Student Handbook

Counselor Education Graduate Programs

Clinical Mental Health Counseling
&
School Counseling

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Revised 3/22/2024

This handbook contains information that you will need to successfully complete the counseling program at the University of South Alabama. In this handbook, you will find information on program requirements, plans of study, professional organizations and credentialing, and the counseling program's student retention policy. It is essential that you review the information in this handbook and refer to this as needed throughout your program. This official copy of our handbook has been made available to you by the College of Education & Professional Studies in an electronic format. You can request one printed copy at the beginning of your program, which you are expected to save and use throughout your graduate

program.

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Our Mission

College of Education & Professional Studies

The mission of the College of Education and Professional Studies is to transform our community and expand our outreach through a commitment to excellence in education and human services, advancement of innovative research, and supporting the dedicated service of our faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

Counselor Education Program

Counselor Education Program Mission Statement:

The Counseling Program at the University of South Alabama is committed to preparing dynamic, culturally competent counselors who embrace diversity and dedicate themselves to be reflective, life-long learners, social-justice advocates and systemic change agents who proactively promote the social, emotional, psychological, spiritual, economic, and physical health of youth, adults, families, and communities.

The USA Counselor Education Program is committed to creating a diverse community of future counselors comprised of individuals with experiences, backgrounds and perspectives that reflect the diversity of our region and beyond. We believe embracing diversity requires moving beyond recognition and tolerance to a position of honoring, valuing, and celebrating differences to create communities that are vibrant and inclusive. We recognize that to accomplish this we must prepare our students to be social justice advocates who proactively engage in our communities to facilitate change at all levels.

We believe it is our responsibility to provide an educational and professional training environment that encourages, welcomes, and supports diverse perspectives and voices in the pursuit of intellectual inquiry and professional development. Thus, we are committed to recruiting and educating a diverse student community of scholars. Beyond recruitment, our social justice framework is built in part on a foundational commitment to secure and nurture practicum and internship settings that provide our students multicultural clinical experiences and, opportunities to develop advocacy skills, thereby enabling students to recognize barriers and injustices at individual, program, agency, and systemic levels. These experiences provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to facilitate positive change.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Mission Statement:

The mission of the USA Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is to prepare culturally competent, advocacy driven counselors and, to develop a mindset of social justice and community responsibility in students, while fostering a common professional identity that both honors and embraces the diversity each student brings to the program.

School Counseling Program Mission Statement:

The Mission of the USA school counseling program is to prepare culturally competent graduates to work as advocates and leaders in PK-12 school settings through the design and implementation of data-driven comprehensive school counseling programs aligned with the ASCA National Model that benefit and support the academic, career and social-emotional development of all students.

Counselor Education Program Objectives

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of clinical mental health counseling to include history, current trends/issues, roles, functions, professional identity, leadership/advocacy strategies, and laws/legislation affecting the counseling profession.
2. Facilitate clients' growth and development over the lifespan within a strengths-based and wellness framework.
3. Utilize technology as applied to clinical mental health counseling.
4. Demonstrate cultural sensitivity, competency, humility, and responsiveness with all individuals, couples, and families.
5. Demonstrate the ability to develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive needs assessments.
6. Demonstrate effective and meaningful individual counseling, couples and family counseling, and group work with diverse clients with diverse needs.
7. Serve as culturally responsive and empowerment-based advocates with individuals, families, and communities to promote optimal growth and wellness to meet the needs of diverse clientele.
8. Demonstrate skills related to clinical assessment and interpretation of assessment results to clients.
9. Demonstrate appropriate use of multi-axial diagnosis in a manner that promotes the optimal well-being of clients.

School Counseling Program Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the foundations of school counseling to include history, current trends/issues, role, functions, professional identity, leadership/advocacy strategies, ethical responsibility, and laws/legislation
2. Facilitate P-12 students' growth and development within the framework of the American School Counselors Association's (ASCA) Mindsets and Behaviors within the domains of academic, career, and social/emotional development)
3. Utilize technology as applied to school counseling
4. Demonstrate cultural competence and responsiveness with all students and their families
5. Develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive, data driven school counseling program aligned with the ASCA National Model

6. Demonstrate effective and meaningful individual counseling, group work, and whole group instruction with diverse students with diverse needs
7. *Leadership, advocacy and systemic change*
8. *Serve as culturally responsive and empowerment-based consultants with students, families, and school personnel concerning the developmental needs of diverse students*
9. Demonstrate skills related to assessment of students, including administration and interpretation of assessment instruments to students, parents/caregivers, teachers, and administrators

Counselor Education Program Faculty

Core Faculty

Yvette Qualls Getch, Ph.D., CRC

- Professor of Counselor Education
- Email: ygetch@southalabama.edu
- Counseling Graduate Programs Coordinator
- CMHC Practicum/Internship Coordinator
- Ph.D., Rehabilitation Education and Research, The University of Arkansas
- M.ED., Rehabilitation Counseling (Independent Living emphasis; Deafness emphasis), The University of Arkansas
- B.S., Social Work, The Florida State University

Dr. Getch has almost 30 years of experience in rehabilitation counseling and education. She has research interests in counseling and advocating for individuals with disabilities and chronic medical conditions.

Danny McCarty, Ph.D.

- Assistant Professor of Counselor Education
- Email: mccarty@southalabama.edu
- Ph.D., Counselor Education & Supervision, University of Arkansas
- M.S., Clinical Mental Health Counseling, University of South Alabama
- B.A., Psychology, University of South Alabama

Dr. McCarty seeks to teach through cooperative experience with students. He primarily researches ways to apply creativity to theory and practice, particularly pertaining to Adlerian counseling theory. He often uses Adventure Therapy concepts in both teaching and in research. And he generally desires to serve his community through working with people recovering from addiction.

Amy W. Upton, Ph.D., NCC, NCSC

- Assistant Professor of instruction of Counselor Education
- Email: amyupton@southalabama.edu
- School Counseling Practicum/Internship Coordinator
- B.A., Theater Arts, Old Dominion University
- M.Ed., School Counseling, Old Dominion University
- Ph.D., Counselor Education, Old Dominion University

Dr. Upton worked 16 years as a school counselor before becoming a counselor educator. Her interests are in school counselor development and professional identity, counselor supervision, school counselor leadership, school counselor program development and implementation, and working for access and equity for underserved populations.

Affiliated Counselor Education Faculty

Meredith Tittler, Ph.D, L.P.

- Assistant Professor of Counselor Education and Clinical/Counseling Psychology
- Email: mtittler@southalabama.edu
- B.A., Psychology, Clark University, Worcester, MA
- M.S., Counseling Psychology, Iowa State University, Ames, IA
- Ph.D., Counseling Psychology, Iowa State University, Ames, IA

Dr. Tittler teaches in both the Counselor Education Master's program and the Clinical/Counseling Psychology Doctoral program. Her research focuses on ways to engage individuals, especially those with privileged identities, in social justice behaviors. She is also passionate about training and supervising students in clinical skills in both individual and group therapy.

Ryon McDermott, Ph.D.

- Professor of Counseling Psychology
- Core Faculty – Combined-Integrated Clinical & Counseling Psychology Ph.D. Program
- B.A., Psychology, University of Kansas
- M.Ed., Community Counseling, University of Houston
- Ph.D., Counseling Psychology, University of Houston

Dr. McDermott's primary research interests revolve around the intersections of adult attachment and gender role socialization in men and women. Especially interested in the connections between adult attachment and issues of partner violence, men's adherence to traditional gender roles, and other variables related to psychological well-being (e.g. self-esteem, personality characteristics, and mental health). He serves the Counselor Education Program as Director of Research, teaches a course in multicultural counseling for the program, and meets with the CED program faculty.

James "Tres" Stefurak, Ph.D.

Professor of Counseling Psychology
Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Research, Graduate Studies, External Relations & Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
BA, Psychology, University of Georgia
M.Ed., Community Counseling, University of Georgia
Ph.D., Counseling Psychology, University of Georgia

Dr. Stefurak has previously taught the practicum, internship, addictions and crisis & trauma counseling courses in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program. He continues to teach and to provide guest lectures as needed and serves as a primary contact with the community. His interests are in adolescent and family psychology, juvenile offending, child welfare, childhood trauma and PTSD as well as mixed methods program evaluation and the intersection of law enforcement, mental health and social justice.

Professional Organizations

In accordance with developing their identity as a professional or school counselor, students are expected to become involved in at least one professional counseling organization during their program of study.

National Organizations:

American Counseling Association (ACA; www.counseling.org)
American School Counseling Association (ASCA; www.schoolcounselor.org)
American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA; www.amhca.org)

ACA has 20 divisions (including AMHCA) if students would like to become involved in an organization with a specific focus area such as group work, college counseling, assessment, LGBT issues, etc. See the website below for more information:
https://www.counseling.org/about-us/divisions-regions-and-branches/divisions

State and Local Organizations:

Alabama Counseling Association (ALCA; www.alabamacounseling.org)
Alabama Mental Health Counselor Association (ALMHCA; www.almhca.com)
Alabama School Counseling Association (ALSCA; https://www.alabamaschoolcounselors.org)

Student Organizations:

Chi Sigma Iota: Upsilon Sigma Alpha chapter (www.csi-net.org)
Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) is an international honor society for counseling students and professionals that offers opportunities for leadership and professional development. In order to gain membership in CSI, students must obtain a 3.5 GPA on a 4.0 scale and have been enrolled in the counseling program at least one semester. An initiation ceremony will take place each year.

Additionally, the Upsilon Sigma Alpha chapter of CSI will host professional development (e.g., guest speakers, workshops) and social activities (e.g., fundraisers, picnics) throughout the year. All students are invited to participate in events hosted by the CSI chapter.

State Licensure & Certification

Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Licensure

Students graduating from the CMHC program will have met the course requirements for licensure *eligibility* by the Alabama Board of Examiner in Counseling (ABEC; www.abec.alabama.gov). However, graduation from the CMHC program does not guarantee licensure as a professional counselor. Licensure is a credential provided by a state government agency, and in any given state licensure may require passage of a test and accrual of post-degree supervised clinical work as well as other requirements. Please go to the following link for the latest information on Licensure Requirements: https://abec.alabama.gov/wp-

content/uploads/2022/07/abec-academic-requirements-072222-cacrep.pdf

As of January 1, 2024, the course requirements for licensure in Alabama are as follows:

- Master's degree from regionally accredited institution
- Minimum **60** semester hours or 90 quarter hours
- All coursework must be included under one degree (multiple degrees or add on coursework does not qualify)
- Only graduate-level course work applies
- All applicants shall have a master's degree from a CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) or CORE (Commission on Rehabilitation and Education) accredited program, or the content equivalent of CACREP or CORE.
- For specifics, please see the following link: https://abec.alabama.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/abec-academic-requirements-072222-cacrep.pdf

Eleven specific course content areas required, and the USA program includes classes that fulfill all of these content domains.

- Counseling Theory
- Human Growth & Development
- Social and Multicultural Foundations
- The Helping Relationship
- Group Dynamics, Processing and Counseling
- Lifestyle and Career Development
- Appraisal of Individuals
- Research & Evaluation
- Professional Orientation
- Practicum (100 hrs/40 direct service)
- Internship (600 hrs/240 direct service)

It is highly recommended that students save their syllabi to demonstrate how coursework meets licensure requirements, particularly those moving to other states.

For more information on Alabama state licensure, go to www.abec.alabama.gov or contact ABEC at 205-458-8716 or 1-800-822-3307.

Note that licensure requirements vary from state to state. Ultimately students are responsible for determining the licensure requirements for the state in which they wish to work as a counselor after graduation and choosing coursework and clinical experiences that meet those requirements.

NOTE: New requirements went into effect in January 2024 that requires that all coursework be included in one counseling degree and additional coursework or multiple degrees cannot be added to meet the requirement.

School Counseling: Certification

Students graduating from the School Counseling program will have met the course requirements

for school counseling certification eligibility in the state of Alabama. However, graduation from the program does not guarantee credentialing as a professional school counselor. Credentials are provided by the Alabama State Board of Education, and in any given state, certification may require passage of a test and accrual of post-degree supervised clinical work as well as other requirements.

- Certification Options: There are two routes to certification in the state of Alabama; The CACREP Accredited Option and the Traditional Department of Education option. Educational requirements and examination requirements vary based upon which option a candidate is applying for certification under (see Appendix D for specific requirements for each option).
- Required Coursework: (1) Completion of a minimum of 60 Credit hours within the school counseling master's program and a GPA of not less than 3.0 on all courses in the Alabama State Board of Education approved master's degree school counseling program. (2) A practicum that includes a minimum of 100 clock hours of which 40 clock hours must be supervised, direct service work in individual and group counseling with early childhood/elementary and secondary school students.
- Experience Requirement: (1) A supervised P-12 school-based internship of at least 600 clock hours of which 240 must be supervised, direct service, begun subsequent to the completion of the practicum which shall require the prospective counselor to perform all the activities that a school counselor is expected to perform AND (2) if pursuing the department of education certification option: two years of satisfactory educational teaching experience.
- Examination: A passing score on the CECE comprehensive exam is required to graduate from the school counseling program The PRAXIS II: School Counselor (5422) exam must be passed prior to registering for internship. If pursing the CACREP certification option; a passing score on the National Counseling Exam (NCE) is required to obtain school counseling certification in the state of Alabama.
- Certification: Pre-K-12
- Reciprocity: Yes,
- Requirements for Other States: If you are an out of state student that does not intend to practice in Alabama after graduation, please begin to gain knowledge of your specific state's certification requirements for school counselors. Visit the American School Counselors Association's website for more information at www.schoolcounselor.org.

For more information on school counselor certification in the state of Alabama, go to Contact ALSDE Teacher Certification office.

National Credentialing

Students will meet the course credit requirements upon graduation for the National Certified Counselor credential through the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC; www.nbcc.org).

Students can apply for NCC certification and take the NCE prior to graduation.

After Graduation: To achieve Board Eligible NCC status, graduates must:

- Pass the National Counselor Exam (NCE). Beginning 2025, the NCE will be offered at various Pearson sites throughout the year. Check NBCC's website for more details about NCE (http://www.nbcc.org).
- Submit your final transcript to NBCC showing your master's degree conferred.
- See https://www.nbcc.org/resources/applicants/students for more information on the steps to achieve NCC certification after graduation.

Personal Counseling Service

Successfully completing your degree in the Counselor Education programs at USA requires that you engage in self-reflection and self-growth to develop yourself as an effective clinical mental health or school counselor. The CED program faculty acknowledges that you may encounter personal issues that you would like to address through personal counseling services during your enrollment in the program.

The University Counseling & Testing Center at USA provides individual counseling and other programs that may meet your needs. Counseling and Testing Services is located at 326 Alpha Hall East and can be reached at 251-460-7051. Counseling students have the same access to UCTC services as any other students. Moreover, if counseling students access services at UCTC, they may still later potentially complete their practicum and internship there, though students may not simultaneously receive services and function as an intern at UCTC.

If you prefer to seek counseling services off-campus, you can talk to a CED faculty member for a list of referral sources in the Mobile and Baldwin County areas to help you find a therapist who will meet your needs. Additionally, student health insurance is available through the University if students can pay the monthly premium, and faculty can help students explore using this or other insurance to access personal counseling and mental health services.

Endorsement Policy

Students will require an endorsement (verbal or written) from faculty when seeking employment and credentialing. Endorsements will be given upon completion of the program only for the area (i.e., clinical mental health and/or school counseling) in which the student was prepared, including rare instances in which a student completes coursework and field experiences required for both programs.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA
COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM CANDIDATE RETENTION POLICY & REMEDIATION PROCEDURES

Professional Behavior

As part of their formal preparation to become professional counselors, candidates in the Counselor Education program at the University of South Alabama are expected to adhere to both the USA Student Code of Conduct and the Code of Ethics of the American Counseling Association in their academic, personal, and professional behavior.

Student Code of Conduct:
https://www.southalabama.edu/departments/academicaffairs/resources/policies/studentacademicconductpolicy8.15.18.pdf

ACA Code of Ethics: http://www.counseling.org/resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf

ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors https://www.schoolcounselor.org/About-School-Counseling/Ethical-Responsibilities/ASCA-Ethical-Standards-for-School-Counselors-(1)

Counselor Education Candidate Dispositions

Candidates are expected to demonstrate the following professional behaviors throughout the course of the program. Examples of behaviors that demonstrate the characteristic expected of professional counselors are provided. Candidates should note that this list of behavioral examples is not exhaustive.

1. Self-awareness

1.a. Awareness of Personal Bias & Assumptions
- Candidate can articulate personal strengths and areas for growth as a counselor-in-training
- Candidate seeks feedback from faculty and supervisors that is addressed to self-awareness
- Candidate can identify populations and/or issues that would be personally difficult to address in counseling based on the candidate's current worldview

1.b. Interpersonal Maturity
- Candidate shows a willingness to work with others
- Candidate is tactful and open when communicating with others
- Candidate responds flexibly when communicating with others
- Candidate makes effective use of critical feedback

1.c. Emotional Stability

- Candidate can articulate a range of emotions while maintaining emotional self-control
- Candidate displays a variety of methods for dealing effectively with predictable stressors
- Candidate demonstrates ability to regulate emotions during interactions with others

2. Professional Behavior

2.a. Manages time effectively

- Candidate completes classroom, department, and site-based assignments (i.e., case notes, treatment plans, etc.) as scheduled
- Candidate is punctual to class, appointments with faculty, and to work at internship site
- Candidate promptly communicates concerns with instructors and supervisors
- Candidate follows through on tasks assigned to them in consistent and reliable ways across time

2.b. Classroom behavior

- Candidate comes to class prepared
- Candidate is attentive in class
- Candidate participates in class discussions
- Candidate makes effective use of required course materials
- Candidate participates in experiential activities as assigned by instructors

2.c. Attendance

- Candidate meets attendance requirements for courses
- Candidate meets attendance expectations at internship site
- Candidate attends scheduled counseling sessions consistently
- Candidate informs instructor or supervisors in advance of circumstances that may necessitate missing classes or work

2.d. Dresses appropriately

- Candidate is well-groomed
- Candidate dresses in a manner consistent with the professional standards of the site

2.e. Professional Demeanor & Attitude

- Candidate is appropriately respectful and courteous to faculty and supervisors
- Candidate is genuine, yet professional, when interacting with clients
- Candidate behaves with civility when interacting with peers, site staff, faculty and supervisors
- Candidate demonstrates respect for the opinions of others

3. Commitment to Life-long learning

3.a. Motivation
- Candidate can articulate professional goals as a counselor
- Candidate actions are consistent with expressed desire to improve performance
- Candidate uses instructor feedback to improve assignments that do not meet expected requirements

3.b. Intellectual curiosity
- Candidate asks clarifying questions in class and in supervision
- Candidate seeks data-driven information to improve personal knowledge and abilities as a counselor
- Candidate goes beyond minimal requirements to explore professionally related issues in greater depth

3.c. Professional curiosity
- Candidate articulates importance of continuing education and supervision past graduation from a master's degree counseling program
- Candidate attends professional workshops and conferences to enhance development as a counselor
- Candidate actively seeks out information and supervision to enhance their work in session with clients

4. Ethical Integrity

4.a. Ethical conduct
- Candidate adheres to ethical guidelines of ACA, ASCA, community agency, K-12 school, or other professional entity as appropriate to setting and work with clients
- Candidate interacts appropriately with clients, observing professional boundaries
- Candidate maintains confidentiality regarding clients

4.b. Ethical reasoning
- Candidate acts in the best interests of the client within ethical and legal parameters
- Candidate does not engage in actions that put clients at risk for harm
- Candidate applies critical thinking skills (see section 5.a.) when evaluating ethical courses of action

4.c. Professional judgment
- Candidate demonstrates academic integrity (e.g., following USA policies)
- Candidate maintain confidentiality and avoids gossiping about clients, fellow candidates, colleagues, faculty, and supervisors
- Candidate recognizes when to consult with faculty, supervisors, or colleagues as to how to act in the best interests of a client

5. Self-efficacy

5.a. Critical thinking
- Candidate uses creative problem-solving skills in assessing and implementing professionally appropriate courses of action
- Candidate engages in forming and testing hypotheses related to intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions with clients
- Candidate demonstrates ability to analyze and synthesize information
- Candidate can utilize critical thinking skills to discuss the validity of feedback from a faculty member or supervisor
- Candidate shows a willingness to process the ways feedback can be implemented with faculty members or supervisors

5.b. Intellectual flexibility
- Candidate examines personal values and beliefs critical to career preparation as a professional counselor
- Candidate views information from multiple perspectives
- Candidate acknowledges and affirms the differing viewpoints of others

5.c. Independent initiative
- Candidate demonstrates autonomy and self-sufficiency
- Candidate demonstrates industriousness
- Candidate follows through with assignments, tasks, and responsibilities, and seeks feedback and supervision when needed

5.d. Resourcefulness
- Candidate shows the ability to adapt by seeking alternative solutions when situations do not go as planned
- Candidate makes effective use of multiple resources by being creative when reacting to difficult situations

6. Affirmation of Diversity

6.a. Sensitivity to cultural differences
- Candidate affirms cultural differences when interacting with clients/students from diverse backgrounds
- Candidate seeks out educational, consultative, and training experiences to improve understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally different populations
- Candidate recognizes the limits of his/her competence and either (a) seeks consultation, (b) seeks further training or education, (c) refers clients to more qualified individuals or resources, or (d) engages in a combination of these actions
- Candidate is engaged in understanding him/herself as a racial and cultural being and is actively seeking a non-racist identity

6.b. Respect for different perspective & opinions
- Candidate holds the belief that everyone has a right to their perspective or opinion
- Candidate listens actively and avoids demeaning or hostile analysis
- Candidate considers input from others, regardless of their backgrounds

6.c. Sensitivity to power differentials
- Candidate recognizes and affirms the existence of real and ascribed power differentials among himself/herself, supervisors, faculty, and clients

6.d. Belief that all students/clients can learn
- Candidate holds the belief that all students/clients are capable of learning
- Candidate holds appropriate academic, social, emotional, and developmental expectations of students/clients

6.e. Fairness and equitable treatment
- Candidate offers fair and equitable services to all clients without exception

7. Leadership and Advocacy

7.a. Empowers clients to be self-sufficient
- Candidate is able to (at an appropriate developmental level) help individuals identify the external barriers that affect their development
- Candidate is able to train clients in self-advocacy skills

7.b. Commitment to advocating for the profession
- Candidate accepts obligation to educate clients about the role and responsibilities of the counselor
- Candidate is able to identify opportunities for advocacy within the profession

7.c. Recognizes the impact of clients' environment on client welfare
- Candidate is able to identify the social, political, economic, and cultural factors that promote and/or adversely affect the welfare of the client
- Candidate recognizes the signs indicating that an individual's behaviors and concerns reflect responses to systemic or internalized oppression and can advocate accordingly on the client's behalf

Candidate Review and Retention Policy

The Counselor Education faculty in the Department of Counseling & Instructional Sciences at the University of South Alabama is responsible for preparing candidates to become **competent** and **ethical** counseling professionals. In addition to assessing academic performance, candidates' personal characteristics, level of interpersonal skills, and professional behavior will be evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the program by the counseling faculty. At least once a year, faculty members review all candidates in the program at a special faculty meeting, and students who do not meet program expectations will be notified and provided written feedback on their academic and professional performance. Professional behavior expectations, the retention policy, and remediation procedures are reviewed by faculty at the new student orientation. In addition, candidates sign an informed consent form (see Appendix A) documenting that they have read, reviewed, and understand these policies and procedures upon entering their first semester of the program.

Initial Remediation Procedures

Candidates identified as demonstrating academic or personal problems that interfere with their professional performance undergo further review by the faculty. Candidates with minor concerns (e.g., seeming distracted throughout the semester, exhibiting low levels of participation in class, demonstrating difficulty receiving constructive feedback, failure to demonstrate adequate counselor dispositions) will be asked to meet with their faculty advisor to discuss concerns and review their dispositions based on the specific reported behaviors(s). The faculty advisor and/or program coordinator will review the completed **Counseling Program Student Disposition Rating Scale**. In many cases, the candidate and faculty advisor come to an agreement on what needs to occur to improve reported behaviors and dispositions. Students are informed that further action will be taken (remediation plan) if concerning behaviors continue and dispositions do not improve.

In some cases, candidates may be asked by their advisor, the core counseling faculty, and/or the program coordinator to complete a remediation plan. Remediation plans are indicated for significant dispositional issues, student handbook violations, failure to secure or retain practicum/internship placement, plagiarism, or other significant issues. If a remediation plan is indicated, the following steps are taken:

- The advisor or program coordinator will discuss the remediation plan with the candidate during their meeting. This meeting may include the advisor and the program coordinator. If the program coordinator is the student's advisor, then an additional core counseling faculty member may attend the meeting.
- A remediation plan is developed (either during or after the meeting) and this plan is shared with the candidate after which both candidate, advisor, and program coordinator will sign the plan to demonstrate their mutual understanding of the candidate's current progress, professional development, and the actions necessary on the part of the candidate to continue in the counseling program. Often, the advisor and/or the program coordinator meet with the student to go over the written remediation plan prior to the student signing the plan. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the remediation plan and answer

questions the candidate may have about the plan.

- The candidate is provided three options for signing the remediation plan.
    - I understand the above remediation plan and consent to enacting this plan with the Counselor Education program faculty.
    - I understand the above remediation plan and consent to enacting this plan with the Counselor Education program faculty, but I would like to provide a written rebuttal to place in my student file.
    - I do not consent to the remediation plan and request an appeal to the next level of university administration, e.g. Associate Dean or Dean of the College.

If the candidate does not consent to the remediation plan and requests an appeal to the next level of administration, the candidate will be directed to the handbook and the appeal procedures policies as outlined the student handbook "The Lowdown" at http://www.southalabama.edu/lowdown

If a candidate does not successfully complete the initial remediation plan or, if at any time during the course of the program, the faculty becomes aware of substandard or unprofessional behavior or performance, unethical behavior, and/or illegal acts, the candidate will be subjected to the following formal remediation process:

Conference with a Faculty Committee: In cases of alleged misconduct, the committee will make every effort to maintain confidentiality of all parties in the process. Information about the case is generally not communicated to non-involved parties, and communications regarding the matter are on a need-to-know basis. If, however, informational material relative to the case is subpoenaed through a court process or is required to be divulged in some other type of investigation, then it would not be deemed a breach of confidentiality and the requested material would be void of its confidentiality. Neither the student nor the faculty involved shall have representation, including legal representation, during the presentation of the case or during the appeals process.

The candidate will be asked to meet with two faculty members, typically the candidate's advisor and the faculty member who raised the concern, to discuss the candidate's performance. If the candidate's advisor is the one with the concern, then another faculty member, preferably one familiar with the candidate, will be asked to be on the committee.

The conference shall be conducted to examine the details of the case. Prior to the conference, the department chair will ensure that the candidate and all committee members have copies of the Counselor Education Candidate Dispositions and Candidate Review and Retention policy as outlined in this handbook.

If a mutually satisfactory remediation plan is achieved during the conference, the process will end, and no further action will be taken. A record of the outcome of the conference will be filed in the department chair and dean's office. If the outcome of the conference results in dismissal of the case, the faculty members are responsible for taking necessary steps for removing blocks on registration.

If a successful resolution is not achieved at the conference, the committee will determine a

recommended penalty. After the review of the candidate, the committee will confirm their decision by vote. For cases in which the Committee recommends a penalty, the penalty may range up to and including dismissal from the university.

Appeals Process

After a decision is rendered by the Faculty Committee, an appeal may be requested. Grounds for an appeal are the alleged lack of due process in the case or alleged discrimination against the student. For an appeal to be considered, it must be based upon:

1. Arbitrary or capricious actions by a member of the faculty, the Faculty Committee, and/or the advisor.

2. Substantial failure on the part of the Faculty Committee to follow the procedures outlined above.

The appeals process follows the Academic Standards Policy as set forth by the Graduate School. Please refer to these policies as outlined in the student handbook "The Lowdown" at http://www.southalabama.edu/lowdown

Academic Standards and Appeals Policy

The counseling program in the Counseling & Instructional Sciences Department complies with the Academic Standards Policy as set forth by the Graduate School and the policies on general and grade grievance, student academic conduct, and sexual offense of the University of South Alabama. Please refer to these policies as outlined the student handbook "The Lowdown" at http://www.southalabama.edu/lowdown

Programmatic Grade Policy

Candidates are expected to comply with the academic standards set forth by the Graduate School, and the following academic standards specific to the Counseling programs.

Course Sequence

All students in both programs must earn a "B" or better in the courses below. The table below summarizes courses that are in common to both programs, courses which are prerequisites for the student to take part in their initial practicum field placement, and the typical year and semester in which each course is taken within that program.

	CMHC		SC		
Course	**Year Taken**	**Semester Taken**	**Year Taken**	**Semester Taken**	**Practicum Prerequisite**
CED 572 - Principles and Theories of Counseling	1	Fall	1	Fall	Y

CED 571 - Foundations of Clinical Mental Health Counseling	1	Fall	NA	NA	Y
CED 565 – Foundations of School Counseling	NA	NA	1	Fall	Y
CED 584 - Seminar in Ethical & Legal Issues	1	Fall	1	Fall	Y
EPY 555 – Tests, Measurement & Evaluation	1	Fall	1	Fall	N
CED 560 – Diagnosis & Treatment Planning	1	Spring	1	Spring	Y
CED 574 - Group Counseling, Theories, & Process	1	Spring	1	Spring	Y
CED 586 - Counseling Skills & Process	1	Spring	1	Spring	Y
IDE 510 – Educational Research and Evaluation	1	Summer	1	Summer	N
EPY 521 – Human Development & Behavior	1	Maymester	1	Maymester	N
CED 591 – Advocacy, Collaboration & Consultation	NA	NA	1	Summer	N
CED 566 - Multicultural Counseling	1	Spring	1	Spring	Y (concurrent)
CED – Child Counseling	NA	NA	1	Summer	N
CED 576 – Supervised Practicum in Counseling	1	Summer	2	Fall	N
CED 582 Data Driven School Counseling	NA	NA	2	Fall	N
CED – Career Development, Assessment & Intervention	2	Fall	2	Fall	N
CED 594 – Internship in School Counseling	NA	NA	2	Spring	N
CED 597 – Internship in CMHC	2	Fall & Spring	NA	NA	N
CED 592 – Crisis & Trauma Counseling	2	Fall	NA	NA	N
CED 562 – Addictions Counseling	2	Spring	NA	NA	N
Electives	1 2 3	Summer Fall Spring	2 2 2	Fall Spring Spring	N

Potential Electives for Clinical Mental Health Counseling:

1. CED 567: Couples Counseling & Human Sexuality
2. CED 564: Gerontological Counseling
3. CED 590: Special Topics: Grief Counseling

4. CED 590: Special Topics: Adlerian Counseling
5. CED 590: Special Topics: Motivational Interviewing
6. CED 569: Child Counseling
7. CED 579: Social and Psychological Aspects of Disability
8. IDE 620: Quantitative Methods I
9. IDE 631: Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research
10. IDE 660: Program Evaluation

The electives above are frequently offered in the regular course rotation. Other CED electives may be taught depending on faculty teaching loads per academic year and will be announced to students. Elective courses also may be taken in another department if they are relevant to professional counseling and the individual student's professional goals and upon approval from the student's advisor. Consult with your advisor for final approval of elective courses. The Clinical Mental Health Counseling Advising Worksheet is included in Appendix B.

Potential Electives for School Counseling:
Students will take nine credit-hours of electives.

The electives are offered in the regular course rotation. Other CED electives may be taught depending on faculty teaching loads per academic year and will be announced to students. Elective courses also may be taken in another department. Consult with your advisor for final approval of elective courses. The School Counseling Advising Worksheet is included in Appendix C.

Additional Program Requirements:

- ***School Counseling:***
    - Praxis II: School Counselor (5422) (required for both options). Praxis II test requirements are subject to change as dictated by the ALSDE. Prior to registering for any Praxis II exam, please verify current requirement by accessing directly to the ALABAMA portion of the Praxis II website at https://www.ets.org/praxis/al/test-takers/plan-your-test/licensure/educator-preparation-approach.html#accordion-4fca109e1d-item-abdf939109

    - A passing score on the National Counselor Exam is required for School Counseling certification in the state of Alabama for students in the CACREP track. Students may graduate from the program without taking this exam. Students must request that their scores be sent directly from the National Board of Certified Counselors to the ALSDE.

- ***Clinical Mental Health Counseling & School Counseling:*** The successful completion of the Counselor Education Comprehensive Examination (CECE) is required for graduation.

Comprehensive Examination

Successful completion of the Counselor Education Comprehensive Examination (CECE) is

required for graduation from Clinical Mental Health and School Counseling Programs.

- If a student fails the first administration of the CECE, the student will have a second opportunity to take the CECE Exam after a minimum of two weeks has passed. The faculty strongly recommend that students seek additional tutorials, courses, and study aids, particularly if they fail to pass the first administration of the CECE.
-
- If the student fails the CECE a second time the following apply:
-
    - The student cannot take the CECE exam again.
    - The student must meet with the program faculty to discuss his/her options.
- *If a student fails more than three sections of the CECE on two separate administrations, the student will not be allowed to sit for a written comprehensive exam. Failure to meet this requirement results in failure to meet the requirements of the program. The program faculty will meet and inform the student of their failure to meet the requirements of the program due to failure to pass the CECE on two separate occasions and failing 3 or more sections of the CECE on two separate occasions*

    - If the student fails the CECE twice BUT fails three or fewer sections on two separate administrations, the program faculty will thoroughly discuss the student's scores on the CECE (see note 1), the student's dispositions as evaluated by the faculty, and any special circumstances that may have contributed to the student performing poorly on the CECE. Based on this faculty discussion, and the decision made as a result of this discussion, the following options may happen:
        - *As a result of the faculty discussion described above, the program faculty does not allow the student to sit for a written comprehensive exam or an oral defense. If so, then the decision means the student failed to meet the requirements of the program.*
        - *In rare circumstances, based on the faculty discussion described above, and at the sole discretion of the program faculty, the program faculty may allow the student to sit for a rigorous and thorough written comprehensive exam that is followed by an oral defense. If the student fails the written comprehensive exam with oral defense, the student has then failed to meet the requirements of the program.*

Appendix A
Informed Consent for Counselor Education Candidate Dispositions, Retention Policy, and Remediation Procedures

University of South Alabama Department of Counseling & Instructional Sciences Clinical Mental Health Counseling School Counseling

Candidate's Name:

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have had the opportunity to discuss expected Counselor Education student dispositions, the retention policy, and remediation procedures with members of the Counseling faculty. I also acknowledge that I have read, reviewed, and understand what is expected of me in complying with these dispositions, policies, and procedures. I understand that the CED program faculty are responsible for providing ongoing performance appraisal and evaluation feedback throughout the training program, per the ACA Code of Ethics (ACA, 2014, F.6.). Additionally, I affirm that I have reviewed and understand university policies and procedures as described in the Student Handbook the "Lowdown." My signature below is evidence of my promise to demonstrate the appropriate dispositions and to adhere to said policies and procedures.

Finally, as a counselor-in-training, I agree to follow the ACA Code of Ethics, and adhere to applicable laws, regulatory policies, and other rules and policies governing professional staff as practicum and internship placement settings (ACA, 2014, F.5.a and F. 5. B.). I agree to fully participate in the courses and curriculum set out by the program faculty and to abide by the student dispositions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

_____ _____

Student's signature Date

_____ _____

Faculty Advisor's signature Date

Appendix B
Clinical Mental Health Counseling Advising Worksheet

College of Education & Professional Studies
Counseling & Instructional Sciences Department
Program of Studies

MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.) -CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING EMPHASIS

Student's Name & Number_____Date Entered _____

Faculty Advisor_____Date Graduated_____

Minimum Hours Required: 60 Semester Hours

1. REQUIRED MAJOR PROFESSIONAL CORE:		Sem	Grade
(39 Semester Hours required)			
CED 560 Diagnosis and Treatment Planning	3	____	____
CED 571 Foundations of Clinical Mental Health Counseling	3	____	____
CED 572 Principles and Theories of Counseling	3	____	____
CED 574 Group Counseling, Theories, and Process	3	____	____
CED 584 Seminar in Ethical and Legal Issues	3	____	____
CED 588 Career Development, Assessment, & Intervention	3	____	____
CED 566 Multicultural Counseling	3	____	____
CED 586 Counseling Skills & Process	3	____	____
CED 562 Addictions Counseling	3	____	____
CED 592 Crisis and Trauma Counseling	3	____	____
CED 576 Supervised Practicum in Counseling (100 contact hours)	3	____	____
CED 595 Internship (6 semester hours required; 600 contact hours)	6	____	____

REQUIRED RELATED PROFESSIONAL COURSES

(9 Semester Hours required)			
IDE 510 Educational Research and Evaluation	3	____	____
EPY 521 Human Development and Behavior	3	____	____
EPY 555 Tests, Measurement and Evaluation	3	____	____

APPROVED ELECTIVES
(12 Semester Hours Required)

Appendix C

Master of Education – M.Ed.

CLASS A CERTIFICATE – SCHOOL COUNSELING

Student Name _____ Jag Number _____

Advisor _____ Date Admitted to Program _____

Program Options*: Traditional (through ALSDE) _____ CACREP:_____

MINIMUM GRADUATE HOURS REQUIRED: 60

A minimum grade of "B" is required in all coursework.

			Hours	Semester	Grade
I.	**Instructional Support (51 Hours)**				
	CED 560	Diagnosis/Treatment Planning	3	_____	_____
	CED 565	Foundations of Professional School Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 566	Multicultural Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 569	Child Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 572	Principles and Theories of Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 574	Group Counseling Theory and Process	3	_____	_____
	CED 576	Supervised Practicum in Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 582	Data Driven School Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 584	Seminar in Ethical and Legal Issues in Counseling	3	_____	_____
	CED 586	Counseling Skills and Processes	3	_____	_____
	CED 588	Career Development, Assessment and Intervention	3	_____	_____
	CED 591	Advocacy, Collaboration, Consultation	3	_____	_____
	_____	Approved Sequence Electives (9 hours)	9	_____	_____
	_____			_____	_____
	_____			_____	_____
	CED 595	Internship: School Counseling (6 semester hours; 600 contact hours)	6	_____	_____
II.	**Educational Foundations (6 Hours)**				
	EPY 521	Human Development and Behavior	3	_____	_____
	EPY 555	Tests, Measurements and Evaluation	3	_____	_____
III.	**Research and Evaluation (3 Hours)**				
	IDE 510	Educational Research and Evaluation	3	_____	_____
	ALSDE Prerequisite:				
	*SPE 500	Nature and Needs of Exceptional Children and Youth *(Must be taken for ***three additional*** semester hours by Traditional ALSDE students who have NOT previously satisfied the special education requirement.)	3	_____	_____

Appendix D
University of South Alabama
Master of Education in School Counseling Certification Options

	Traditional Route	CACREP Option
PRIOR TO ADMISSIONS		
Bachelor's Degree	YES	YES
Bachelor level educator's certificate	YES	NO
2 years teaching experience	YES	NO
*Successful Background Clearance *	YES (Should be completed if holding an educator's certificate)	YES (must complete background check requirements prior to admissions
Prior to Program Completion		
Complete Special Education Course Requirement	YES (Either in undergraduate program or take SPE 500)	No
Complete 60 credit hour approved School Counseling program	YES	YES
*Pass AECPT prior to enrolling in Practicum	YES (Should have passed before obtaining an educator's certificate)	No
*Pass Praxis – Professional School Counseling prior to enrolling in internship	YES	YES
Pass Comprehensive Examination	YES	YES
PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR CERTIFICATION		
*Pass the National Counseling Exam (NCE) administered by the NBCC	NO	YES
Apply for Certification	YES	YES

Appendix E
University of South Alabama
Master of Education in School Counseling
Additional Program Requirements

Background Check (Prior to Admissions)

The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) requires that all students in a school counseling certification program have their fingerprints cleared through the ABI/FBI. One of the requirements for completion of our Master's in school counseling program is verification of this clearance.

All individuals enrolled in a school counseling certification program are to use this system to meet the fingerprinting/background check requirement. Information, including online registration and fingerprinting procedures, is available on the Field Print Alabama.
https://fieldprintalabama.com/

Verify Your Background Clearance
An individual may verify that their criminal history background check results are on file with the Alabama Department of Education by visiting the Teacher Certification Portal.
https://tcert.alsde.edu/Portal/Public/Pages/SearchCerts.aspx
Students must input a last name and first name.

Program/certification testing requirements

- Praxis – Professional School Counseling (for all students prior to enrolling in Internship)
  http://www.ets.org/praxis/al/other_cert_approaches/cacrep

- NCE (National Counselor Exam given by the National Board of Certified Counselors (NBCC) – REQUIRED ONLY FOR CACREP OPTION before applying for certification)
  https://www.nbcc.org/resources/applicants/students