



## **Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

### **Student Handbook**

Montreat College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the Associate's degree, the Bachelor's degree, and the Master's degree. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions about the accreditation of Montreat College.

## Montreat College

# Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling Student Handbook

*Revised August 2024*  
(Subject to revision at any time)

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## Welcome

The pursuit of a graduate degree is a life-changing career decision. Congratulations on making this step in your professional and academic journey, and welcome to the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) program at Montreat College. The following handbook will be your guide with the College throughout the time you are enrolled in the CMHC degree program and will provide you with valuable information regarding policies and procedures, expectations, and resources. The college reserves the right to update this document.

The program faculty is committed to helping you reach your academic and professional goals and mentoring you in this process as you grow and develop as a professional. The College staff and faculty look forward to getting to know you and your dreams. We are committed to assisting you in developing the required skills, knowledge, and attitudes for professional work as a mental health counselor.

## Program Administration and Faculty

Montreat College strives to continually recruit core, affiliate, and adjunct instructors whose professional identity is that of professional counselor, who have been trained with excellence, who have diverse experiences in practicing mental health counseling, and who, above all else, profess a Christian faith. Our current faculty includes the following professionals:

### **Assistant Professor of Clinical Mental Health Counseling/Program Director**

Dr. Penny Lane Hamblin, EdD, NCC, LCMHCS

[phamblin@montreat.edu](mailto:phamblin@montreat.edu)

### **Visiting Assistant Professor of Clinical Mental Health Counseling/Clinical Director**

Dr. Tora Kincaid, PhD, NCC, QS, LCMHC, LCASA, BC-TMH

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### **Assistant Professor of Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

Dr. Anna Lee Brown, PhD, LCMHCS

[annalee.brown@montreat.edu](mailto:annalee.brown@montreat.edu)

### **Adjunct Faculty**

Dr. Gregg Blanton, EdD, LCMHC, LMFT

Dr. Joy Martin, PhD, LCMHC

Dr. Laura Rogers, PhD, LPCS, NCC, ACS, BC-TMH

Dr. Sharon Arrindell, PhD, LCMHC

Dr. John-Nelson B. Pope, Ph.D., LCMHCS, NCC

Dr. Tyreeka Williams, Ph.D., M.A., Licensed K-12 School Counselor

Dr. Kwame Frimpong, PhD, LCMHC

Lori Breland, LCMHC, NCC, ABD

Carrie Hanson, LMFT, LCAS, CSS, QS

Melody Mitchell, MSW, LCSW

## Mission of the College

Montreat College is an independent, Christ-centered, liberal arts institution that educates students through intellectual inquiry, spiritual formation, and preparation for calling and career, all to impact the world for Jesus Christ.

## Mission of the Counseling Program

The mission of the Counseling Program is to train candidates in the fundamentals of human development, human behavior, and counseling within the context of both a secular and Christian worldview and to guide them in developing a personal philosophy of counseling and professional practice in a variety of settings. The Counseling Program provides a forum for candidates to engage in reflective practice as professionals and to become life-long learners, active global citizens, and advocates for social justice.

## Mission of the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Degree Program

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree program educates candidates in the history and development of the counseling profession, the theories of counseling, the ethical practice of counseling, the competencies required for working with multicultural and diverse groups, and the strategies for working with individuals across the lifespan in everyday developmental, behavioral, psychological, social, emotional, and career challenging crises.

## Purpose of the Handbook

This handbook is written to provide you with important information about the Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree program, college and program resources, and policies and regulations. It is also a source of information for related professional associations and activities that can support your growth as a professional while enrolled in the program.

Updates to this handbook will be made available to you via the program website, by notifications on the College Listserv, and as requested in print from faculty and staff. This handbook is a supplement to the Montreat College AGS Catalog and does not serve as a replacement to the Catalog.

## The Conceptual Framework for the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Degree Program

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree prepares candidates to become competent counselor practitioners who are life-long learners, critical thinkers, agents of social justice in their communities, and spokespersons for transformation, renewal, and reconciliation in their spheres of influence within the conceptual framework of *Counselor as Advocate, Leader, and Collaborator*.

The Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (CMHC) is a 60-credit degree that meets the academic requirements for licensure as a clinical mental health counselor in most states. The philosophy takes a broad view of counseling as a discipline to create an inclusive

program incorporating a diverse range of counseling approaches. The overarching theme of the program centers on instilling the counselor identity in students. This involves helping them develop an understanding that being a counselor is something that they are, not just something that they do. The program supports the development of a counselor identity by creating a safe space for students to engage in a process of self-reflection to develop insight and awareness about their own personality, learn how to bring this personality into a counseling relationship, and experience their own vulnerability as they come to understand their personal strengths and growth areas as a counselor. Four subsidiary themes that are interwoven throughout the curriculum are developing ethical reasoning, valuing diversity, applying critical thinking, and integrating theory and technique in clinical practice.

To achieve this vision, the curriculum makes extensive use of synchronous and asynchronous video collaboration software to allow students to connect on a more direct and immediate level with both their peers and their instructors and to facilitate a greater sense of community within the program. The program creates an authentic learning environment in which students learn how to apply the theories and techniques of counseling through role-play simulations allowing them to experience the counseling process from the perspective of the counselor and the client.

In addition to the online course work, the training experience includes two face-to-face residencies, a 100-hour practicum, and at least two 300-hour internships. Also, in order to accommodate students from as many states as possible, courses specific to state licensure requirements (such as crisis intervention/crisis counseling and marriage and family counseling) address additional licensure needs.

During the course of their training, students are expected to endorse the following confidentiality statement: “I commit to manage and protect all information from mock counseling sessions during residencies, classroom assignments, and discussions as private information. I will comply with the ACA code of ethics guidance on how to manage private information. I commit to maintain the confidentiality of all classmate information in accordance with applicable laws. I understand that I will only have access to video-recorded activities in the classroom for 60 days after the term in which I took the course ends. I further commit to gain written consent from any classmate in a video that I would like to share with other parties as a demonstration of my counseling skills before I share that video.”

## Counseling Program Outcomes

Upon completion of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling graduate degree program, candidates should be able to meet the following objectives that are based on the 2009 CACREP Standards for Clinical Mental Health Counseling Programs:

Acquire a solid knowledge base related to clinical mental health counseling that includes the following:

- a. History and philosophy of clinical mental health counseling and current trends in the field (CMHC:A: 1; CMCH:C:9)
- b. Ethical and legal standards and ways to apply them to professional practice

(CMHC:A:2; CMHC:B: 1)

- c. Professional associations and organizations, licenses and credentials related to clinical mental health counseling, the benefits of credentialing and membership in organizations, and the processes for obtaining credentials and licenses (CMHC: A:4)
- d. Counseling theories and techniques and strategies for integrating them into counseling sessions, based on client identified goals and needs, as well as supervision theories and models (CMHC: A:5; CMHC:E:3)  
Professional roles and functions in a variety of settings and specialties, professional issues that influence clinical mental health counselors, and self- care strategies and resources (CMHC:A:3; CMHC:A:7; CMHC:C:5; CMHC:D:9)
- e. Counseling strategies for working with diverse clients in multiculturally sensitive and competent ways (CMHC:D:2; CMHC:D:5; CMHC:E:1-6; CMHC:F:1-3; CMHC:H:1; CMHC:K:4)
- f. Advocacy strategies for clients and advocacy efforts, legislation, and public policy related to clinical mental health counseling (CMHC:B:2; CMHC:E:4; CMHC:E:6)

**Demonstrate knowledge of and skills for practice in the following areas:**

- g. Counseling, prevention, and intervention, including theories and techniques (CMHC:A:5; CMHC:C:1; CMHC:C:8; CMHC:D:1; CMHC:D:3; CMHC:C:7; CMHC:D:4)
- h. Substance abuse and addictions (CMHC:A:6; CMHC:C:4; CMHC:D:8; CMHC:K:3)
- i. Career development across the lifespan and career counseling theories and techniques (Section ii:4:a-g)
- j. Crisis, trauma, and disaster (CMHC:A:9-1 O; CMHC:C:6; CMHC:K:5; CMHC:L:3)
- k. Individual, couple, family, and group counseling (CMHC:D:5}
- l. Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning, using a variety of assessment tools such as the current edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) (CMHC:C:2; CMHC:D: 1; CMHC:D:6; CMHC:G:1-4; CMHC:H:1-4; CMHC:K:1-5; CMHC:L:1-3)
- m. Ethical practice, decision making and the implications of advocacy and multicultural issues in sound ethical practice with clients (CMHC:A:2; CMHC:B:1)
- n. Research strategies and critical evaluation of literature and interventions related to the practice of clinical mental health counseling (CMHC:1:1-3; CMHC:J:1-3)
- o. Day-to-day practice skills, including intake, record keeping, and consultation (CMHC:A:8; CMHC:D:7)

Meet the following additional goals:

- p. Articulate a personal worldview and personal theory of counseling, integrating their own spiritual formation into their professional growth and practice as a counseling practitioner.  
Demonstrate mastery of the technology needed for success in today's professional world and exemplary oral and written communication skills requisite of a graduate-level professional.
- q. Demonstrate a commitment to life-long personal and professional growth through continuing education, consultation, and supervision as appropriate.
- r. Create a professional portfolio that will include, but not limited to, documentation of the following: course projects, attendance at professional conferences and workshops, leadership roles, projects implemented during practicum and internship experiences (as appropriate), a Professional Growth Plan (PGP), beginning documents for the state licensure processes, and reflections on their experiences throughout the program.

## Program Requirements and Course Descriptions

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree curriculum is designed to provide students the opportunity to meet the educational requirements for application to become a Licensed Professional Counselor Associate (LCMHC-A) set forth by the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors. To meet the state licensure requirements, the program requires students to complete 60 credit hours of graduate level coursework.

Program courses are taken in a lock-step, sequential manner. If a student wishes to take courses beyond those required, as courses are available, the student should speak with his or her Faculty Mentor and *receive* written permission to take a course out of sequence and/or in a more intensive manner than is already established. All courses are core to the program. Students will take courses in the order outlined below.

### COUN 5211 Professional Orientation to Counseling

This course will be an introductory exploration of the history of counseling as a profession as well as current trends in the practice of clinical mental health counseling. Students will begin to explore the various settings in which counseling can take place and the specialties within the profession, in addition to professional counseling licensure and credentialing. Additional topics *covered* in this course in an introductory way include counselor self-care, consultation, professional counseling organizations, *advocacy*, ethics, and multicultural competency. (3 credits, 15 week)

### COUN 5212 Ethics and Ethical Practice in Counseling

This course will examine ethical standards and ethical decision making for the practice of counseling. Applicable Codes of Ethics will be examined, and case studies will be used to



challenge students to think critically about ethics and ethical decision making. Ethical issues in individual, group, family, and couples counseling will be *covered*, as well as multicultural considerations. The course will also address confidentiality, informed consent, boundaries, multiple relationships, supervision, and consultation within an ethical framework. (3 credits, 8 weeks online)

### [COUN 5213 Theories & Techniques in Counseling](#)

This course will provide an overview of counseling theories and related techniques including psychoanalytic, gestalt, behavioral, cognitive, reality, existential, Adlerian, family systems, feminist, and post-modern therapies. Students will have the opportunity to role play and demonstrate beginning skills for counseling through videotaped role play sessions with classmates. (3 credits, full term)

### [COUN 5221 Counseling Skills](#)

This course will provide students an opportunity to continue to develop counseling microskills as well as foundational skills in interviewing in the helping professions. Students will videotape role-played sessions and participate in peer review as well as review with course instructor. (3 credits, 15 week)

### [COUN 5231 Spirituality & Religion in Counseling](#)

This course will exam the role of spirituality and religious beliefs in the counseling relationship and process. Students will explore how different religious traditions that clients may participate in could influence the counseling process as well as examine their own religious and spiritual foundations for their counseling theory and practice. Ethical standards will be discussed. (3 credits, 8 weeks)

### [COUN 5214 Counseling Across the Lifespan](#)

This course will provide an overview of human development across the lifespan, from birth until death and explore critical considerations for counseling individuals across these stages of development. (3 credits, 15 week)

### [COUN 5215 Multicultural Counseling](#)

This course will provide students an opportunity to begin to develop skills for multicultural competency when providing counseling services to clients of diverse backgrounds. Multicultural competencies will be reviewed, and students will explore their own identity as a cultural being. (3 credits, 15 week)

### [COUN 5222 Mental Health Diagnosis and Treatment](#)

This course will provide students with an overview of clinical diagnoses according to the Diagnostic Statistical Manual - IV - Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR). Diagnosis criteria and current best practice treatment options will be reviewed. Case studies will be utilized to provide students opportunities to practice diagnostic skills. Treatment planning in counseling will also be discussed. (3 credits, 15 week)

### [COUN 5241 Career Counseling](#)

This course will provide an introductory exploration of career development across the lifespan, career counseling theories, assessments relevant to career counseling, and occupational information sources. The course will allow student opportunities to role play, consider case studies, and create a career intervention for a chosen population. (3 credits, 8 weeks)

#### COUN 5216 Assessment in Counseling

This course will provide an overview of assessment methods and tools used in counseling, including intakes as well as standardized assessments. Ethical standards for the use of assessments in counseling will be reviewed. Students will experience taking an assessment as well as provide a critical review of assessments. (3 credits, 15 week)

#### COUN 5217 Research Methods in Counseling

This course will provide an *overview* of qualitative and quantitative research methodology and techniques and discuss the role of research in counseling. Ethical standards for conducting research will be discussed. Students will develop the ability to read and critically evaluate counseling literature as well as develop a research prospectus. (3 credits, 15 week)

#### COUN 5251 Crisis Intervention/Crisis Counseling

This course will provide students with an *overview* of counseling skills for working in crisis and trauma situations as well as crisis intervention theory. Students will review case studies and create a crisis resource for a client population or counseling setting of interest. (3 credits, 8 weeks)

#### COUN 5223 Group Counseling

This course will provide an overview of theory and principles of effective group work, provide students an opportunity to develop skills in using group techniques, and plan activities for groups. Students will participate in a group experience during this course. Ethical standards for group counseling will be reviewed. (3 credits, 15 week)

#### COUN 5261 Substance Abuse Counseling

This course will provide an overview of the nature of substance use, abuse, and dependency. Education, prevention, treatment, and recovery will be addressed. (3 credits, 15 week)

#### COUN 5271 Child and Adolescent Counseling (Elective)

This course will examine developmental, cultural, relational, and social concepts related to working with children and adolescents in a variety of settings including, school, residential, private practice, outpatient, and substance abuse treatment. The course will include experiential activities that inform students about the ethical and legal responsibilities required for working with children and adolescents and provide practice using expressive arts therapy centers. (3 credits, 8 weeks)

#### COUN 5281 Marriage and Family Counseling (Elective)

This course will examine various Marriage and Family Therapy presenting issues and techniques, as well as address the various roles and responsibilities of the professional counselor working within a marriage and family setting. Presenting issues include, but are not limited to: sex,

addiction, co-dependency, enmeshment, disengagement, and intimacy, mental illness in the family, triangulation, parenting, family hierarchy, and spiritual development within the family (3 credits, 8 weeks)

### COUN 6221 Counseling Practicum

This is an experiential course and requires students to complete a minimum of 100 hours of clinical counseling practice, under supervision, at an approved site. Students will provide counseling services as well as continue to learn skills in intake, assessment, counseling, and consultation. Students will participate in weekly individual supervision as well as group supervision. Both the counseling practicum site and the site supervisor must be approved by the CMHC program. Requires 100 hours of supervised clinical counseling experience. (3 credits, 15 week)

### COUN 6222 Counseling Internship I

This is an experiential course and requires students to complete a minimum of 300 hours of clinical counseling practice, under supervision, at an approved site. Students will provide counseling services as well as continue to learn skills in intake, assessment, counseling, and consultation. Students will also begin to complete paperwork required for licensure as an LCMHC-A (Licensed Professional Counselor Associate) in NC. Students will participate in weekly individual supervision as well as group supervision. Both the counseling internship site and the site supervisor must be approved by the CMHC program. Requires 300 hours of supervised clinical counseling experience. (6 credits, 15 week)

### COUN 6223 Counseling Internship II

This is an experiential course and requires students to complete a minimum of 300 hours of clinical counseling practice, under supervision, at an approved site. Students will provide counseling services as well as continue to learn skills in intake, assessment, counseling, and consultation. Students will also begin to complete paperwork required for licensure as an LCMHC-A (Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor Associate) in NC. Students will participate in weekly individual supervision as well as group supervision. Both the counseling internship site and the site supervisor must be approved by the CMHC program. Requires 300 hours of supervised clinical counseling experience. (6 credits, 15 week)

### Residencies

The residency requirement for the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree program is satisfied by the completion during two courses, each consisting of a three-day residency (COUN5221 Counseling Skills and COUN5223 Group Counseling). Students must have completed the residency requirement prior to starting their counseling practicum (COUN6221). Each residency experience for the Master of Arts in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree program requires students to receive a minimum of 40 total hours of training and practice in the areas of counseling theory and intervention, assessment, multicultural issues, legal and ethical issues, group counseling, and advanced counseling/therapy. Through counseling residency, students gain a stronger sense of academic community by networking and discussing concepts and issues in the field of professional counseling. This experience provides a learning environment that fosters the

application of critical thinking and integrated knowledge to professional issues.

## Accreditation

Montreat's MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) through 2026.

## Professional Characteristics of Montreat Counseling Students

In 2010, the American Counseling Association (ACA) adopted the following definition of counseling: *Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals.* For more information on this definition, visit ACA's website for the 20/20: A Vision for the Future of Counseling at <http://www.counseling.org/20-20/index.aspx>.

North Carolina law, in General Statute chapter 90, Article 24, the Licensed Professional Counselors Act, defines counseling in the following way(s):

### § 90-330. Definitions: practice of counseling

The *practice of counseling* means holding oneself out to the public as a professional counselor offering counseling services that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Counseling: Assisting individuals, groups, and families through the counseling relationship by evaluating and treating mental disorders and other conditions through the use of a combination of clinical mental health and human development principles, methods, diagnostic procedures, treatment plans, and other psychotherapeutic techniques, to develop an understanding of personal problems, to define goals, and to plan action reflecting the client's interests, abilities, aptitudes, and mental health needs as these are related to personal-social-emotional concerns, educational progress, and occupations and careers.
- a. Appraisal Activities: Administering and interpreting tests for assessment of personal characteristics.
- b. Consulting: Interpreting scientific data and providing guidance and personnel services to individuals, groups, or organizations.
- c. Referral Activities: Identifying problems requiring referral to other specialists.
- d. Research Activities: Designing, conducting, and interpreting research with human subjects.

The American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) provides the following definition of counselors: Clinical mental health counselors are highly skilled professionals who provide flexible, consumer-oriented therapy. They combine traditional psychotherapy with a practical, problem-solving approach that creates a dynamic and efficient path for change and problem resolution. Clinical mental health counselors offer a full range of services including:

- a. Assessment and diagnosis
- b. Psychotherapy
- c. Treatment planning and utilization review
- d. Brief and solution-focused therapy
- e. Alcoholism and substance abuse treatment
- f. Psychoeducational and prevention programs
- g. Crisis management

More information can be found at <https://www.amhca.org/about/facts.aspx>.

The Montreat College Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling uses these definitions of counseling and counseling activities as the foundation for identifying who counselors are, what they do, and what the profession of counseling looks like.

### Non-Academic Expectations, Professional Behavior & Dispositions

Students are expected to uphold the Code of Ethics endorsed by the NC Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors, which is the American Counseling Association's Code of Ethics. This Code can be found at <http://www.counseling.org/Resources/CodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx>.

Students understand that they are required to abide by the ethical standards set forth by the American Counseling Association and the North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (NCBLCMHC).

If, at any time, a student behaves in an unethical manner, the student's actions will be (1) assessed by program faculty according to the standards of ACA and NCBLCMHC, (2) discussed with the student and by a member of the faculty, and if the circumstance requires it, (3) reported to either the American Counseling Association or North Carolina Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors. Information released will only include your name and a synopsis of the situation. Information related to student status will remain confidential.

In training counselors, evaluating student dispositions—distinctive personal characteristics and attitudes—is crucial. Dispositions provide insight into how well students align with the profession's values and ethical standards. They embody the interpersonal and intrapersonal qualities necessary for effective therapeutic relationships, ethical decision-making, and personal resilience. Evaluating these dispositions ensures counselors-in-training are prepared to meet the challenges and responsibilities inherent in mental health work. Evaluating and nurturing these dispositions should be an ongoing process throughout counselor training. Regular feedback from faculty, supervisors, and peers is essential to help students identify strengths and areas for improvement. Disposition assessment includes reflective journaling, self-assessments, and observation of interpersonal interactions in clinical settings.

In cultivating these qualities, counseling programs ensure students are not only skilled in theory and practice but are also prepared to navigate the interpersonal and ethical demands of the profession. This focus on dispositions fosters the development of counselors who bring both competence and compassion to their roles. More information on student dispositional expectations can be found on pages 8-9 of the CMHC Fieldwork Manual.

### Confidentiality & HIPAA

The nature of the CMHC program and topics covered in class creates the potential to put students in a vulnerable state as sensitive material may come up in role plays, class discussions, and other activities. This being so, confidentiality is stressed throughout the program and extends beyond work with clients in practicum and internship to apply also to conversations that take place in small groups, in-class group discussions, and large class discussions. Violating the confidentiality rights of fellow students and clients in the program is grounds for suspension or dismissal from the program.

At the fieldwork site, it is imperative for counselors-in-training to strictly follow HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) guidelines and adhere to clinical documentation regulations to protect clients' privacy and ensure ethical practice. HIPAA compliance requires maintaining the confidentiality of client information, including secure handling, storing, and sharing of personal health information (PHI) only as permitted by law. Accurate, timely, and thorough documentation is also crucial; it not only supports continuity of care but also ensures accountability and adherence to professional and legal standards. Students must follow site-specific protocols for electronic and physical records, keep documentation factual and objective, and consult supervisors when questions arise regarding confidentiality or record-keeping practices. Violating the HIPAA guidelines regarding clients at the fieldwork sites and/or in the program is grounds for suspension or dismissal from the program.

### Professional Dress & Behavior

As representatives of Montreat College, students are expected to uphold professional standards and expectations in all they do, including participation in class and experiential learning courses (practicum and internship). Students should dress professionally, keeping in mind the Christian foundation of the College. When working with clients in practicum and internship courses, students should be mindful, also, of the setting in which they are interning, the expectations of the internship site, the clients served, and what is appropriate based on these factors regarding dress and behavior.

### Respect & Dignity of Individuals

At all times, students in the CMHC program are expected to show respect to and uphold the dignity of individuals, including instructors, classmates, and any individuals served in practicum and internship. Students are charged to remember that all individuals are made *Imago Dei* (that is, in the image of God). Further, students are asked to remember Genesis 1:31 "God saw all that he had made, and it was *very good*."

## Assessment of Skills and Dispositions

Each student will be evaluated on counseling skills (the methods used for helping clients), professional behaviors, and dispositions (the observable behaviors related to respect for individuals and openness to learning that are demonstrated in interactions and feedback with peers, faculty, and clients). Evaluation of skills and dispositions is an ongoing process throughout the program, occurring formatively in the following key courses:

- COUN 5221 Counseling Skills
- COUN 5223 Group Counseling
- COUN 6221 Counseling Practicum

A summative evaluation of the skills and dispositions that the student has demonstrated across the program of study will be conducted during the field experience.

### Clinical Practicum and Internship Experiences

Students will complete a field experience that consists of a minimum of 100 hours of practicum and 600 hours of internship; the purpose of which is to allow the student a hands-on experience of clinical work with actual clients. Students who intend to seek licensure in states that require

additional field experience hours will be required to take an additional internship course to meet that state's requirements. Students will be required to secure and gain approval for field experience sites. The same approved field site may be used for the practicum and internship experiences.

### Practicum and Internship Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible for enrollment in practicum and internships, students must meet the following criteria prior to enrollment:

- Satisfactorily completed all coursework
- Satisfactorily completed both residencies
- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher upon completion of COUN5221 Counseling Skills & COUN5223 Group Counseling
- Secured liability insurance for the duration of field experiences (strongly recommended to join ACA as a student to continue to develop a counselor identity and secure liability insurance as a student member)
- Have an approved field experience application accepted by the CMHC program
- Have a signed and finalized legal affiliation agreement between the field site and Montreat on file
- Have satisfactorily completed all assigned knowledge, skills, or dispositional remediation plans (if applicable)
- Have completed all training courses required to begin fieldwork (telehealth, HIPAA, clinical documentation, etc.)
- Are in good standing with Montreat

Detailed information and directions regarding the policies and procedures to search, secure, apply, and participate in field experiences are found in the Tevera management system. Students will pay \$230 to enroll in the Tevera management system as part of their requirement to complete the practicum and internship experience. Students can obtain login information by emailing Clinical Director, Dr. Tora Kincaid at [CMHCFE@montreat.edu](mailto:CMHCFE@montreat.edu)

### Practicum and Internship General Expectations

#### Practicum

*COUN6221 Counseling Practicum* is an introductory hands-on experience at an approved field site during which students practice synthesizing clinical and professional skills that are required of a counselor-in-training. Students attend their approved field site over a full 15-week term and participate in an accompanying online practicum course. Students are required to be at their site a minimum average of 10 hours per week to earn a minimum total of 100 clock hours. Those 10 hours per week include, on average, 4 or more direct counseling hours per week (50% of which are one-to-one treatment counseling sessions), 3 professional development hours per week, 1 hour of in-person face-to-face individual/triadic supervision per week provided by the approved site supervisor, and 1.5 hours per week of synchronous video group supervision provided by the faculty supervisor. The practicum online coursework focuses on further developing case conceptualization skills, assessment skills, treatment planning, delivery, and management. By the end of practicum, students will be prepared to progress to the internship experience.

## Internship

The internship experience is split into two required courses—*COUN6222 Counseling Internship I* and *COUN6223 Counseling Internship II in Clinical Mental Health Counseling*—both of which occur over a full 15-week term and have an online class component. The total number of hours is split equally between the two required internship experiences with a minimum total for each experience of 300 hours at the approved field site. Students are required to attend their approved field site a minimum average of 30 hours per week to earn a minimum total of 600 clock hours at the field site. These hours are broken into minimum average totals of 12 or more direct counseling hours per week during the term (50% of which are one-on-one treatment counseling sessions), 15 professional development hours per week during the term, 1 hour of in-person face-to-face individual/triadic supervision per week during the term provided by the approved site supervisor, and 2 hours per week during the term of synchronous video group supervision provided by the faculty supervisor. In addition to the onsite requirements, there will be *Internship I* and *Internship II* online course requirements. (The Internship courses focus on honing and mastering case conceptualization skills, assessment skills, treatment planning, delivery, and management.)

**Note:** Students who intend to seek licensure in states that require more than 700 hours of field experience will enroll in *Internship II Continuation* where they will gain an additional 300 hours of experience. The breakdown of hours and type of supervision will be the same as stated above.

**Note:** Students who wish to spread their internship hours over three terms and who have an elective course available to them may enroll in *Internship II Continuation*, in which case they will be required to be present at their internship site for an average of 20 hours per week during the term.

During their field experience courses, students will sign the following confidentiality statement: “I commit to obtain written consent for recording counseling sessions from all willing clients prior to treatment and from a parent or guardian for all willing clients under the age of 18, relying on the guidance of my site supervisor and my field site policy. I further commit to maintain the confidentiality of all protected client information in accordance with federal, state, and local laws.”

## Professional Liability Insurance

Students participating in practicum and internship are required to have professional liability insurance with coverage of \$1,000,000 each claim, and up to \$3,000,000 aggregate (\$1,000,000/\$3,000,000). One benefit of student membership in the American Counseling Association (ACA) is that student liability insurance is covered with paid membership dues. Visit the ACA website for more information at [www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org). An explanation of this is provided in the [ACA Master’s Level Student Liability Insurance Program FAQs](#) document. Students will be required to submit proof of insurance prior to enrollment in the practicum and internship courses.

## Writing Style

Students are required to use the *Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA) 7th Edition (2020) as the guide for all written work completed in the training program. Students should own a copy of the APA manual (7th edition) and should



become familiar with the style guide.

## Beginning a Professional Journey

Students in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program are beginning the journey of becoming counseling professionals who engage in lifelong learning and collaboration. The beginning of the journey is the perfect time to buy in to one's professional identity as a counselor and thus begin engaging with the organizations that represent our profession.

Students are encouraged to take advantage of student rates and become involved in the American Counseling Association (ACA) and at least one ACA division that reflects an area of the student's professional interest. This will enrich students' knowledge of the counseling profession and help students be a part of important movements that occur as we respond to the changing needs of a global society. The ACA has many interest groups, email lists, and local chapters that give students the opportunity for direct engagement in the field. Professional conferences are a significant source of professional training, networking, and involvement. The ACA holds an annual conference in a different city each year, with the ACA divisions also offering conferences on an annual basis or every other year. These conferences are excellent opportunities for students to meet professionals who are practicing in and shaping a variety of areas for our field.

Students may also find that their individual state counseling associations have a particularly strong community of mental health professionals, and students are therefore encouraged to consider involvement with their state counseling associations. Many states hold annual conferences or seasonal workshops. These are excellent opportunities for students to meet professionals from around their states, some of whom may be important contacts for future field experience opportunities.

## Licensure, Certification, and Professional Information

### Licensure

Completing the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is the first step toward becoming a licensed counselor. Montreat routinely checks the academic pre-licensure requirements of each state. Whenever possible, we will keep you up to date about changes in your state's requirements. However, because requirements may change between Montreat's routine reviews, you should periodically review the requirements of your state to confirm that you have met the necessary academic requirements for licensure. All states require additional, postgraduate clinical experience and passage of a national examination to become licensed. You should also check the post-degree licensure requirements for your state. Your state may require that you submit a syllabus for each of your counseling courses. Be sure to save copies of your syllabi.

You may find the state licensure requirements by visiting your state's licensure board website. You can find the state licensing board website and contact information at the [National Board for Certified Counselors \(NBCC\) State Board Directory](#).

## National Certified Counselor (NCC)

Graduates of the MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program are eligible to apply for the National Certified Counselor credential. This is a voluntary, national certification process that recognizes counselors who have met training program and experience standards established by the National Board for Certified Counselors. While national certification furthers the professional identity of beginning counselors, it is not the same as state licensure. For further information, visit the [National Board for Certified Counselors website](#).

## Professional Association Information

Students are encouraged to join and become active in professional organizations (or associations). One method of remaining current in the profession is participating in professional organizations by presenting papers at conferences, serving on committees, writing for professional journals, attending workshops, and becoming active in leadership.

## Policies and Procedures

### Academic and Non- Academic Remediation Process

When a serious concern arises within a course, and CMHC program faculty assesses that it is in the best interest of the student's professional growth and training as a future counseling professional and to protect the client populations the student is serving (if in practicum and internship) and/or will serve in the future, a remediation plan may be devised.

Following are the steps in a remediation process:

1. The instructor will meet the student to provide the student with feedback regarding the issue of concern and to hear the student's perspective on the problem. This meeting will be documented by the instructor.
2. If the instructor and student agree on the identified problem as well as a possible solution or solutions, an agreement is made and documented. The solution is then implemented and evaluated at an agreed upon time by the instructor. If the solution is reached, this is documented, and the situation is considered closed.
3. If the solution agreed upon by the student and instructor is not reached, the instructor will implement the consequences of not attaining the solution, and the action is documented.
4. If the instructor and student do not agree upon the identified problem or a solution, the professor will consult with the campus Faculty Mentor. In consultation, the Faculty Mentor and instructor will identify a solution, which is documented by the Faculty Mentor using Appendix E or the Student Program and Progress Report.
5. The Faculty Mentor will meet with the student and instructor to discuss the solution identified by the Faculty Mentor and the instructor and will document this meeting. If the student accepts and completes the steps to the solution, the situation is considered closed and documented in the Student Program and Progress Report as such. If the student does not accept the solution, he or she can appeal to the Program Chair.
6. Upon making an appeal, the student and the Program Chair will meet and discuss the identified problem and the provided solution(s). The Program Chair will decide if the solution(s) will be upheld or not. If it is to be upheld but the student does not accept the upheld solution, he or she can make continued appeal, following the grievance policies and procedures of

Montreat College outlined in the AGS College catalog. If the solution is not upheld by the Program Chair, a meeting can be called that brings together the student, the instructor, the Faculty Mentor, the Program Chair, the Academic Advisor and interdepartmental faculty (when available) to create the Remediation Committee. This meeting will be documented.

7. If a student refuses to accept a remediation plan, even after making an appeal and following the processes outlined above, he or she is at risk of suspension and/or dismissal from the program.

8. The Program Chair will submit a written recommendation of probation, suspension, or dismissal and send a copy to the student, the Registrar, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Associate Dean of AGS.

9. The process, all meetings, and all communications with and to the student, will be documented and kept in the student's file. The instructor may share information with other instructors as appropriate.

10. The student may appeal the decision as outlined in the AGS college catalog regarding the process for grievances.

11. If the recommendation is that the student be suspended or dismissed from the program, the student will meet with the Faculty Mentor or AGS Academic Advisor and both can assist the student in exiting the program in a caring and compassionate manner.

### Academic Probation

Graduate students who earn a cumulative grade point average below 3.00 in course work taken for graduate credit will be placed on academic probation for the next term. If at the end of that term the cumulative grade point average is still below a 3.00, the student will face academic suspension.

Students who receive financial aid must make satisfactory academic progress to maintain eligibility for federal and/or state funds. Financial aid may or may not be available for students admitted on probation.

### Academic Suspension

The administration reserves the right to suspend a student from the College because of poor scholarship. Any student on academic probation who fails to meet the requirements of probation will be subject to academic suspension without refund of fees.

Graduate students not permitted to continue for academic reasons may appeal the suspension in writing to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College within two weeks of the suspension. Graduate students not permitted to continue for academic reasons may seek reapplication in writing through their academic program director.

### Dismissal from the Program

A student will be at risk for dismissal from the CMHC program for any of the following reasons:

1. Failing to successfully complete a remediation plan.
2. A completed remediation plan does not resolve the original problem.
3. Severe professional, dispositional, and/or ethical misconduct.
4. Academic dishonesty.

## Admissions

Students seeking admission into the CMHC degree program must submit the following materials:

- a. The Montreat College application for admission
- b. Official transcripts of all prior undergraduate college coursework documenting:
  - i. An earned Baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution
  - ii. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in undergraduate study
  - iii. Official transcripts of all prior graduate college coursework (up to 18 credit hours may be transferred)
- c. Professional goals essay
- d. Completed background check (fee to be paid by the applicant)
- e. A required drug test prior to attending the first course.

## Waivers & Transfer of Credit

Waivers for specific admissions requirements are rarely granted. If a student has just cause to believe his or her situation should be considered for a waiver, the student may submit a request for a waiver in writing to the Program Chair and provide any supporting documentation for consideration.

## Transfer of Credits

Students may transfer up to 18 credit hours of graduate level counseling-related coursework completed at a regionally accredited institution. The student must request to have his or her previous coursework considered for transfer credit. The Program Chair will review the student's request, compare the coursework from the previous institution with that of the Montreat College CMHC program curriculum to ensure the courses are comparable, and send the student an email stating any transfer credits that will be applied to the Montreat College degree. Students will be provided with the remaining courses to take in place of those transferred in order to maintain full time graduate status for financial assistance purposes. It is the students' responsibility to monitor their enrollment status for financial assistance purposes.

## Course Registration

In the CMHC program, students take nine hours each 8-week, full semester. The classes are online for 8 weeks. The online courses are delivered in synchronous formats. Students who believe their circumstances would allow adequate time to focus on more courses in the same period may submit an application to the Program Chair requesting permission for the course overload. Course overloads are considered under the following conditions:

1. The student must be admitted into the program.
2. The student must have completed at least 9 credit hours of graduate course work in the CMHC program at Montreat College.
3. The student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 from coursework completed in the graduate CMHC program at Montreat College.
4. The student must have the endorsement of his or her Faculty Mentor for the

course overload.

### Minimum Academic Standing & Degree Progression

Students in the graduate program are required to maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. Therefore, students must earn grades of B or higher in all courses. Should a student earn a grade of B- (2.66) or lower for a course, he or she must meet with the core program faculty to review circumstances surrounding the grade, course performance, and the student's plans to maintain the required minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA for the duration of the program as well as formulate a plan of action for remedying identified deficiencies in his or her performance in the course in which the student earned the low course grade. If a student earns a C in any course, the student will be required to retake the course.

### Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam

Students pursuing the Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling degree at Montreat College will take the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) as a requirement during practicum to enter internship I. Institutions contract with the Center for Credentialing and Education (CCE) to administer the CPCE. (<http://www.cce-global.org/Org/CPCE>): From the NBCC website, the CPCE is utilized by over 400 universities and colleges, and is designed to assess counseling students' knowledge of counseling information viewed as important by counselor preparation programs, and is based on the same eight knowledge areas as the National Counselor Exam (NCE). The NCE is required for state licensure in North Carolina as an LCMHC-A and LCMHC. During the year, CMHC program faculty will use data collected from students' CPCE scores to reevaluate the efficacy of the curriculum.

The CPCE exam will be administered at a Pearson Vue testing center; dates will be announced in advance to allow students adequate time to plan to take the exam. Students are eligible to sit for the CPCE exam upon completion of all but 3 credit hours of didactic course work, thus, they can complete the exam during the final didactic course or practicum course. Students must pass the exam to enroll in the internship course.

According to standards set by Montreat College, to obtain a passing score, a student must earn a cumulative passing score of greater than 1 standard deviation below the national mean of the most recent norms for the examination. The following policies apply with respect to the CPCE and program completion:

1. If a student passes the overall examination but fails a subsection within the exam
  - a. The program faculty will schedule an oral exam for the student in which questions will be asked relative to the content of the failed subsection.
  - b. If a student does not pass the oral exam, an academic remediation plan will be developed to address the student's weaknesses in the content area. This remediation plan could include a delay in beginning the internship experience and re-enrolling in the failed content course.
  - c. If the student successfully passes the oral component of the exam, the student will be granted enrollment in the internship course.
2. If a student does not receive a cumulative passing grade for the test, the student must meet with his or her Faculty Mentor to discuss strategies for preparing to take the examination again.
  - a. Students have a maximum of 2 opportunities to take and pass the exam.
  - b. A student unable to pass the exam will be unable to register for and complete

- the internship requirement until he or she is able to take and pass the examination.
- c. Students who are unable to successfully pass the exam on the first attempt should be aware that additional semesters will be added to their projected graduation date.
3. If a student is required to take the exam again, the student will be responsible for covering the cost of taking the test again. The student will also be responsible to schedule the exam within the testing window and by week 12 of the Practicum course.
  4. A student who does not make a passing score on the second administration of the exam must meet with the Faculty Mentor and the primary faculty of the content area(s) that have below standard scores. If the student is unable to successfully pass the exam on the second attempt, the following could be considered and is based on the individual's performance and needs:
    - a. The student may be placed on academic suspension for one year from the program.
    - b. The student and Faculty Mentor will review the exam results and develop a remediation plan for the student to successfully complete those areas of the exam where the student did not meet competency level. This plan could include retaking/auditing courses and/or participating in additional clinical experiences and supervision. In these instances, the student is responsible for all tuition fees associated with retaking courses.
    - c. The student will be able to retake a course only once as a remediation option for not passing a second attempt of the exam.

### CPCE Preparation Study Tools

Faculty want their students to be well prepared and confident when they take the Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam. Students are recommended to take the CPCE Preparation Course. The Course is designed for anyone who is scheduled to take the CPCE or the National Counselor Examination or who has been unsuccessful in passing the exams. The Course also reviews effective test taking strategies and the 8 major exam content areas, ACA ethics 2014, and the DSM-5. Students can access the course at the following link, using their Montreat emails: <https://classroom.google.com/c/NzA4ODY0Njk0NjQ0?cjc=btfszva>

### Telemental Health Training Course

For students entering practicum, who may be asked to complete online sessions with clients at their field site, Montreat offers a telemental health course into the curriculum to prepare students to meet the evolving demands of the counseling profession. With the rapid expansion of digital platforms and the increasing need for accessible mental health services, students must be proficient in delivering care through telecommunication technologies. This course satisfies the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) mandate that ensures that students operate within their scope of practice and are trained to provide the service to clients. They will develop the necessary skills to navigate ethical considerations, maintain therapeutic rapport, and effectively utilize technology in diverse settings. By mastering telemental health, students are better equipped to provide quality care to a broader range of clients, regardless of geographical barriers.

### Faculty Evaluation of Student Progress

The faculty will assess student progress in the program at various intervals based on the completed Evaluation of Student Progress form (see Appendix E). The evaluation will take place three separate times during a student's tenure within the CMHC program. During these evaluation periods, students will also complete a self-evaluation. Faculty will review the evaluations. If it is determined from the evaluations, that a nonacademic remediation plan is required for any student(s), the Faculty Mentor will contact the student(s) and set up a meeting to discuss the issue. The purpose of this meeting is developmental with the expectation that it will provide the student increased insight and eliminate any future need for remediation plans related to issue(s) of concern.

### Assessment of Student Learning in CMHC

Program faculty gauge students' progress throughout the program. As stated in self-study, students' academic performance is assessed through course grades and cumulative Grade Point Average. The faculty assess student's professional development as they acquire counseling skills in skills courses and supervised experiences (professional practice). Finally, students' personal development is monitored throughout their course of study. If a Faculty Mentor or instructor notices a development issue, a student may be contacted to implement a remediation process for growth. Faculty encourage students to develop the capacity to respect individual differences, be open to personal growth, and aware of interpersonal or intrapersonal problems which may interfere with the ability to be a professional helper.

Annual assessments include evaluations of current students' academic and personal/professional development, level of learning based on students' accomplishment of student learning outcomes, personal/professional development in counseling identity, knowledge, advocacy, relationship skills, research, and scholarship. Graduates are evaluated by assessing knowledge of student learning outcomes, accomplishments, and employer evaluations. Faculty evaluate the curriculum, program, coursework, admissions process, and current student functioning. Site supervisors evaluate current students, program outcomes and direction of the programs.

### American Psychological Association Publication Style

All scholarly work submitted for coursework is expected to follow APA format for in-text citations and references.

### Academic Faculty and Career Advising

Montreat's Master of the Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program offers a variety of professionals to support and promote student growth throughout the program and as a counselor-in-training. These individuals are available to advise counseling students throughout their program, on topics ranging from what courses to sign up for each term to developing a professional counseling identity to helping with field experience and job-search questions. To ensure the best possible response, different advisors focus on different aspects of students' program experience as follows:

#### Academic Advisor

The academic advisor provides primary support for all program, course, and registration needs (with the exception of practicum and internships). Academic advisors reach out regularly, often weekly. Their main responsibilities cover the following:

- Welcoming students to the university and orienting them to Blackboard, Tevera, and the learning environment
- Reviewing the counseling academic program, creating a course plan, and enrolling students in courses to drive their path to graduation
- Being knowledgeable about policies (satisfactory academic progress [SAP] plans, scholastic warning, petitioning to graduate, etc.) and communicating these to students when applicable

#### Faculty Mentor (previously Faculty Advisor)

In addition to interacting in the classroom with instructors from *diverse* backgrounds, students will be assigned a *Faculty Mentor* for the duration of the program. While the curriculum at Montreat College is sequential and students will have an AGS staff *advisor* to ensure they are staying on track with courses, Faculty Mentors (FM) provide mentorship, come alongside students to hear their professional CMHC interests and goals, and collaborate on ways to fulfill those interests and goals. Faculty Mentors may encourage students to join related professional associations, attend counseling conferences for professional development, and support student presentations at counseling conferences and workshops. Further, Faculty Mentors provide guidance on ways students can enhance their coursework by focusing projects and requirements on areas of interest, counseling specialty interest, and populations of interest.

Faculty Mentors are also a source of support *for* the practicum and internship selection processes. Students are encouraged to take initiative to cultivate this relationship; it is the students' responsibility to seek out the FM when questions or concerns arise. Collaborative work with program instructors in research, presentations, and publications can extend beyond the student's FM.

#### Career Advisor

Students in the CMHC program will be assigned a Faculty Mentor (FM) who will serve as a mentor throughout the training program. As such, the FM will provide career mentoring and collaborate with the student to discern his or her interests, aid in the CMHC practicum and internship process and provide career mentoring as the student approaches graduation.

Program instructors are also encouraged to share information about practicum, internship, and career opportunities that come to their attention through the program listserv, in one-on-one settings as appropriate, or by posting information to location bulletin boards.

#### Clinical Experience Faculty Advisor

The clinical director serves as the clinical experience faculty advisor who provides primary support for all questions related to field site search, practicum, and internships. Their main responsibilities cover the following:

- Answering questions regarding field site searching and securement
- Answering questions regarding applying for practicum and internships
- Answering questions regarding practicum and internship prerequisites and requirements
- Supporting field site searching
- Orienting students to practicum and internships



## Recommendations & Endorsements

Students may request that instructors, program supervisors of clinical experience, and their Faculty Mentor provide recommendations or endorsements for professional positions and/or licensure. According to policies set forth by the NC Board of LPG, the academic supervisor of clinical experience (i.e., CMHC program instructor providing supervision to the student for practicum and internship) will verify the graduate clinical experience on licensure documents. If the supervising instructor is unable to sign, the Program Director will sign the documents upon verifying supervision and work logs from the student, faculty supervisors, and site supervisors as appropriate.

Endorsements and recommendations of students for professional positions will be made at the discretion of the individual instructor of whom the request is made. Further, the instructor will make at his or her discretion endorsements and recommendations of students for positions for which they are qualified. For example, an instructor may determine that it is not appropriate to recommend a student for a professional position in substance abuse work if the student did not focus his or her internship experiences in a substance abuse setting and/or if he or she did not perform well in the substance abuse course.

If a student desires to have an instructor provide a verbal or written endorsement or recommendation, the student should make a specific request of the instructor and provide adequate time for the instructor to provide the endorsement recommendation. The student should also plan to provide the instructor with a current copy of his or her resume (CV) and/or have a discussion with the instructor about career interests and goals, accomplishments, and related activities.

## Programs & College Resources

### Program Orientation

All students accepted into the CMHC program, and who have paid their enrollment deposit, are expected to attend the Program Orientation Night (PON). The PON takes place during the first night of COUN5211, *Professional Orientation to Counseling*. PON occurs for each cohort and occurs at the location where the cohort will attend classes. The PON will provide students an opportunity to meet key Program and College personnel, learn about the College's classroom management system (Blackboard), decide upon an elective course to be taken during their time in the program, and most importantly, have the opportunity to begin making connections with classmates as a foundation for teamwork and collegial relationships that will be encouraged over the duration of the graduate program.

### Graduate Assistant/Administrative Assistant

Montreat College is pleased to offer a Graduate/Administrative Assistantship (GA/AA) Program for students enrolled in the CMHC program. Two GA/AA positions are held each academic year for the duration of the academic year. The Graduate/Administrative Assistant (GA/AA) is offered to currently enrolled students in the CMHC program, who are in academic good standing and making progress toward degree completion.

As a GA/AA, the students will work 20 hours of clock time per week for the CMHC program.

Responsibilities focus on administrative support duties. Specifically, the GA/AAs will assist the Program Chair in (1) writing projects for the CACREP accreditation process, (2) maintaining and assisting in the organization of program data, (3) assistance with elements of teaching and updating the online Student Files and (4) other tasks as needed. In exchange for 20 hours per week from July 1 to June 30, the GA/AA will receive partial/full tuition waiver for the year he or she is a GA as well as a monthly pay stipend. The assistantship does not provide medical or dental insurance benefits, cost of living benefits, or housing stipends. A GA/AA contract will be written for a one-year time frame from July 1 to June 30; in the instance that a GA position is filled later than the July 1 start date, all benefits will be pro-rated, and the contract will reflect the actual start date (i.e., it may be for less time than the full 12 months) with the same end date of June 30.

Additionally, it is expected that the students who hold the GA/AA position do so with proper professional demeanor and with confidentiality of any student specific information. The GA/AA position will be announced to all classes in advance of the start date of the position and all currently enrolled students who have received full admission to the program and are in good academic standing will be eligible to apply and be considered.

A GA/AA must maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA to continue receiving benefits (tuition waiver and monthly stipends). Should a GA's cumulative GPA drop below a 3.5, the GA and Program Chair will discuss the circumstances surrounding the situation and develop an action plan and timeline for bringing the GPA back to the required 3.5. If this plan of action is not implemented successfully in the determined time frame, the student will be released from his or her GA/AA responsibilities and will assume responsibility for tuition expenses for courses. If a student currently serving as GA encounters a need to withdraw from the program or to take a leave of absence, he or she will be released from his or her GA/AA responsibilities and cease receiving benefits (tuition waiver and monthly stipend). Upon returning to the program, the student may reapply for a GA position if one is available, and he or she meets the requirements (see Appendix F for the Graduate Assistantship application).

### Personal Counseling

As Counselor Educators, the CMHC faculty believe there is value in and benefit from personal counseling for a variety of developmental, career, and relationship issues as well as for managing personal stress. Students are required to participate in 5 to 8 personal mental health counseling sessions throughout the duration of the program. It can be beneficial for a counselor-in-training to experience what it is like to be a client in the therapeutic relationship. Counseling is also a way to take care of yourself while in the program. Students will inform the Faculty Mentor on their campus when counseling ended by providing an exit letter of attendance from the licensed clinician. This letter will be kept in the student's CMHC file. A list of local mental health providers for each CMHC program location is provided in Appendix I. However, it is not appropriate for students to receive personal counseling from CMHC program instructors during the time they are enrolled in the program.

### National Counselor Exam

The NCE exam is offered by NBCC through participating institutions twice a year (April and October) for students near the end of their training programs and for alumni within a year of graduating from their training program. The National Counselor Exam is one of two exams

required by the NC Board of Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselors (NCBLCMHC) for application for licensure as a LCMHC-A and LCMHC.

### The Writing Center

Montreat College offers support services for students seeking to strengthen their writing skills. While the Writing Center is located at the main location in Montreat, graduate students at all locations are eligible to use the services provided. From the Montreat College website:

Montreat College students not enrolled at the main campus have two options for benefiting from our Writing Program: First, you are welcome to travel to our main campus location in Room 105 of the L. Nelson Bell Library. The Drop-in Writing Center hours are Monday-Thursday: 7 p.m.-midnight, and Sunday: 6 p.m.-11 p.m. Secondly, you may easily email your paper for electronic review. You will normally receive a response from a writing consultant within 48 hours, Sunday through Thursday, but note, only when the traditional semester is in session (beginning the third week of classes and ending the week before final exams). Requests received on Thursday will normally be answered on Monday. To submit, please send your paper to [writingtutor@montreat.edu](mailto:writingtutor@montreat.edu).

## Professional Counseling Resources

Students are strongly encouraged to consider joining professional counseling associations at the state, regional, and national levels. Because the College recognizes that taking on the financial responsibility of graduate school is significant and can thereby limit financial resources, students are not required to join associations. There are, however, many benefits to being involved in professional counseling associations:

1. Opportunities for students to network with professionals
2. Many associations and divisions of associations offer discounted conference rates and scholarships or grants for conference attendance
3. Discounted membership rates
4. Opportunities to supplement knowledge gained from program curriculum
5. Leadership opportunities for graduate students.

For these reasons, the CMHC faculty enthusiastically encourages students to consider joining professional counseling associations.

### National Level

American Counseling Association ([www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org))

*Divisions of the American Counseling Association*

<http://www.counseling.org/AboutUs/DivisionsBranchesAndRegions/TP/Divisions/CT2.aspx>

Association for Assessment in Counseling and Education (AACE)  
Association for Adult Development and Aging (AADA) Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC)  
American College Counseling Association (ACCA)  
Association for Counselors and Educators in Government (ACEG)  
Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES)

The Association for Humanistic Counseling (AHC)  
Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling (ALGBTIC)  
Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)  
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA) American  
Rehabilitation Counseling Association (ARCA)  
American School Counselor Association (ASCA)  
Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC)  
Association for Specialists in Group Work (ASGW)  
Counselors for Social Justice (CSJ)  
International Association of Addictions and Offender Counselors (IAAOC)  
International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors (IAMFC) National  
Career Development Association (NCDA)  
National Employment Counseling Association (NECA)  
Association for Play Therapy (A4PT) <https://www.a4pt.org/>

#### State Level

Licensed Professional Counselors Association of NC (LPANC) [www.lpcanc.org](http://www.lpcanc.org)  
North Carolina Counseling Association (NCCA) [www.nccounseling.org](http://www.nccounseling.org)  
*Divisions of NCCA*

NC Association for Counselor Education and Supervision NC  
Career Development Association  
NC Association of Humanistic Education and Development NC  
Association for Assessment in Counseling  
NC Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development  
NC Association for Spiritual, Ethical, Religious & Value Issues in Counseling NC  
Association for Specialists in Group Work  
NC Addiction and Offenders Counselor Association  
NC Mental Health Counselor Association  
NC College Counseling Association  
Association for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Issues in Counseling of NC  
Association of Marriage and Family Counselors  
NC Association for Adult Development and Aging  
Association for Professional Counseling in Schools NC  
Graduate Student Association - Interest Group  
NC School Counselor Association (NCSCA) <https://www.ncschoolcounselor.org>  
NC Association for Play Therapy (NCAPT) <https://www.ncapt.org/>

#### Regional Level

Southern Association of Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES) [www.saces.org](http://www.saces.org)

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Evaluation of Student Progress Form (Appendix E)

**MASTER OF ARTS IN CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING**  
**MONTREAT COLLEGE SCHOOL OF PROFESSIONAL AND ADULT STUDIES**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Course Code/Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor(s) Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_

THIS EVALUATION IS TO BE COMPLETED BY CMHC PROGRAM INSTRUCTORS AS PART OF AN ONGOING EVALUATION PROCESS OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND NON-ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR, AS A COMPONENT OF STUDENT RETENTION. THE EVALUATION COVERS FOUR AREAS OF PERFORMANCE: CLINICAL, PROFESSIONAL, INTERPERSONAL, AND ACADEMIC. A COPY OF THE EVALUATION FORM WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE STUDENT'S FILE.

Instructions: Based on your observation of the student, circle the number that corresponds using the Rating Scale provided.

- NO – No opportunity to observe
- 0 – Does not meet criteria
- 1 – Meets criteria minimally or inconsistently
- 2 – Meets criteria consistently

**CLINICAL (COUNSELING SKILLS AND ABILITIES) NOT APPLICABLE UNTIL PRACTICUM**

NO 0 1 2

1. The student demonstrates the ability to establish relationships in such a way that a therapeutic working alliance can be created.				
2. The student demonstrates therapeutic communication skills as outlined below:				
a. Creating appropriate structure-setting the boundaries of the helping relationship and maintaining boundaries such as settling parameters for meeting time and place, maintaining time limits, etc.				
b. Understanding content-understanding the core elements of the client's story.				
c. Understanding context-understanding the uniqueness of the story elements and their underlying meanings				
d. Responding to feelings-Identifying client affect and addressing those feelings in a therapeutic manner				
e. Congruence-genuineness; external behavior is consistent with external affect				

f. Establishing a communicating empathy-taking the perspective of the client without over identifying and communicating this experience to the client.				
g. Non-verbal communication-demonstrates effective use of head, eyes, hands, feet, posture, voice, dress/attire, etc.				
h. Immediacy- Staying in the here and now				
i. Timing- responding at the optimal moment				
j. Intentionality- responding with a clear intention of the therapists' therapeutic intentionality				
3. The student demonstrates awareness of power differences in the therapeutic relationship and manages these differences therapeutically				
4. The student collaborates with the client to establish clear therapeutic goals				
5. The student facilitates movement towards client goals				
6. The student demonstrates the capacity to match appropriate interventions and corresponding theory to the presenting client profile.				
7. The student creates a safe clinical environment				
8. The student demonstrates analysis and resolution of ethical dilemmas				
9. The student willingly increases knowledge (and implementation) of effective counseling strategies				

**PROFESSIONALISM- Professional Responsibility**

NO 0 1 2

1. The student conducts him/herself in an ethical manner so as to promote confidence in the counseling profession				
2. The student relates to peers, professors, and others in a manner that is consistent with slated professional standards				
3. The student demonstrates sensitivity to real and ascribed differences in power between themselves and others, and does not exploit or mislead other people during or after professional relationships				
4. The student demonstrates application of legal requirements relevant to counseling training and practice				
5. The student demonstrates the ability to determine when counseling law and ethical standards differ and take action accordingly				
6. The student projects a professional image and positive attitude				

**COMPETENCE**

NO 0 1 2

7. The student recognizes the boundaries of his/her particular competencies and the limitations of his/her expertise				
8. The student takes responsibility for compensating for deficiencies as set forth through discussion with faculty				
9. The student takes responsibility for assuring client welfare when encountering the boundaries of his/her expertise				
10. The student provides only those services and applies only those techniques for which he/she is qualified by education, training, and experience				

**INTERPERSONAL- MATURITY**

NO 0 1 2

1. The student demonstrates appropriate self-control (such as anger and impulse control) in interpersonal relationships with faculty, peers, clients, supervisors, and members of the community				
2. The student demonstrates honesty, fairness, and respect for others				
3. The student demonstrates an awareness of his/her own belief systems, values, needs, and limitations and the effect of those on his/her own work				
4. The student demonstrates the ability to receive, reflect on, and integrate feedback from peers, faculty, and supervisors				
5. The student exhibits appropriate levels of self-assurance, confidence, and trust in his/her own ability				
6. The student follows professionally recognized conflict resolution processes, seeking to informally address the issue first with the individual(s) with whom the conflict arises				

**INTEGRITY**

NO 0 1 2

7. The student refrains from making statements which are false, misleading, or deceptive				
8. The student avoids improper and potentially harmful dual relationships				
9. The student respects the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people				
10. The student respects the rights of all individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and choices regarding self-determination and autonomy				
11. The student respects cultural, individual, and role differences, including those due to age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status				

**ACADEMIC**

NO 0 1 2

1. The student regularly attends class				
2. The student is on time for class				
3. The student stays and actively participates in class activities and discussions for the entire class				
4. The student completes all of assignments on time				
5. Completed assignments reflect appropriate graduate level work				
6. The student is open to feedback regarding academic performance and incorporates given feedback into subsequent work				
7. The student is able to grasp, apply, and integrate knowledge at both concrete and abstract levels of thought				
8. The student is responsive to critical feedback				
9. The student treats faculty and peers with respect in regards to verbal and nonverbal communication				

Any score of 0 in any area of functioning could result in remediation and/or dismissal from the program.

- 3 or more scores of “1” in any area of functioning could result in remediation and/or dismissal from the program.

Comments:

Signature of Instructor completing the evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form was adapted with permission from Lenior-Rhyme Counseling Programs June 2012. Original source: INC Charlotte Department of Counseling.



Graduate Assistantship Application

**Master of Arts in Clinical Mental Health Counseling  
Montreat College School of Professional and Adult Graduate Studies  
(Current)**

Applicant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Checklist to verify eligibility (per handbook):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Fully accepted (unconditional admission)

\_\_\_\_\_ Cumulative CMHC Program GPA of 3.5 (unless student has not begun courses at the time of application; in this case, applicant must have a 3.0 undergraduate GPA)

\_\_\_\_\_ Available to provide 20 hours per week of work to the CMHC program

**Additional Information Required to Accompany Application:**

1. Cover letter/letter of interest

- a. Why are you interested in the Graduate Assistantship position?
- b. What skills will you use in completion of GA responsibilities?
- c. What makes you a unique candidate for consideration for the GA position?
- d. How will this position help you meet your professional goals?

2. Current resume

By application for the Graduate Assistantship position, I testify that I have read the program handbook and any accompanying job description, understand that I must maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA, understand that this is a time-limited position, and if I wish to continue in a GA capacity in subsequent years, that I must reapply, and that I will be required to clock 20 hours per week of tasks for the CMHC program. Additionally, I understand that if offered this position I am to fulfill the role with proper professional demeanor and with confidentiality of any student specific information I may encounter.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Health Standards

We, the faculty members of Montreat College's CMHC program, strive to provide a safe and welcoming environment in which to learn and grow as a future counselor. Our aim is to adhere to standards set forth by CACREP and the ethical codes established by the American Counseling Association.

Per CACREP Section 2 F.1. k and Section 2 F.1.l we must provide strategies within our curriculum for personal and professional self-evaluation, implications for practice and self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role.

F.5.b of the ACA Code of Ethics states students and supervisees monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems and refrain from offering or providing professional services when such impairment is likely to harm a client or others.

Upon acceptance to the CMHC program you will be required to have a drug screening completed. This screening is to ensure your fitness for our program and future work during Practicum and Internship.

The screening will be completed by Wolfe. You will be provided instructions for completing this process. There is a \$38.00 fee to be paid online or in person at the testing site. If you pay online with a debit or credit card, you will be provided a receipt to take to a testing lab. There results will be report to Wolfe and Montreat.

All screenings must be completed within three weeks of acceptance.

If a student fails the initial drug screening, he or she will be able to take classes at the start of the semester: Introduction to Counseling and will have eight weeks to get retested that their own expense. If a student then passes, he or she will be allowed to continue in the program. If failed, the student may be dismissed from the program.

If you have any questions about the drug screening order or payment process, **please contact Wolfe at 828-251-9898 or 800-979-1739.**



### Counseling Referrals of Montreat CMHC students

#### **Black Mountain**

*Nikki Mousette \**

Safe Harbour Christian Counseling

(828) 395-6073

nikki@safeharbor1.com

Swannanoa, NC

*Linda Curtis, \**

Henry Building

(828) 242-9556

*Hailey Klieforth*

(847) 807-1699

Tele-health Counselor

Sliding Scale; as low as \$80 for students

#### **Asheville**

*MAHEC (Mountain Area Health and Education Center)*

(828) 257-4400

121 Hendersonville Rd, Asheville, NC 28803

Intern counselors can be seen based on need and availability. Client must be a patient.

*"MC" Carla Ellis, LCMHC*

Mc@mccliscounseling.com

ATherapistLikeMe.org

Montreat Students: \$50/session

*Lauren Griffin \**

WNC Counseling

201 Stone Ridge Blvd

Asheville, NC 28804

(386) 801-2606

lauren@wnccounseling.com

www.wnccounseling.com

*Katherine Therrell LCMHCS, PLLC*

3653 Sweeten Creek Road

Suite B

Arden, North Carolina 28704

(828) 565-1925

(828) 551-6262 cell

Accepts most insurances

*Dr. Sandra Brown \**

Pastoral Counseling & Growth

191 E Chestnut St,  
Asheville, NC 28801  
(828) 258-2112

**Morganton**

*Brandi Geddings, LPCA \**  
*Caroline Sigmon, MSW, LCSW \**  
New Directions  
201 Government Ave. SW  
Hickory, NC 28602  
(828) 267-1740

*Dr. Debra Peters, LP \**  
Wisdom Path  
220 West Union St.  
Morganton, NC 28655  
(828) 475-6544

**Charlotte**

*Atrium Health's Carolinas Medical Center*  
(704) 355-2000  
[atriumhealth.org](http://atriumhealth.org)  
1000 Blythe Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28203

Intern counselors can be seen based on need and availability. Client must be a patient.

*Counseling Center at Charlotte \**  
3900 Park Road  
Charlotte, NC 28209  
Email: [info@charlottecounselingcenter.org](mailto:info@charlottecounselingcenter.org)  
Tel. (704) 527-7907  
Fax (704) 527-7906

*First Baptist Church \**  
120 N. Lafayette Street  
Shelby, NC 28151  
(704) 472-1437  
[http://charlottecounseling.org/Home\\_Page.html](http://charlottecounseling.org/Home_Page.html)

\*Pricing may be adjusted on a case-by-case basis based on need.

Standard G: Counseling agencies are provided for students on each Montreat campus. These counseling agencies have been added to the program handbook and expressed to students during the night of orientation to the program. Students requesting counseling services now have options available to them.