and assignments on their own schedule—within clearly set weekly deadlines.

While the CMHC Savannah program is self-paced, the program still maintains a structured timeline to ensure consistent progress. Faculty provide regular feedback and are available for support through email, virtual office hours, and discussion forums. You'll also participate in interactive components like peer discussions and case study reviews to help you build clinical insight and community, even in an online setting.

Although the coursework is asynchronous, some parts of your training—like practicum, internship, residency, or potential synchronous group supervision—may require scheduled participation and in-person or virtual attendance, depending on licensure requirements and placement site expectations.

The Savannah program requires two in-person residencies, once while enrolled in CNS6161, *Counseling Techniques*, and again in CNS7510, *Internship IA*. Students cannot successfully complete these courses without attending the in-person residency in its entirety. Failure to attend the in-person residency will result in a failing grade, incomplete, or withdrawal from the course, all of which will prohibit progressing in the curriculum until the requirement is met. Revised course planning will be done with the Program Director and may require the student to withdraw from the program for a specified period of time.

Hybrid Program/Blended Modality

The West Palm Beach CMHC program is considered a hybrid program delivered in a blended modality where the curriculum offered combines online, virtual, and/or on-campus elements. The West Palm Beach CMHC curriculum combines online and on-campus formats where a minimum of 51% of the program is required to take place on-campus. Course modality is at the discretion of the program.

Blended: Course is offered through multiple modalities to achieve learning outcomes and meet credit hour requirements.

- **Blended- Campus/Virtual (B-CV):** A course that integrates scheduled on-campus/on-site, in-person classes with synchronous online virtual sessions.
- **Blended- Campus/Online (B-CO):** A course that integrates scheduled on-campus/on-site, in-person classes with asynchronous online learning activities.
- **Blended – Online/Virtual (B-OV):** A course that integrates asynchronous online learning activities with synchronous online virtual sessions.

Online/Asynchronous: Course is offered in totality as an online, with asynchronous learning activities to meet credit hour requirements.

On Ground: Course is offered in totality as on-campus/on-site in-person classes to meet credit hour requirements.

Practicum and Internship

Student training in the CMHC program is delivered through a combination of didactic coursework and supervised field experiences. As part of their clinical preparation, students will complete practicum and internship placements in community-based counseling settings, where they will engage in direct client services under the supervision of an approved onsite supervisor. In addition to onsite supervision, students will participate in weekly individual and group supervision sessions led by a qualified faculty member. These field experiences are designed to integrate theory with practice, enhance clinical competencies, and support students' professional development.

Licensure Preparation

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is designed to prepare graduates to meet the academic requirements to apply for initial licensure as a professional mental health counselor in many states, as well as to qualify for certification as a National Certified Counselor (NCC) through the National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC). Because licensure requirements vary by state, the program may not fulfill all licensure criteria in every jurisdiction. Students are responsible for reviewing the specific licensure requirements of the state in which they intend to seek licensure and should consult the appropriate state licensing board to ensure the program meets those requirements. South University does not imply, promise, or guarantee all graduates will pass the licensure requirements.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate from the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program, a student must successfully:

1. Evidence a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater for all academic work required for the degree.
2. Successfully pass the Comprehensive Examination process.
3. Successfully remediate or repeat all courses in which a grade lower than a "C" was earned.
4. Successfully meet all conditions of a remediation plan(s) as provided by the Progress Promotions Policy during periods of probation or suspension.

DIVERSITY

CMHC Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Justice Statement

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at South University attests to the common belief that diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice are the essential foundation for cultivating a safe and

productive learning environment. Instructors are expected to promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice throughout all areas of student engagement. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. representation of diversity in lived experience across course design.
- b. implementation of multicultural competencies throughout learning goals and objectives.
- c. modeling a practice of cultural humility
- d. supporting student efforts toward empowerment and advocacy.
- e. facilitating open and respectful student discourse.
- f. building counselor efficacy from a strengths-based approach.
- g. preparing students to identify and navigate cultural differences and systemic barriers in the field.
- h. increase awareness of contemporary social justice issues.
- i. and develop skills for engaging in social justice and advocacy.

To ensure fidelity, students are highly encouraged to provide feedback regarding how they perceive these initiatives are being maintained within their course of study through end of course evaluations. As a result, it is the hope of the CMHC program that students may find the freedom to conceptualize their professional identities from a clinical lens that is both authentic to their own experiences, as well as, inclusive of the lives of others.

Non-Discrimination Policy

South University does not discriminate or harass on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, age, religion, veteran's status, genetic marker, or any other characteristic protected by state, local or federal law, in our programs and activities. South University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities. South University will not retaliate against persons bringing forward allegations of harassment or discrimination. The campus Dean of Student Affairs has been designated to handle inquiries and coordinate the campus' compliance efforts regarding the Non-Discrimination policy. Please see the Appendix at the end of the catalog for contact information for each South University location.

Please refer to the [Non-Discrimination Policy](#) in the South University Academic Catalog for more information and for the General Complaint Procedures.

Diverse Student Recruitment, Enrollment, and Retention

The CMHC program at South University is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment through intentional strategies in recruitment, admissions, and student support. These efforts are designed to attract, enroll, and retain a student body that reflects the diverse communities served by the counseling profession.

Recruitment

The program actively engages in community partnerships, outreach to underrepresented populations, and alumni engagement to recruit a qualified and diverse student body. Initiatives include:

- Partnerships with local organizations and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Student Ambassador and Alumni involvement
- Veteran and first responder outreach
- Strategic use of social media and online presence

Enrollment

Admissions processes are reviewed regularly to ensure fairness and accessibility. Supportive practices include:

- No supplemental application fee
- Virtual interviews and open houses
- Transparent information about tuition and costs
- Collaboration with the South University Corporate Education Program (CEP) to expand financial accessibility.

Retention

The program promotes student success through early academic intervention, personalized support, and culturally responsive practices. Key efforts include:

- Individualized academic remediation plans.
- One-on-one tutoring and success resources
- Recognition of diverse cultural and religious practices
- Peer mentorship and community-building initiatives

ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT

Admission Criteria

Applications for admission to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program are accepted for the Spring and Fall quarters (April and October). Admission standards align with those established for other master's-level programs at South University.

In addition to academic qualifications, the CMHC program evaluates applicants for attributes essential to success in the counseling profession. As such, specific materials must be submitted to assess applicants' personal integrity, emotional maturity, interpersonal effectiveness, and communication skills. Admission decisions are based on the evaluation of the following criteria:

1. Completion of application for admission.
2. Submission of transcripts from all postsecondary institutions attended (all credentials earned outside the United States must be evaluated by a NACES or AICE-member credential evaluation service). Official transcripts must be submitted within 5 weeks of beginning classes.
3. Completion of a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution, grade point average of at least 2.3 (on an admissions scale of 4.0) for the last 60 semester hours/90 quarter hours of coursework (including relevant graduate work), **or** a bachelor's degree with an overall

CGPA of 2.7, **or** an earned graduate degree from an accredited institution with a CGPA of 3.0 or higher.

4. Submission of a personal/professional statement addressing the applicant's interest in counseling, professional goals, along with a self-appraisal of academic and professional qualifications.
5. Current résumé (or career summary).
6. Current university approved background check.
7. If applicable, a minimum score on a South University preapproved English language proficiency test is required for all applicants whose "first" language is not English as specified in the English Language Proficiency Policy.
8. Interview with a Core Faculty member.

Applicants are responsible for compiling and submitting all required items listed in the admissions criteria before an interview with a Core Faculty member can be scheduled.

Please refer to the Academic Catalog for the complete [Procedure for Admission to the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program](#).

Acceptance into the Program

All applicants who complete the admissions process will receive official notification from the University regarding their acceptance status. Applicants who are not admitted due to not meeting the minimum GPA requirement may reapply once the required GPA threshold has been achieved. However, applicants denied admission for not meeting other program-specific admissions criteria are not eligible to reapply.

It is important to note that meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program. The admissions process is competitive, and the University seeks the most qualified candidates based on a comprehensive review of all application materials, including the admissions interview. Applicants must demonstrate both academic and dispositional attributes that indicate potential for successful program completion and the ability to develop into a competent, ethical mental health counselor. Admission to, or completion of, the CMHC program at South University does not guarantee eligibility for professional licensure or certification.

Re-entry/Readmission Students

Students seeking re-entry after an absence of one year or longer must apply for readmission (see admission requirements). If they were enrolled at other colleges during their absence, transcripts of coursework taken must be sent to South University.

Please refer to the [Re-entry/Readmission Policy](#) in South University Academic Catalog for specific information.

Transfer Credit Policy

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling students are not permitted to transfer more than 49% of the program's credits. Also, no course may be transferred if it was taken more than seven years prior to the transfer request and/or a grade below of "B" was earned.

Please refer to the Academic Catalog for the [Graduate Transfer of Credit policy](#).

Personal Enrichment Enrollment

Non-Degree seeking students who are seeking state licensure must contact the state licensing board and determine which courses or areas of coursework are required to meet the board's needs. These students can enroll in the desired courses if space is available (with the exception of practicum and internship courses) at the discretion of the Department Chair/Program Director and are considered enrolled for personal enrichment. These students are held to the same academic and professional standards as degree-seeking students and must comply with university conduct and academic integrity policies.

Students attempting to enroll under these circumstances are classified as special subject students and are not eligible for Title IV financial aid. A personal enrichment student is permitted to enroll in one class per quarter for no more than three quarters without following the standard admission procedures or meeting standard admission requirements. Status as a special subject student is not available to students receiving military education benefits.

Please refer to the Academic Catalog for complete information on the [Personal Enrichment Policy](#).

Background Check

Every applicant to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is ***required*** to complete a university approved background check at the time of application and is responsible for the associated fee. Background checks are a standard requirement in the profession given the serious responsibility we share to protect the public.

Applicants wishing to enter the CMHC program should be aware that any prior, concurrent, or future felony or misdemeanor conviction(s) or violation(s) may restrict an individual's ability to obtain professional licensure or certification. While background check results remain confidential, any felony, misdemeanor, conviction, or violation may limit an applicant's ability to be placed in certain facilities for practicum and/or internship. This may delay completion of the program if the applicant must wait for a particular clinical site to become available.

It is the responsibility of the student to alert the program director of any criminal felony or misdemeanor violations or charges within 24 hours of the instance. Failure to report these criminal infractions constitutes a significant breach of moral and ethical conduct and is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

Acceptance into a South University program, or its completion, does not imply or guarantee that a student will be able to obtain licensure or certification. Any violations that involve a

felony or misdemeanor conviction or constitute a significant breach of moral or ethical conduct may result in immediate removal/rejection of an applicant's file for consideration for entry into the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program.

Students will be required to complete a second university approved background check as part of their pre-practicum course and will be responsible for associated fee. Failure to complete the second the background check may result in dismissal from the program.

Please refer to the complete [Criminal History, Charges and Background Checks](#) policy in the South University Academic Catalog.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Students enrolled in the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program at South University should be aware of the financial responsibilities and resources associated with graduate study. This section outlines essential information regarding tuition and fees, financial aid options, graduate assistantships, and other potential costs related to program participation. Understanding these financial policies will help students plan effectively for their academic journey and remain in good financial standing throughout the program. For the most current and detailed financial information, students are encouraged to consult the South University Academic Catalog and the Student Consumer Information website.

Tuition and Other Fees

Changes in tuition and fees apply to all students unless otherwise specified. In-state and out-of-state tuition are the same. Tuition and fees are subject to change at the end of any term. Unless otherwise stated, the cost of books, technology charges, lab coats, and other miscellaneous expenses are not included in tuition or fees.

Other fees are collected for all South University graduate students. These fees may include a registration fee, graduation fee, technology fee, etc. Please refer to the South University Academic Catalog for more information.

Other expenses in relation to the CMHC graduate program may include but are not limited to professional dues, the purchase of insurance, class assignment resources, conference attendance costs, and background checks. Please note, students will be responsible for payment of these fees to the appropriate organization.

Refer to the [South University Student Consumer Information website](#) for more information on Tuition and Fees.

Financial Aid

Students may visit the Academic Catalog for all information concerning [Financial Aid](#). Also, [Student Consumer Information](#) is available for all campuses via the South University website.

Any student with questions surrounding financial aid should reach out to the Financial Aid Office.

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are available each quarter for MA-CMHC students. Graduate assistants will provide administrative and/or teaching assistance for 10 hours per week for a one-year duration. Work schedules will be mutually agreed upon between the student and the Faculty Supervisor or Clinical Coordinator. To continue receiving the assistantship, students must establish and maintain a South University CGPA of 3.75 or higher and sign a Memorandum of Understanding. The scholarship is equal to \$1000 tuition grant per quarter and can be combined with other University grants and scholarships. It is used only for tuition and fees and may not result in a stipend to the student.

Eligible students must be enrolled full-time and have completed a minimum of four quarters of academic coursework. All graduate assistants must be in good standing, not placed on academic probation or any type of remediation plan established by the CMHC Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC).

Other Financial Assistance

Scholarships from any campus funds, associations, foundations, or societies that the University or the Program Director become aware of will be passed on to the student via email. Those students interested in securing other financial assistance should contact the Financial Aid Office. More information can be found in the Academic Catalog under Financial Information or the Student Consumer Information found on the South University website.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Orientation to the Program

All students are required to complete a program orientation during the first week of enrollment. The orientation provides an overview of the academic expectations and professional dispositions associated with the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program. Key topics include a review of the *CMHC Program Guide*, program requirements, student expectations and available resources, evaluation methods, licensure information, and the faculty's role as professional gatekeepers. Completion of the orientation is documented through a required course assignment to ensure each student begins the program fully informed of the policies, procedures, and standards that will guide their development as a counselor-in-training at South University.

University Academic Counseling

Each newly admitted student is assigned an Academic Counselor prior to the start of their first term. The Academic Counselor serves as an ongoing resource throughout the program, supporting students with on issues related to university policies and procedures, including matters related to academic standing, attendance appeals, course withdrawals, and leaves of absence.

Faculty Advising

Each new student is assigned a Faculty Advisor within their first term. Faculty Advisors map each student's program of study and support their progression through the program. When meeting with Faculty Advisors, students should be prepared to discuss their current academic

progress and /or clinical and professional development goals for the upcoming term. This process is valued as it will assist faculty in becoming more aware of each student's anticipated plans and goals.

Attendance

Students are expected to adhere to the university-wide [attendance policy](#) as outlined in the South University Academic Catalog. Regular attendance and punctuality are essential to academic success and professional development.

Students enrolled in synchronous didactic and clinical courses are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions, arrive at least five minutes prior to the start of class, and remain for the entire session.

Aligned with Professional Dispositions: Professionalism & Responsibility:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to arrive on time. Attendance and punctuality reflect essential professional behaviors expected in the counseling field.

Attendance Expectations for Synchronous Class Meetings:

- Arriving 30 minutes or more late will be recorded as an absence.
- Leaving class early without instructor approval will be recorded as an absence.
- Missing more than 20% of the class will result in a 10% deduction from the final course grade for each additional occurrence, including repeated tardiness or early departures.

Documentation and Communication: If a student must miss class or submit late work due to documented circumstances (e.g., illness, death in the family, military obligations), the student must:

1. Notify the course instructor within 24 hours of the absence or missed deadline.
2. Contact the Dean of Student Affairs to discuss potential accommodations or support to minimize further absences or missed assignments.

Persistent tardiness, early departures, or unexcused absences may disrupt the learning environment and are considered unprofessional. Such behaviors may result in a meeting between the student and the course instructor. Continued concerns after this meeting may be referred to the Progress and Promotions Committee for further review and possible action.

Students are responsible for all content covered during any missed class sessions, including lecture notes, activities, assignments, and announcements. Absences may significantly impact a student's ability to stay current with course material. In the event of an absence on the day of a scheduled examination, the student must notify the instructor in advance or as soon as possible to discuss appropriate next steps.

For comprehensive attendance expectations and policies, please consult the South University Academic Catalog.

Late Work Policy

Aligned with Professional Dispositions: Effective Use of Time and Resources & Professionalism:

All assignments are expected to be submitted on time. Late submission requests must be submitted to the course instructor at least 24 hours before the due date via South University email, copying the Program Director. Approved extensions allow up to 5 calendar days (excluding holidays) to submit the assignment with a 5% daily deduction.

- Maximum of 2 extensions per quarter.
- Faculty may deny any request (no appeal process).
- Assignments over 5 days late or submitted late without faculty approval will receive a zero.
- For extensions beyond 5 days, contact the Dean of Student Affairs to request formal accommodations.

Academic Progress

Students must demonstrate satisfactory academic progress by completing the required coursework, maintaining required academic standards, and adhering to program and university progression policies. All CMHC students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA (CGPA) of 3.0 or higher and complete the program within the maximum allowable timeframe (MTF), which is 150% of the program's normal length. These standards are reviewed each quarter by core faculty, and any deficiencies are subject to remediation designed by the Policies and Promotions Committee (PPC).

Academic Programmatic Probation

In addition to meeting South University's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements, students enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program are also expected to maintain compliance with program-specific academic standards. In some cases, a student may maintain a cumulative GPA (CGPA) of 3.0 or higher but still earn a grade below a "C" in a required course. In such instances, the student will be placed on Academic Programmatic Probation and must meet the conditions outlined below:

- **Course Retake Requirement**

Any course in which a student earns a grade lower than a "C" must be repeated within a timeframe determined by the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC). Students are responsible for all tuition and fees associated with retaking the course. Students must attain a "B" or better in the following courses or must be repeated within a timeframe determined by the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) and are responsible for all tuition and fees associated with retaking a course:

- CNS 6002- Counseling Theory
- CNS 6018- Psychopathology
- CNS 6161- Counseling Skills

- CNS 6509- Group Dynamics
- And All Clinical Classes (CNS 7010, 7011, 7510, 7610, 7611)
- **Remediation Compliance**

If a student fails to meet the terms of an academic remediation plan issued by the PPC, they will be required to meet with the committee to reassess their progress and standing. Following this review, the PPC may recommend one or more of the following actions:

 - Continued probation
 - Continued probation with additional conditions
 - Referral to academic counseling
 - Referral to personal counseling
 - Suspension from the CMHC program
 - Dismissal from the CMHC program

Transcript and GPA Implications

When a course is repeated, both the original and repeated course grades will appear on the student's transcript. However, only the grade earned during the repeated attempt will be used in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

As stipulated in the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy (SAP Policy) of the South University Academic Catalog, students must demonstrate academic and financial aid progress. Poor academic performance and programmatic performance may lead to an academic/financial aid warning and/or dismissal from the university.

Academic progress is reviewed at the completion of every quarter. CMHC students are required to maintain and matriculate with a cumulative 3.0 GPA. Any course in which a final grade is below a C will not be accepted and must be retaken for a higher grade. A student may choose to re-enroll no more than two times in a course for which a final grade of C was earned. A student's GPA will reflect the higher grade of the retaken courses, however, failed courses and courses with grades of C or lower remain on the student's transcript.

Please review the [Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy](#) as outlined in the South University Academic Catalog.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CMHC Code of Conduct

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program is committed to preparing students for the ethical, professional, and personal responsibilities of clinical mental health counseling. As part of a CACREP-accredited program, students are expected to uphold the highest standards of conduct in accordance with the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics, program policies, and university guidelines.

Students must demonstrate professional dispositions consistent with the identity of a counselor-in-training, including but not limited to:

- **Ethical Practice:** Adhering to the ACA Code of Ethics, confidentiality standards, and legal obligations in all academic, clinical, and interpersonal interactions.
- **Professionalism:** Maintaining a respectful, collaborative, and accountable attitude in all settings, including the classroom, practicum/internship sites, and university-related events.
- **Academic Integrity:** Demonstrating honesty and responsibility in all academic work, including research, assignments, exams, and collaborative projects.
- **Personal and Interpersonal Competence:** Engaging in appropriate self-care, seeking support when needed, and managing personal issues in a way that does not impair professional performance.
- **Respect for Diversity:** Promoting inclusive, culturally responsive behavior that respects the dignity, rights, and welfare of others.
- **Commitment to Growth:** Actively engaging in self-reflection, feedback, and supervision to support personal and professional development.

Violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the program.

All disciplinary actions taken against a CMHC student will be reported to the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) and will be considered relative to the student's suitability for continued participation in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and entry into the clinical mental health counseling profession.

South University Code of Conduct

By enrolling as a student at South University, you have agreed to abide by the rules and regulations of the University. The rules concerning student behavior are outlined in the [Code of Conduct](#) section of the South University Student Handbook. Alleged violations of the South University Code of Conduct may be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs. Please refer to the [Conduct and Behavior Policies](#) outlined in the South University Student Handbook for complete information.

Academic Integrity

South University is committed to fostering a culture of academic excellence and integrity. Academic integrity is the commitment to honest and responsible scholarship that forms the foundation of our academic community at South University. It reflects our core values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility, and supports our mission to cultivate a dynamic learning environment that fosters professional readiness and social responsibility. We believe that maintaining high academic standards empowers students and our entire academic community to reach its full potential.

Please review the [South University Academic Integrity Policy](#) in the South University Academic Catalog.

Virtual/Online Netiquette

Virtual/online course expectations mirror those of campus-based courses. Students are expected to maintain professionalism, respect for the learning environment, and adherence to ethical standards consistent with the counseling profession. This includes:

- Attending class with camera on and remaining visibly engaged
- Joining from a private, quiet, and distraction-free environment
- Ensuring the setting reflects a professional space (e.g., not in a vehicle, public place, or environment with interruptions such as children or other distractions)
- Using appropriate virtual backgrounds, if needed, that are not distracting
- Presenting themselves in a manner consistent with professional ethical standards (e.g., ACA Code of Ethics).

Artificial Intelligence

Using AI to complete assignments without permission, submitting AI-generated work as your own, or using AI in ways your instructor has prohibited violates our academic integrity policies. The work you submit must represent your own learning and effort.

Please review the [South University Academic Integrity Policy](#) in the South University Academic Catalog.

Electronic Recordings

Due to the personal and sensitive nature of class discussions, experiential activities, and the potential inclusion of confidential client-related information, the audio or audiovisual recording of instructional sessions is strictly prohibited. Exceptions may be granted only when approved in advance through South University Disability Services as a reasonable accommodation.

Additionally, the photographing or otherwise capturing images of examinations, quizzes, or other assessment materials is prohibited.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, violations of the Honor Code, Code of Conduct and Behavior, and/or Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Professional Dispositions standards.

Professional Identity

Professional societies serve a critical function in the training and education of counselors, the dissemination of research in the field, and advocacy for the field of counseling and its consumers. They can help students gain additional understanding and experience in the field from a regional and national level. Exposure to professional organizations can aid students in making a solid and beneficial connection to the field for years to come. Professional societies also serve a major function in advocating for the counseling profession. By joining these organizations, individuals make it possible for the field to advocate for issues that are critical to our field. Students who have joined professional societies typically report a high level of satisfaction with their decision to do so.

Most professional societies have several outlets to engage student participation such as newsletters, listservs, and websites to assist their members with the process of maintaining currency with important developments in the field. Membership in professional societies also provides the benefit of free or discounted journal subscriptions, substantial discounts on convention registration fees, and reduced continuing education fees.

Professional Organizations and Memberships

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at South University requires students to participate in national and state professional organizations related to their field. CMHC students will be introduced to two national professional organizations most relevant to the Clinical Mental Health Counseling profession, American Counseling Association (ACA; www.counseling.org), and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA; www.amhca.org). Students are required to join one of these national organizations in order to obtain their professional liability insurance for practicum and internship.

Expectations for Professional Engagement

Students are expected to explore joining other professional affiliations representative of the mental health field. Examples can include but are not limited to include SAIGE (Society for Sexual, Affectional, Intersex, and Gender Expansive Identities), NBCA (National Black Counselors Association), and CSJ (Counselors for Social Justice).

Students may obtain additional information on professional organizations relative to their location from their Program Director.

Professional Dispositions

Professional dispositions in counseling refer to the way a counselor's attitudes, values, and habits influence their interactions with clients and colleagues. It includes qualities like commitment to learning, interpersonal skills, communication skills, effective use of time and resources, use of constructive feedback, etc. These dispositions shape how counselors approach relationships, handle challenges, and promote client growth. Throughout the course program, these qualities are regularly reviewed and developed to ensure students embody the ethical and compassionate mindset necessary for effective counseling.

Commitment to Learning	Identifying problems Formulating appropriate questions Demonstrating a positive attitude toward learning Offering my own thoughts and ideas Applying new information to strengthen my understanding
Interpersonal Skills	Maintaining professional demeanor in all situations Demonstrating interest in others as individuals Maintaining confidentiality in all clinical interactions Approaching others to discuss any difference in opinion Working effectively with difficult students and teachers Accommodating differences in learning styles
Communication Skills	Recognizing the impact of non-verbal communication (body language, eye contact)

	Maintaining my composure and professional demeanor with all Utilizing communication technology effectively Talking about difficult issues with sensitivity and objectivity
Effective use of time and resources	Focusing on task at hand Prioritizing tasks to be completed Completing tasks within rational or directed time frames Using unscheduled time efficiently Performing multiple tasks simultaneously and efficiently
Use of constructive feedback	Actively seeking feedback and help Critiquing my own performance realistically Reconciling differences with sensitivity Acknowledging the need for frank, objective feedback from instructors and mentors in the educational setting.
Problem Solving	Recognizing and stating problems clearly Identifying resources needed to solve problems Updating solutions to problems based on current research Accepting responsibility for implementing solutions
Professionalism	Abiding by Code of Ethics Abiding by course syllabus requirements Abiding by Program guidelines Demonstrating accountability for my own decisions and actions Keeping learning as priority
Responsibility	Demonstrating dependability and punctuality Projecting a professional image to other students and faculty Following through on commitments Referring to available experts when necessary Accepting accountability for my own actions
Critical Thinking	Raising relevant questions Considering all available information Articulating ideas Clearly explaining why a particular intervention, solution, or approach was chosen Exhibiting openness to contradictory ideas Justifying selected solutions to problems
Stress Management	Recognizing my own stressors or problems Recognizing signs of distress in others Maintaining professional demeanor in all situations Prioritizing multiple commitments Responding calmly to urgent or new situations Tolerating inconsistencies in the learning environment

Ethics

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program subscribes fully to the professional ethics of the counseling field. All students are expected to read, understand, and practice the ethical principles of the profession, including the following:

- American Counseling Association (ACA):
<http://www.counseling.org/docs/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf?sfvrsn=4>
- American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA):
<https://www.amhca.org/viewdocument/2020-amhca-code-of-ethics>
- National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC):
<https://www.nbcc.org/resources/nccs/newsletter/the-2023-nbcc-code-of-ethics-launch>

In addition to the above ethical standards, students are also responsible for learning the laws and regulations of the states in which they plan to practice.

Substance Abuse and Screening Policy

Drug and alcohol disorders can be detrimental to one's overall physical and emotional health, as well as academic and professional performance. Students are prohibited from reporting to class or any clinical facility while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. A student in violation of the policy will be subject to immediate removal from the clinical facility and dismissal from the program.

The College of Arts and Sciences has adopted the following policy and procedures related to student drug and alcohol testing and students suspected of impairment due to drugs or alcohol.

With reasonable suspicion or at the recommendation of any clinical site, the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program may require a student who is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol to undergo an immediate (within one (1) hour) mandatory drug screening. Results of testing must be transmitted directly from the selected screening agency and the program; no hand-delivered results from students will be accepted.

Testing Procedures

In the event of reasonable suspicion or at the recommendation of any clinical site personnel, the following actions will be taken:

- The student will be removed from the site and the Program Director/Clinical Coordinator will be notified for further direction.
- An academic or clinical faculty member will facilitate the student's communication with a transportation service or emergency contact to arrange transport to an off-site testing facility. The student is not to transport himself/herself.
- Medical assessment, treatment, and transportation will be at the student's expense.
- If the student's behavior is threatening or belligerent, the instructor or clinical site supervisor may notify law enforcement to have the student escorted from the premises.

Also note:

- Students are required to contact the program before undergoing a drug test to ensure the correct testing service and panel is conducted.

- Positive drug tests will be evaluated by an independent Medical Review Officer (MRO) designated by the drug testing agency selected by the program.
- A positive drug test for illicit substances may qualify for a confirmatory follow-up test as recommended by the testing facility or MRO. If a student is taking prescribed medications for which a positive drug test may result, the student is responsible for reporting the prescription and dosage to the drug testing service.
- Attendance at clinical sites will be denied to students who refuse or fail to provide a sample for a drug test or who have an unsatisfactory test result.

Due Process and Confidentiality

Students who are dismissed have the right to due process according to program and University policies.

Information and records relating to positive test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations provided to the Medical Review Officer (MRO) shall be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in a separate location from student academic files. Such records and information may be disclosed to South University administration, clinical placement sites, and Dean of Student Affairs on a need-to-know basis and may also be disclosed when relevant to a grievance, charge, claim, or other legal proceeding initiated by or on behalf of a student. Students have the right to review the drug testing results.

Student Attire

It is imperative that students dress appropriately and professionally while at the University and when representing the University (i.e., clinical practice). It is a strongly held value of the University that professional attire contributes to an overall tone of professionalism and is one method of communicating the University's commitment to enhancing the professional opportunity of students. Professional dress and appearance also remain as one important presentation of quality to our various constituencies in that it reflects first impression, image, and professionalism of the University and its students.

Each student shall be dressed appropriately whenever he/she is in a clinical (client care) environment. Unless otherwise noted (by the clinical facility or Clinical Coordinator) students must dress in an appropriate shirt or sweater, slacks, and or a dress/appropriate skirt.

Unacceptable attire for either the clinical or University environment includes casual or faded khaki or cotton slacks, capri pants, leggings, spandex or stretch clothing, athletic clothing, jogging suits/sweatpants, t-shirts with offensive or distracting words, emblems or markings, work boots, flip flops, torn or cut-off clothing of any kind, clothing with holes or severely worn areas, backless, see-through, revealing clothing, or excessive jewelry of any kind.

Personal Growth

Students are encouraged to enhance their insight and skills development through engaging in their own counseling experiences. Obtaining personal counseling allows students to deepen self-awareness, increase empathy, and better understand the client's perspective, which are vital components of effective practice. While participation in personal counseling is not required unless deemed necessary, many students find that this process significantly contributes to their growth as compassionate and ethical counselors.

Technology Use

Each student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program must have access to a reliable computer, internet connection and the required computer software and hardware. Cell phones and tablets are not acceptable computer or laptop replacements.

Requirements include:

- Computer with Windows 7 or higher or Mac OSX 10.7 or higher
- Microsoft Office 365 (available to all South University students)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Browsers
 - For Windows users, Internet Explorer (latest 2 releases), Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome
 - For Mac users, Apple Safari (2 latest releases), Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome
- Virtual classes require access to a camera and microphone.

Electronic Instructional Recording Policy

Due to the personal and sensitive nature of class discussions, experiential activities, and the potential inclusion of confidential client-related information, the audio or audiovisual recording of instructional sessions is strictly prohibited. Exceptions may be granted only when approved in advance through South University Disability Services as a reasonable accommodation.

Additionally, the photographing or otherwise capturing images of examinations, quizzes, or other assessment materials is prohibited.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include, but is not limited to, violations of the Honor Code, Code of Conduct and Behavior, and/or Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) Professional Dispositions standards.

PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP

Students begin to demonstrate their readiness and suitability for the counseling profession during practicum and continue to do so through internship. These supervised clinical experiences are a vital part of the CMHC program at South University and reflect the program's strong commitment to experiential, applied learning.

The clinical training sequence includes one practicum and three internships, comprising a total of 700 hours of supervised field experience. These experiences are supervised both by qualified community-based site supervisors and program faculty and are designed to provide students with direct client contact, professional skill development, and exposure to a variety of counseling settings.

Student performance in the clinical sequence is evaluated based on clinical competencies, professionalism, documentation, and compliance with the policies of South University, the field placement site, and Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) guidelines for professional practice.

It is each student's responsibility to research and understand the licensure requirements of the state in which they plan to practice. This includes confirming whether clinical site supervisors must hold specific credentials to meet that state's supervision requirements. Students are expected to verify these criteria when selecting and securing clinical placement sites.

Practicum and Internship Overview

Clinical experience during the practicum and internship phases of counseling training is crucial for developing essential skills and professional competence. These supervised placements provide students with real-world opportunities to apply theoretical knowledge, refine therapeutic techniques, and enhance their ability to build effective client relationships. Hands-on experience also fosters self-awareness, ethical decision-making, and cultural sensitivity, all of which are vital for effective practice. Additionally, clinical placements allow students to receive valuable feedback from supervisors, supporting continuous growth and confidence in their counseling abilities.

A more detailed description of our practicum and internships follows, with quarters listed for our 8-quarter and 10-quarter programs:

Quarter 3/5, CNS7010: Pre-Practicum IA. In this course, the student receives fifteen (15) hours of faculty instruction that focus on writing a resume and cover letter, identifying possible clinical placement sites, interviewing at potential clinical sites, securing a site, and signing a field agreement, purchasing liability insurance, clinical skills practice, and reviewing necessary paperwork for practicum and internship.

Quarter 5/7, CNS7011: Practicum IB. Students spend a minimum of 10 hours per week at a program approved field placement site with an overall minimum of forty (40) direct contact hours with clients, ten (10) hours of individual supervision, and fifteen (15) hours of group supervision. During the practicum, the student will apply knowledge and skills learned throughout the curriculum in work with actual clients.

Quarter 6/8, CNS7510: Internship IA. Students spend a minimum of twenty (20) hours per week at the site, and eighty (80) direct contact hours with clients while receiving a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours of supervision of which ten (10) hours must be individual supervision and fifteen (15) hours of group supervision.

Quarter 7/9, CNS7610: Internship IIA. Students are required to spend a minimum of 20 hours per week at the field placement site and to have a minimum of 80 direct service hours (minimum of 9 hours/ week) with clients, receive a minimum of 25 hours of supervision during the academic term of which 10 hours must be individual supervision and 15 hours group supervision.

Quarter 8/10, CNS7611: Internship IIB. Students are required to spend a minimum of 20 hours per week at the field placement site and to have a minimum of 80 direct service hours (minimum of 9 hours/ week) with clients, receive a minimum of 25 hours of supervision during the

academic term of which 10 hours must be individual supervision and 15 hours group supervision.

Throughout clinical classes, students are required to maintain a cumulative 3.0 GPA. Students will be referred to the PPC for earning a grade lower than a “B.”

Professional Liability Insurance

Liability coverage is provided by South University for each graduate student regarding the performance of clinical duties necessary to complete the practicum/internship course requirements and associated responsibilities/duties of the site. Students are asked to obtain **additional** liability insurance on their own. Students can purchase separate insurance policies through professional organizations such as the American Counseling Association (ACA) and the American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), after becoming a member through their website.

Specific information regarding insurance coverage and practicum and internship is addressed in the course, CNS7010, *Pre-Practicum*, or can be directed to the Program Director.

Practicum and Internship Requirements

Students must be registered for practicum or internship during any quarter in which they collect hours towards completion of the requirements. They must also be registered to retain liability coverage as a student counselor. The monitoring of field experiences is taken seriously by both faculty and on-site supervisors as a range of professional activities like on-site staffing, trainings, and direct client interaction will be encountered by the student counselors.

During practicum and internship, the following will take place:

1. The student will be assigned a faculty supervisor and an on-site supervisor. Both supervisors will commit to being available to the student and one another through the on-site experience. The faculty supervisor may initiate contact for both progress evaluations and on-site or virtual visitations each quarter.
2. All required documentation will be stored in an online, HIPAA compliant repository and accessible to the student, site-supervisor, and faculty supervisor. Students are expected to maintain a Daily Activity Log that will be reviewed and signed by the on-site supervisor and the faculty supervisor.
3. Students are required, in accordance with the policies of their sites, to present in their group supervision class either audio or audiovisual recordings, and complete case conceptualizations based on clients seen in their clinical sites.
4. The Faculty Supervisor is responsible for scheduling **a midterm on-site evaluation** (during the fifth week of the quarter) and a **final evaluation** (which may be conducted via teleconference) with the on-site supervisor. During these evaluations, the Faculty Supervisor and on-site supervisor will review the student's performance using the Practicum/Internship Performance Evaluation Form (PIPEF), discuss the student's progress at the agency or clinic, and exchange feedback regarding the student's practicum or internship experience.

Site Selection and Approval Process

When students are registered in CNS7010, *Pre-Practicum*, they are required to work with the Faculty Supervisor to begin setting up the practicum site based off desired career goals. Readiness for field experiences is assessed by the counseling program faculty and students' previous performance.

Actual placement at a site is contingent upon a signed agreement between the site supervisor, student, and school representative (Program Director, Faculty Supervisor, or Clinical Coordinator).

It is the responsibility of the university to furnish the appropriate forms to the students and on-site supervisor and it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the completed forms have been submitted to the faculty supervisor before they begin on-site work.

Internship-Site Requirements

For a site to be considered an acceptable placement for internship, the following criteria must be met:

- The site for Mental Health Counseling must represent an agency or other community facility that has an identifiable administrative and organizational structure using predominantly licensed professionals and counselors.
- The site must allow for the audio or audiovisual recordings of individual counseling sessions. Such recordings will be used for supervision purposes only and will be made under proper guarantees of privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity for the clients.
- During practicum/internship, students are required to engage in at least one group counseling leader experience. If the site cannot meet this requirement, the student can still be placed at the site, but they must notify the university so an alternative experience can be identified for the student.

Per CACREP 2024 Standards, Site Supervisors must:

- Have a minimum of a master's degree, preferably in counseling or a related profession.
- Have an active certifications and/or licenses in the geographic location where the student is placed, preferably in counseling or a related profession.
- Have a minimum of two years post-master's professional experience relevant to the CACREP specialized practice area in which the student is enrolled.
- Have a relevant training for in-person and/or distance counseling supervision; relevant training in the technology utilized for supervision.
- Have knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students.

Student Obligations

In exchange for the services provided by the field experience site, the counseling student must be willing and able to provide the internship site with the following:

- A time commitment to the site that coordinates with both the course requirements and the site's needs.

- A willingness to participate in all professional activities the site requires of its other clinical staff.
- Appropriately terminating the relationship with their clients at the conclusion of the internship.

Practicum and Internship Evaluation

Students are formally evaluated throughout their clinical training to ensure the development of core counseling competencies and professional conduct. Site supervisors are required to assess student performance at both the midpoint and conclusion of each quarter using the Practicum/Internship Performance Evaluation Form (PIPEF). These evaluations are used to determine both course grades and the student's overall clinical progress.

In addition to site-based evaluations, the Clinical Coordinator assesses the student's readiness and appropriateness for professional counseling practice within the practicum course. If a student demonstrates significant difficulty performing expected counseling skills or fails to meet clinical expectations, they may be referred to the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) for review and possible remediation.

Students also participate in the evaluation process by completing formal assessments of both their Faculty Supervisor and Site Supervisor at the end of their clinical experience.

Interns and practicum students are expected to maintain a high standard of professionalism, ethical behavior, and clinical competence at all times during their field placements. This includes demonstrating respect for clients, adhering to legal and ethical guidelines, and practicing in a manner consistent with the ACA Code of Ethics. Any student who engages in unethical, unprofessional, or harmful behavior—such as the use of illegal substances, misuse of legal substances, or participation in illegal activities—may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program in accordance with the Progress and Promotions Policy.

Unsuccessful Completion or Release from Field Experience

Any student in field placement that receives two or more **“needs improvement”** on any items of their final quarterly PIPEF will receive a failing grade, will need to repeat the course, and will be referred to the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) for further action.

Interns and practicum students are expected to maintain a high standard of professionalism, ethical behavior, and clinical competence at all times during their field placements. This includes demonstrating respect for clients, adhering to legal and ethical guidelines, and practicing in a manner consistent with the ACA Code of Ethics. Any student who engages in unethical, unprofessional, or harmful behavior—such as the use of illegal substances, misuse of legal substances, or participation in illegal activities—may be subject to immediate dismissal from the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program in accordance with the Progress and Promotions Policy.

If a student is released from a clinical training site by the site supervisor or site staff as a result of inadequate clinical performance, unprofessional disposition, unethical delivery of services,

illegal or unlawful acts, or any behaviors deemed disruptive at the clinical training site, the student will receive an “F” for the course and will be automatically referred to the PPC to determine the student’s progression in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. This outcome may include support, remediation, probation, or dismissal from the program.

Site Supervision Expectations

Each student should receive no less than 1 hour of individual supervision provided by the on-site supervisor. Students will receive either 1.5 hours of group supervision provided by the faculty supervisor each week, or 3 hours every other week. Students are evaluated based on review of the clinical performances, ethical, professional, and personal behaviors, and other observations of the on-site and faculty supervisors.

Intern Evaluation of Supervisor

As part of the Exit Interview process, students are provided the opportunity to evaluate the quality of supervision they received at their clinical site. The Exit Interview Summary Form includes a section where students rate various aspects of their supervision—such as attentiveness, respect, support for professional development, quality of feedback, and communication—using categories such as *Poor*, *Adequate*, or *Good*. This feedback is compiled and shared with the clinical site to support ongoing improvement and accountability in site supervision.

It is the student’s responsibility and demonstration of professional accountability to maintain copies of their clinical documentation for their future records.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Program Evaluation

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program’s Academic Program Assessment and Evaluation Plan guides the collection, analysis, and utilization of data to drive informed continuous improvements to the curriculum, instructional practices, student learning, and overall program effectiveness. The systematic assessment and action planning process is consistent with the expectations of the accrediting body for South University, the Southern Association of Colleges, and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), and of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the specialized accreditor of the CMHC Program.

To ensure ongoing program quality and effectiveness, program faculty meet quarterly to review data. The review includes, but is not limited to:

- Student retention and graduation rates
- Licensure and certification exam pass rates
- Feedback from students, alumni, and site supervisors
- Employer satisfaction surveys
- Faculty evaluations and professional development efforts
- Course and curriculum effectiveness, including alignment with CACREP standards

The CMHC Annual Program Evaluation Report summarizes the findings of the quarterly meetings and suggests action items, budgetary implications, and a timeline for implementation for any needs of program modification or enhancement. Identified needs may include curriculum updates, instructional improvements, resource allocations, etc.

This comprehensive assessment process helps ensure students are progressing appropriately while also informing continuous program improvement.

Evaluation results and subsequent actions are shared with key stakeholders, including students, faculty, site supervisors, advisory board members, and university administration. This transparent and collaborative process ensures the program remains responsive to the evolving needs of students, the counseling profession, and the communities it serves.

Annual Report

The CMHC Annual Report is published annually and is available on the program's website for public access. The report includes a summary of program evaluation results, data-driven modifications, and any significant changes implemented during the reporting period.

The report is intended to inform students, faculty, institutional administrators, site supervisors, employers, and other stakeholders about the program's ongoing efforts to ensure quality and effectiveness. Each year, currently enrolled students and faculty are notified via email when the report is published, and a link is also provided in relevant student and faculty resource areas, such as the learning management system and faculty SharePoint.

This commitment to transparency reflects the program's dedication to continuous improvement and accountability in counselor education. A second GSER is completed to evaluate the student's progress as a pending graduate.

STUDENT RETENTION, REMEDIATION, AND DISMISSAL

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program at South University is committed to fostering student success from admission to graduation. In alignment with the ethical, academic, and professional standards of the counseling profession, the program provides structured support for students throughout their development. The student retention, remediation, and dismissal policy outlines the process for reviewing student progress, identifying academic, clinical, or professional dispositions concerns, and implementing appropriate interventions. It also details the procedures for remediation, and, when necessary, dismissal, ensuring that all actions are consistent with institutional policies and the ethical expectations of the counseling field.

Student Progress Review

Students are evaluated using a combination of formative and summative assessments to ensure they are meeting program expectations and professional readiness benchmarks at key transition points in the program in relation to academic progress, professional dispositions, and Program Student Learning Objectives/KPIs. If a faculty determines a student is not performing adequately in any of those areas, remediation may be suggested.

Academic Progress

To remain in good academic standing, CMHC students must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA (CGPA) of 3.0 or higher and complete the program within the maximum allowable timeframe (MTF), which is 150% of the program's normal length.

Evaluation of Professional Dispositions

The CMHC program evaluates students' development in professional dispositions. Evaluation of these competencies occurs continuously throughout the program to ensure students are developing in alignment with the standards of the counseling profession.

Professional dispositions are evaluated through the *Evaluative Grade Report* (EGR), completed at the end of each course, to provide regular feedback on professional dispositions and behaviors. Another assessment is conducted using the *Graduate Student Evaluation Report* (GSER). It is administered twice during the program: once during the quarter prior to beginning clinical training and again in the quarter before graduation and is more comprehensive than the EGR.

EGR and GSER data examined at the aggregated and individual level allows the program to identify areas in the curriculum that may need addressed in order to optimize student development opportunities regarding student readiness for clinical experiences and entry into the profession.

Evaluative Grade Report (EGR)

At the conclusion of each course in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program, instructors complete an Evaluative Grade Report (EGR) for every student. The EGR is designed to assess student performance in key domains, including academic skills, application of course content, and interpersonal and professional behaviors. It serves as an ongoing formative evaluation to promote student growth and identify areas of strength and concern.

Instructors may use the EGR to recommend additional academic or professional support, such as referrals to the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) or to the Academic Success Center (ASC) for help with academic writing or skill development. Each completed EGR is reviewed by the student's Faculty Advisor, who provides individualized guidance based on the report. All EGRs are retained in the student's academic file and are considered part of the official academic record.

Graduate Student Evaluation Report (GSER)

The Graduate Student Evaluation Report (GSER) is a summative assessment tool used to evaluate student development across academic, clinical, and professional domains within the CMHC program. The GSER focuses on professional dispositions, ethical conduct, interpersonal effectiveness, and overall readiness for clinical practice and professional counseling roles.

Faculty complete the GSER at two key milestones in the student's academic journey: first, during the quarter immediately prior to beginning clinical training (typically in CNS7010, Pre-Practicum IA), and again during the quarter in which the student plans to graduate (typically in CNS7611, Internship IIB). This dual-point evaluation supports students' continued growth and

provides faculty with the opportunity to assess students' progress toward meeting program standards and the expectations of the counseling profession.

Key Performance Indicators

The CMHC Key Performance Indicators were developed based on the CACREP standards from each of the core areas. Student proficiency is assessed with pre-selected course assignments. Students must meet the expectations on all KPIs in order to continue or complete the program. Failure to meet the developmental threshold expected on KPI assignments will result in immediate referral to the PPC. Students are afforded two opportunities to attain a 70% or higher on KPI exams. Students who fail to achieve a 70% or better on KPI exams will be referred for remediation.

Remediation

When a student's performance does not meet program expectations, a remediation process may be initiated to provide structured support, promote growth, and ensure readiness for professional practice.

Identification of Concerns

Concerns may be identified by faculty, site supervisors, or program staff through evaluations or observations at any point in the program. Any concern that falls outside of the [South University Code of Conduct and Behavior Policies](#) is referred to the CMHC Remediation process.

Level 1 concerns may initially be addressed informally through discussion, email communications, etc. and include suggested efforts to resolve issues early and collaboratively. Examples of minor concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- A missed submission or late assignments
- Occasional time management or organizational issues
- Difficulty with classroom participation or engagement
- Initial struggles with clinical documentation or basic counseling skills
- Minor lapses in professional demeanor or communication
- Infrequent tardiness or absences not violating the attendance policy

Level 1 concerns are relatively minor. As long as the student is making adequate adjustments to correct the concern, no remediation is necessary. However, if a level 1 concern persists, or no adjustments are noted, further remediation may be suggested.

Level 2 concerns involve patterns of behavior or incidents that raise significant alarm. If level 1 concerns persist or are considered serious, students are referred to the Program Director and/or the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC), where the faculty, supervisor, and/or other staff will work directly with the student to recommend the remediation. Serious concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- Persistent minor concerns that go unaddressed by the student
- Breaches of ethical or legal standards in academic or clinical settings
- Failure to demonstrate appropriate professional boundaries

- Repeated or significant concerns about professional dispositions
- Poor clinical performance that impacts client care
- Academic dishonesty or plagiarism
- Persistent failure to remediate previously identified concerns
- Conduct that violates program, university, or site policies

Progress and Promotions Committee

The CMHC Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) is responsible for the remediation plans for all level 2 concerns. The committee consists of three (3) faculty members, who may be from within or outside the CMHC program and serve as voting members. The Program Director, or designee appointed by the Dean of the College, facilitates the committee's creation and processes and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of any remediation or action plans, including in probation or dismissal, resulting from PPC decisions.

PPC Remediation Process

If a formal remediation is determined to be appropriate, the following steps will be followed:

1. **Meeting** – The student will meet with the Program Director and designated members of the Progress and Promotions Committee to review the concern(s).
2. **Development of Remediation Plan** – A written remediation plan will be created. This plan will include a description of the concern, expected outcomes, specific actions or interventions, a timeline for improvement, and methods for evaluating progress.
3. **Student Review** – The student will receive the remediation plan within ten (10) business days of the meeting. The student's signature acknowledges receipt and understanding of the plan; refusal to sign will be documented but does not prevent implementation.
4. **Follow-Up and Resolution** – Upon successful completion of the remediation plan, the matter will be considered resolved. If concerns continue, further action may include extended remediation, additional referral to the PPC, or dismissal from the program.

PPC Remediation Plan

The PPC remediation plan is a formal document summarizing the concern(s) that resulted in the referral to the PPC. The letter will provide a clear explanation of the implications of the student's status and responsibilities during that period, including expectations for academic, clinical, personal, or professional development. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Enrollment in remedial or repeated coursework
- Regular meetings with faculty or advisors
- Attendance at the Writing Lab or Academic Success Center
- Submission of supplemental assignments
- Completion of additional clinical hours or supervision
- Participation in personal counseling
- Scheduled check-ins with the Program Director

Please note this Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal Policy is not intended to replace or supersede actions that may be taken against a student by South University, for unsatisfactory academic progress or for violations of the South University Conduct Policy.

All documentation related to the remediation process is maintained in the student's academic file. These records are treated as confidential and are used solely for internal program decisions unless disclosure is required by law or professional ethics.

Dismissal

A student may be dismissed from the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program if they do not meet established academic, clinical, or professional standards as outlined in prior sections of this handbook. Grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to demonstrate satisfactory academic, clinical, or professional progress
- Failure to comply with the terms of an approved remediation plan
- Recommendation for dismissal by the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC)
- Falsification of application of academic records
- Refusal to complete a background check or drug screening
- Dismissal from the clinical site

All dismissal decisions are made in accordance with program policies and are intended to uphold the integrity and standards of the counseling profession.

Immediate Dismissal

A student may be dismissed from the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program without remediation if they engage in a serious violation of ethical or professional conduct, or if they are found to have misrepresented academic, professional, or personal information during the admissions process. Grounds for immediate dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- Providing false or misleading information on the program application or falsifying background details.
- Violations of ACA Code of Ethics
- Harmful or unsafe behavior in clinical settings
- Dismissal from the clinical site
- Violations of the South University Code of Conduct and Behavior Policies

In accordance with the South University Code of Conduct and Behavior Policies, please refer to the [interim suspension or immediate expulsion](#) section in the South University Academic Catalog for when a student may be removed, suspended, or expelled without applying or exhausting procedures of the Code of Conduct and Behavior Policies or the CMHC Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal Policy.

Appeal Process

Students in the CMHC program have the right to appeal decisions regarding to academic standing, remediation, probation, or dismissal, other than those based on the South University SAP policy. This appeal process is designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and adherence to ethical and institutional standards.

Appeals will be considered for claims of the following:

- Failure of the program to follow due process
- New evidence or information that was not available at the time of the decision
- Disproportionate outcome relative to the concern or infraction

Students may appeal decisions by submitting a formal written appeal to the Department Chair within seven (7) business days of receiving notification of the decision. The appeal must clearly state the grounds for the appeal, including any supporting documentation, and specify the outcome the student is seeking.

The Department Chair will issue a written response to the student within ten (10) business days of receiving the appeal. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome, they may escalate the appeal to a second level by submitting a written request to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences within seven (7) business days of receiving the Department Chair's decision. The decision of the Dean is final and not subject to further appeal. All documentation will be added to the student's academic file.

Academic Programmatic Probation

In addition to meeting South University's Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements, students enrolled in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program are also expected to maintain compliance with program-specific academic standards. In some cases, a student may maintain a cumulative GPA (CGPA) of 3.0 or higher but still earn a grade below a "C" in a required course. In such instances, the student will be placed on Academic Programmatic Probation and must meet the conditions outlined below:

- **Course Retake Requirement**
Any course in which a student earns a grade lower than a "C" must be repeated within a timeframe determined by the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC). Students are responsible for all tuition and fees associated with retaking the course.
- **Remediation Compliance**
If a student fails to meet the terms of an academic remediation plan issued by the PPC, they will be required to meet with the committee to reassess their progress and standing. Following this review, the PPC may recommend one or more of the following actions:
 - Continued probation
 - Continued probation with additional conditions
 - Referral to academic counseling
 - Referral to personal counseling
 - Suspension from the CMHC program
 - Dismissal from the CMHC program
- **Transcript and GPA Implication**
When a course is repeated, both the original and repeated course grades will appear on

the student's transcript. However, only the grade earned during the repeated attempt will be used in the calculation of the student's cumulative GPA.

Terms and Expectations of Probation

Students placed on probation by the PPC will receive formal notification from the Program Director/Chair of the PPC. This notification will include a summary of the concern(s) that led to probation and a corresponding remediation plan. The letter will outline the following key elements⁵:

- **Probationary Status and Expectations**
A clear explanation of the implications of probationary status and the student's responsibilities during the probationary period, including expectations for academic, clinical, personal, or professional improvement.
- **Opportunities for Improvement**
Recommendations and requirements for addressing identified concerns may include, but are not limited to:
 - Enrollment in remedial or repeated coursework
 - Regular meetings with faculty or advisors
 - Attendance at the Writing Lab or Academic Success Center
 - Submission of supplemental assignments
 - Completion of additional clinical hours or supervision
 - Participation in personal counseling
 - Scheduled check-ins with the Program Director
- **Monitoring and Benchmarks**
A defined process for ongoing review, including benchmarks for evaluating the student's progress during the probationary period. This process is designed to assess performance across academic, clinical, professional, and personal development domains.
- **Continued Enrollment**
Students who agree to and comply with the conditions outlined by the PPC will be permitted to continue in the program under probationary status.

While on probation, students may only enroll in courses specifically approved by the PPC. Probationary status does not automatically affect financial aid eligibility; students remain eligible to receive aid unless notified otherwise by the Financial Aid Office.

Please refer to the Academic Catalog for more information on [Programmatic Probation](#).

Removal from Academic Programmatic Probation

A student will be removed from academic probation and returned to good academic standing upon successful completion of the conditions outlined in their probation remediation plan and the demonstration of a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher by the end of the probationary period.

Please refer to the [Reinstatement Policy](#) in the Academic Catalog for more information.

⁵ All letters and correspondence to the student will be copied to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Registrar, Program Director, and the Progress and Promotions Committee.

Appealing Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) or Financial Aid Dismissals

Decisions related to Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) and Financial Aid Dismissals are determined by South University and are governed by institutional policy.

Students seeking to appeal a SAP or Financial Aid Dismissal should refer to [Section IV. Procedures for Appealing Academic/Financial Aid Dismissal](#) in the South University Academic Catalog for detailed information and instructions.

LICENSURE AND CERTIFICATION

Professional Certifications and Licensure

Students interested in becoming Licensed Mental Health Counselors or Licensed Professional Counselors in their respective states must apply with their state boards to pursue their licenses after graduation. Most agencies and credentialing bodies require a background check. A student who has been convicted of a felony and/or particular misdemeanors may face barriers with certain practicum/internship sites while in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program and with licensing boards. Students are encouraged to contact the board directly and ask any questions regarding charges/issues on their background checks. Students may be asked by their state licensing boards about any past mental and/or addiction disorders and must be prepared to address these questions when applying for their licenses. Information on how to contact your state licensure board can be obtained from your Program Director. For more information, visit your state's licensure website:

South University Columbia:

<https://llr.sc.gov/cou/>

South University Richmond:

https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/counseling/counseling_forms.htm#LPC

South University Savannah:

http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/licensing/plb/43/composite_board_proposed_rules

South University West Palm Beach:

<http://floridasmentalhealthprofessions.gov/licensing/licensed-mental-health-counselor/>

Endorsement Policy

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at South University is designed to prepare counselors to enter and perform in appropriate work settings. As individual state requirements vary, students requesting an endorsement are directed to the Program Director for the appropriate documentation for determination of request. These requests will be addressed relevant to the specific endorsement being sought and the qualifications of the student requesting the endorsement. Decisions about the appropriateness of an endorsement for employment and/or professional credentialing will be based on the student's area of specialization, training, and/or coursework. Under no circumstance will students be endorsed for employment outside their area(s) of demonstrated competence. Any endorsement is solely at the discretion of the Program.

THE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The Comprehensive Examination is a key academic milestone in the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program and serves as a culminating assessment of a student's mastery of core content prior to graduation. This formal examination is designed to evaluate the breadth and depth of knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking skills developed throughout the program. It is intended to align with and meet or exceed expectations set by the program, the department, the University, national accreditation bodies, and state licensure requirements. The exam is designed and administered by the CMHC program, and the structure and content are similar to the CPCE.

CNS8202, Comprehensive Examination

Students are enrolled in CNS8202, a 0-credit Comprehensive Examination course, during the later stages of the program—typically in quarter 6 of the 8-quarter track or quarter 8 of the 10-quarter track. This course represents the official platform for assessing students' understanding across key counseling domains. Content areas assessed include, but are not limited to:

- Human Growth and Development
- Social and Cultural Foundations
- Helping Relationships
- Group Work
- Career and Lifestyle Development
- Appraisal
- Research and Program Evaluation
- Professional Orientation and Ethics

The exam is a four-hour, multiple-choice assessment. Students must pass all sections of the exam in order to be eligible for graduation. The examination is administered on pre-scheduled dates announced at the beginning of the quarter in which it is offered.

Cost

There is no fee for students to take the comprehensive examination.

Comprehensive Examination Progression Policy

Students who do not pass the comprehensive examination on their first attempt will be referred to the Progress and Promotions Committee (PPC) for review and support. Students are permitted to retake CNS8202 up to two additional times. If a student fails to pass the examination after three total attempts, they will be dismissed from the program and will not be awarded the Master of Arts degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Student Affairs

The Office of Student Affairs provides programs and services that support and enhance students' academic experiences by promoting personal growth and professional development. Additionally, the Office serves as a primary resource and point of contact for military and

veteran students, as well as eligible family members seeking support during their time at South University.

Please refer to the [Student Support](#) section of the South University Academic Catalog and the [South University Student Handbook](#) for the policies and services available to all South University students:

Student Support	Policies
Digital Bookshelf	Code of Conduct
Career Services	Non-Discrimination Policy
Disability Services	No Harassment Policy
Health Services	Grievance Procedure
Library Services	

Health and Wellness/Student Assistance Program

Health and wellness is an active and lifelong process, involving positive decision making and finding balance between priorities. It is tied to awareness and to making choices that lead to being happier, healthier, and more fulfilled lives. As a South University student, you have access to a free resource for counseling called the UWill. The UWill provides access to both a twenty-four-hour seven day a week telephone number that connects the individual with a professional counselor and website to assist students. The services provided include mental health counseling, and a wellness hub, which includes articles and videos on mental health and wellness topics, including mental and emotional health, fitness and nutrition, academic performance, stress management, healthy relationships and more. For additional college and local resources, contact the Dean of Student Affairs.

Mental Health Support

All South University employees and students have access to a free resource for counseling called Uwill. Uwill provides immediate access to licensed therapists and up to six counseling sessions at no additional cost. Services are flexible and confidential, including appointment options by video, phone, or chat, scheduling during days, nights, and weekends. Included is the ability to choose therapists based on gender, language, ethnicity, or specialty.

To access Uwill, go to <https://app.uwill.com/login>.

Students in need of support should contact Uwill at 1-833-99-Uwill.

For additional college and local resources, contact the Dean of Student Affairs.

Community Resources

South University's Student Assistant Program (SAP) connects students to a free, confidential helpline, 211, offering referrals to local resources such as food, clothing, and household essentials; rental and utility assistance; health, dental, and eye care; emergency shelter and low-income housing; job training and employment services; additional mental health counseling and

substance abuse support. Contact 211 by dialing 211, texting your ZIP code to 898-211, or visiting www.211.org.

For complete information, please refer to [Health and Wellness](#) in the South University Academic Catalog.

Disability Services

South University Disability Services ensures students with disabilities equal access to the college's educational programs, opportunities, and activities. Qualified students requesting reasonable and appropriate accommodations receive services to eliminate physical, programmatic, and attitudinal barriers that may arise with disabilities.

Students who seek reasonable accommodations should notify the Dean of Student Affairs at their campus location. Students will be asked to submit medical documentation of the need for accommodation to the campus Dean of Student Affairs. Classroom accommodations are not retroactive but are effective only upon the student sharing approved accommodations with the instructor. Therefore, students are encouraged to request accommodations as early as during the Admissions process to allow for time to gather necessary documentation. If you have further questions, contact the Dean of Student Affairs associated with your campus location.

Any complaints will be handled in accordance with the school's Student Grievance Procedure for Internal Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment found in the Student Affairs section of the Academic Catalog.

Please refer to [Disability Services](#) in the South University Academic Catalog.

Career Center

The Career Services Office aids with pursuing employment opportunities through individualized job searches, resume and cover letter development, and career planning resources. Career workshops as well as themed events related to academic majors are held throughout the year to aid students in their professional development.

Please refer to the [South University Career Center](#) for more information regarding the services provided.

Technical Support

South University students have access to Technical Support by calling 1 (866) 848-5515 to receive personalized assistance from a live tech support representative, *Monday through Saturday, from 8am to 10pm ET*.

This support is available for the following:

- *My Campus* Student Portal username or password problems and navigation
- *Digital Bookshelf* and other digital resources setup and navigation (for online courses only)
- Office 365 access

- Online classrooms (Bright Space) or electronic file upload assistance
- Hardware requirements, software requirements, and computer configuration
- Operating system and browser issues

Students experiencing trouble with campus computers, printers, or the wireless network, submit a ticket through the SUITS (South University Information Technology Services) system at [Inside.SouthUniversity.edu](https://inside.southuniversity.edu).

Email Accounts/Communication

South University will provide all applicants and current students a southuniversity.stu.edu email account. This will be considered the student's primary email account while enrolled at South University. All Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) students are required to use their South University email account for all official correspondence and are expected to check it regularly. Email is the primary method of communication between students, faculty, practicum/internship supervisors, and professional contacts. Important program updates, announcements, and academic information will be sent exclusively to students' university email accounts. Failure to monitor this account may result in missed deadlines or critical information related to academic and clinical progress.

Tutoring Services

South University tutoring is supported by tutor.com. This service provides 24-hour support for students to connect with a tutor, drop off work, test prep, job, and career resources, etc. Students may access tutoring options students my click on the Tutoring link in the navigation bar of any course home page.

Library Services

South University provides library facilities for its students at each of the main campus locations. Virtual support services are provided for all campuses, including branches. The libraries are easily accessible and house print collections consisting of general and reference books, periodicals, and other non-print media to support students in their studies. Campus library facilities offer students group and quiet study spaces. Campus libraries post their operating hours.

Electronic resources are available to all students, faculty, and staff through the library's web site. Digital resources include e-books, journals, and video content. Electronic resources are available 24 hours a day/365 days a year. Virtual support services include email, text, and chat services. Chat hours are posted on the library home page.

South University libraries expand their patrons' access to resources outside of their own facilities through inter-library loan services. Students can request articles that are not available in South University Library's collection, and the library will locate the article(s) and deliver them to the student, usually via email.

Library Directors participate in new student and faculty orientation. A library overview webinar is offered to all students at the start of each academic term. In the webinar, students are informed of the types of materials available, how to locate information, and how to use library resources to

the greatest advantage. Additional webinars on Understanding APA 7 and citing/referencing are also offered.

Each campus library maintains a policies and procedures manual providing guidance on various topics including checking out materials and overdue books. Campus students may request access to specific policies from the Library Director. Online students can contact Chat services or submit an email to request information about specific policies and/or procedures.

Campus libraries provide a reserve collection for use by students, faculty, and staff. Reserved materials are usually identified by faculty members as resources for specific courses. Reserved materials are for reference purposes and are restricted to the library.

INFORMED CONSENT AGREEMENT

I confirm that I have been oriented to the CMHC Program requirements and expectations of graduate students enrolled in the CMHC Program at South University. These include:

- Full participation and engagement in course work and experiential activities, some of which will be recorded, either in person or via a designated virtual space, designed to provide students the opportunity to develop the awareness, dispositions, knowledge, and skills required of counselors.***
- Receiving and integrating feedback from faculty, supervisors, and peers on my personal, academic, and professional development.***
- Examining the impact of my personal beliefs, background, behaviors, and mental health on my ability to engage ethically and effectively with peers, faculty, supervisors, and clients.***

I also understand:

- Faculty and supervisors have an ethical responsibility as gatekeepers for the profession to protect public health and safety. This will entail communication and consultation among faculty, administration, and site supervisors.
- Students in training engage in supervised practice under the auspices of the professional counseling licenses of their site and faculty supervisors.
- Faculty and supervisors have a responsibility to assist students who are not meeting the personal, academic, and/or dispositional requirements of the program and field. Concerns will be documented, and remediation plans will be initiated as needed.
- Effective gatekeeping may require dismissal of students who are unable to demonstrate sufficient development as counselors-in-training, which may include failing to meet program requirements and expectations, unethical, illegal, and or unprofessional behavior at any time during their enrollment in the program. Such cases will be referred to the Progress and Promotion Committee and recommendations will be made to the Program Director.

I, _____ (student name), acknowledge I have received and reviewed the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Guide and understand I am bound by the policies detailed in it, the South University Academic Catalog, as well as the *American Counseling Association Code of Ethics*. I acknowledge the faculty of the Counseling Program are accountable for ongoing assessment of my academic and professional behavior and development.

I agree to engage as a student in the CMHC Program and to abide by the policies and expectations set by South University and the CMHC program.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please give this completed form to your faculty advisor. Your advisor will sign the form and turn it into the office where it will be placed in your student folder.

Faculty Advisor's Signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX A: FORMS

Accurate documentation of counseling and counselor training is a requirement of the field and a best practice. Training documentation is essential to demonstrating compliance with accreditation standards and monitoring student completion of program requirements. Students are responsible for retaining documentation of their clinical training for use in pursuing licensure following graduation⁶. Please become familiar with the forms that guide documentation of key activities in the CMHC Program.

The **Practicum/Internship Agreement** is completed by the Site with which the clinical training will take place, South University, and the student. It is a binding document that outlines obligations of all parties during the clinical education.

The **Practicum/Internship Performance Evaluation Form**, or PIPEF, is completed by the Site Supervisor each quarter the student is in clinical training (Practicum, Internship I, Internship II, and Internship III). It is an opportunity for the student to receive qualitative feedback on their progress across multiple areas. Areas evaluated include responsibility, professional interest and development, time management, organizational skills, ethical behavior, communication, etc.

The **Exit Interview Summary Form** gives the student and Site Supervisor an opportunity to outline strengths and weaknesses during clinical training. The Site Supervisor evaluates the student, and the student has an opportunity to describe their experience at the site.

The **Student Clinical Evaluation** is completed by the Site Supervisor by assessing criteria on attending classes, giving feedback, using proper techniques, and counseling skills, etc.

The **Client Authorization and Release Form** is signed by the individual who will be counseled by the practicum/internship student. This authorizes the use of audio and video tape and reassures the client all tapes will be destroyed, and they can revoke consent at any time.

The **Daily Activity Log** is where students describe their activities, and the amount of time devoted to each one and submit for supervisory sign-off. Students prepare a new log each week for supervisor review.

The **Site Visit Evaluation** is conducted by the Clinical Coordinator, or South Faculty Supervisor, in relation to the student's performance during clinical training at the Site. The Faculty Supervisor discusses the student's progress and skills.

The **Supervisor Evaluation of Program** allows the Site Supervisor to evaluate the South University's Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program. Site Supervisors choose a response on a 1-5 scale of poor to excellent on different areas in relation to student preparation.

⁶ South University does not promise or guarantee employment or that students will pass licensure exams.

The **Temporary Waiver of Campus Supervision** is completed no later than two weeks prior to the time the waiver of campus supervision would be active. This outlines permission for the student to be supervised by the Site Supervisor and the Site while supervision by South University's Faculty Supervisor will not be available. The Student, Faculty Supervisor (Clinical Coordinator), and Site Supervisor sign off on the permission.

The **Weekly Field Supervision Log** is completed by the Site Supervisor to keep track of topics covered for the week. Site Supervisors sign off each week.

The **Evaluative Grade Report**, or EGR, is completed every quarter while a student is enrolled in the CMHC program. The instructor and/or Faculty Advisor note the academic skills, application of knowledge and key performance indicators for the class. This evaluation could lead to a student being recommended for review by the Progress and Promotions Committee if any areas are not meeting expectations or need improvement.

The **Graduate Student Evaluation Report**, or GSER, is completed prior to Pre-Practicum, CNS7010 and Internship IIB, CNS7611. It is used for acknowledgement of accomplishments and providing constructive feedback prior to and during clinical training. South University Faculty measure the student's growth throughout the program in academic development, professional/personal development, and clinical development. Satisfactory progress in each of these areas is a requirement. Failure to do so may lead to probation, suspension, remediation, or dismissal from the program.

APPENDIX B: CMHC Curriculum

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program: 91 Credits, 10-quarter program (Curriculum for Columbia, Richmond, and Savannah/Online campuses only)

Quarter 1:

- CNS6002 Counseling Theory *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6425 Clinical Mental Health Counseling *4 credit hours*

Quarter 2:

- CNS6018 Psychopathology *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6161 Counseling Techniques *4 credit hours*

Quarter 3:

- CNS6050 Lifespan Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6051 Diagnostics of Psychopathology and Treatment *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 4:

- CNS6313 Professional Orientation and Ethics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6565 Multicultural Foundations *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 5:

- CNS6509 Group Dynamics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS7010 Pre-Practicum IA *1 credit hour*
- CNS6901 Diagnosis and Treatment of Addictive Disorders *4 credit hours*

Quarter 6:

- CNS6529 Research and Statistical Evaluation *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6535 Clinical Mental Health Appraisal I *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 7:

- CNS6602 Lifestyle and Career Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6850 Psychopharmacology *4 credit hours*
- CNS7011 Practicum IB (100 hours) *1.0 credit hour*

Quarter 8:

- CNS7510 Internship IA (200 hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7950 Child/Adolescent Psychopathology and Treatment *4 credit hours*
- CNS8202 Counseling Preparation Comprehensive Examination *0 credit hour*

Quarter 9:

- CNS7610 Internship IIA (200 hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7970 Crisis and Trauma *4 credit hours*

Quarter 10:

- CNS6709 Couples, Marital, and Family Dynamics *4 credit hours*
- CNS6775 Counseling Administration, Advocacy, Supervision, and Policy *4 credit hours*
- CNS7611 Internship IIB (200 hours) *4 credit hours*

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program: 91 Credits, 8-quarter program
(Curriculum for Columbia, Richmond, and Savannah/Online campuses only)

Quarter 1:

- CNS6002 Counseling Theory *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6050 Lifespan Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6425 Clinical Mental Health Counseling *4 credit hours*

Quarter 2:

- CNS6018 Psychopathology *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6161 Counseling Techniques *4 credit hours*
- CNS6565 Multicultural Foundations *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 3:

- CNS6051 Diagnostics of Psychopathology and Treatment *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6313 Professional Orientation and Ethics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6509 Group Dynamics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS7010 Pre-Practicum IA *1 credit hour*

Quarter 4:

- CNS6529 Research and Statistical Evaluation *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6535 Clinical Mental Health Appraisal I *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6709 Couples, Marital, and Family Dynamics *4 credit hours*

Quarter 5:

- CNS6602 Lifestyle and Career Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6901 Diagnosis and Treatment of Addictive Disorders *4 credit hours*
- CNS7011 Practicum IB (100 hours) *1.0 credit hour*

Quarter 6:

- CNS7510 Internship IA (200 hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7950 Child/Adolescent Psychopathology and Treatment *4 credit hours*
- CNS8202 Counseling Preparation Comprehensive Examination *0 credit hour*

Quarter 7:

- CNS6850 Psychopharmacology *4 credit hours*
- CNS7610 Internship IIA (200 hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7970 Crisis and Trauma *4 credit hours*

Quarter 8:

- CNS6775 Counseling Adm, Advocacy, Supervision, and Policy *4 credit hours*
- CNS7611 Internship IIB (200 hours) *4 credit hours*

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program: 95 Credits, 10-quarter program
(Curriculum for the West Palm Beach campus only)

Quarter 1:

- CNS6002 Counseling Theory *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6425 Clinical Mental Health Counseling *4 credit hours*

Quarter 2:

- CNS6018 Psychopathology *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6161 Counseling Techniques *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 3:

- CNS6050 Lifespan Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6051 Diagnostics of Psychopathology and Treatment *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 4:

- CNS6313 Professional Orientation and Ethics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6565 Multicultural Foundations *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 5:

- CNS6509 Group Dynamics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6901 Diagnosis and Treatment of Addictive Disorders *4 credit hours*
- CNS7010 Pre-Practicum IA *1 credit hour*

Quarter 6:

- CNS6529 Research and Statistical Evaluation *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6535 Clinical Mental Health Appraisal I *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 7:

- CNS6602 Lifestyle and Career Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6850 Psychopharmacology *4 credit hours*
- CNS7011 Practicum IB (100 clinical hours) *1 credit hour*

Quarter 8:

- CNS6709 Couples, Marital, and Family Dynamics *4 credit hours*
- CNS7510 Internship IA (200 clinical hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7950 Child/Adolescent Psychopathology and Treatment *4 credit hours*
- CNS8202 Comprehensive Examination *0 credit hours*

Quarter 9:

- CNS7610 Internship IIA (200 clinical hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7970 Crisis and Trauma *4 credit hours*

Quarter 10:

- CNS6775 Counseling Administration, Advocacy, Supervision and Policy *4 credit hours*
- CNS6800 Human Sexuality *4 credit hours*
- CNS7611 Internship IIB (200 clinical hours) *4 credit hours*

Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program: 95 Credits, 8-quarter program
(Curriculum for the West Palm Beach campus only)

Quarter 1:

- CNS6002 Counseling Theory *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6050 Lifespan Development *4.5 credit hour*
- CNS6425 Clinical Mental Health Counseling *4 credit hours*

Quarter 2:

- CNS6018 Psychopathology *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6161 Counseling Techniques *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6565 Multicultural Foundations *4.5 credit hours*

Quarter 3:

- CNS6051 Diagnostics of Psychopathology and Treatment *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6313 Professional Orientation and Ethics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6509 Group Dynamics *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS7010 Pre-Practicum IA *1 credit hour*

Quarter 4:

- CNS6529 Research and Statistical Evaluation *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6901 Diagnosis and Treatment of Addictive Disorders *4 credit hours*

Quarter 5:

- CNS6535 Clinical Mental Health Appraisal I *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS6602 Lifestyle and Career Development *4.5 credit hours*
- CNS7011 Practicum IB (100 hours) *1.0 credit hour*

Quarter 6:

- CNS6709 Couples, Marital, and Family Dynamics *4 credit hours*
- CNS7510 Internship IA (200 hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7950 Child/Adolescent Psychopathology and Treatment *4 credit hours*
- CNS8202 Counseling Preparation Comprehensive Examination *0 credit hour*

Quarter 7:

- CNS6850 Psychopharmacology *4 credit hours*
- CNS7610 Internship IIA (200 hours) *4 credit hours*
- CNS7970 Crisis and Trauma *4 credit hours*

Quarter 8:

- CNS6775 Counseling Administration, Advocacy, Supervision, and Policy *4 credit hours*
- CNS6800 Human Sexuality *4 credit hours*
- CNS7611 Internship IIB (200 hours) *4 credit hours*

Revision History

Date	Description of Changes	Updated by
10/2023	v.1 New Program Guide with CRT approval	J. Masoner
1/17/2024	v.2 Updated links referencing Academic Catalog to reflect new catalog published at end of 2023	J. Masoner
4/22/2024	v.3 • Updated program goals for new assessment • Addition of 9th PSLO and verbiage changes to PSLO 1 and 5 • Clinical Experience: Update to quarters recommended for Pre-Practicum IA • Appendix A: CMHC Curriculum. Alter quarters for CNS6535 and CNS7010, removal of NC notes	J. Masoner
4/24/2026	v.4 • Updated University mission statement • Program Objectives • Program Student Learning Outcomes/Key Performance Indicators • Program Delivery Options • Diversity policy • Background Check • Graduate Assistantships • Attendance Requirements • Late Work Policy • Course Retake Requirement • CMHC Code of Conduct • Virtual/Online Netiquette • Artificial Intelligence • Electronic Recordings • Substance Abuse and Screening Policy • Program Evaluation • Student Retention, Remediation, and Dismissal	J. Masoner