

CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING, MS

Contact

Breana Nieves Vergara, Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions, 150 Huntington Hall, 315-443-2505, bnieves@syr.edu
Meredith Si Snieckus, Assistant Teaching Professor, sgao13@syr.edu
(sgao13@syr.edu)

Core Faculty

Dr. Sabrina Butler, Assistant Teaching Professor
Dr. Yanhong Liu, Associate Professor
Dr. Melissa Luke, Dean's Professor
Dr. Caroline O'Hara, Associate Professor
Dr. Derek Seward, Associate Professor
Dr. Meredith Si Snieckus, Visiting Assistant Teaching Professor

Program Description

The Master of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling prepares professional counselors to offer a broad range of clinical mental health counseling services and interventions focused on wellness and advocacy. These therapeutic services are designed to enhance the growth and development of all clients and can be delivered in a variety of settings such as community agencies, private practice, residential treatment, community hospitals, Veterans Affairs Clinics, and human service organizations.

Students develop skills in clinical mental health counseling, multicultural/social justice counseling, career counseling, substance abuse services and crisis counseling. Students who graduate from this program meet all educational requirements for the New York State license in clinical mental health counseling (LMHC). After completion of the program, students may apply for a limited permit to practice mental health counseling, while accumulating the required post degree hours to sit for the licensure exam. Students also meet the educational requirements for licensure as a mental health counselor in most other states.

Counseling faculty at Syracuse University have been pioneers in training highly skilled practitioners and leaders in a wide range of counseling settings. Our programs are nationally accredited and can lead to national certification or state certification in school counseling or licensure as a clinical mental health counselor. Faculty members are nationally recognized for their leadership in the profession and all classes are taught by skilled experts and experienced clinicians.

The coursework offered for this program is delivered in a one day/week format, generally scheduled from 4-7 pm or 7-10 pm. Courses are offered at specific time slots during specific semesters. We identified these timeslots to complement Practicum and Internship expectations. During the field experience, counselor-trainees engage field sites as interns, typically during business hours on weekdays. Although some sites are located along the bus route, it is strongly recommended that students have access to their own independent transportation to travel to and from their field experience sites. The CMHC Program has field partnerships with agencies around the Central New York area.

The faculty is deeply committed to the growth and development of their students; faculty work closely with both our master's and doctoral students. Students are trained in the most current practices and research

in counseling and provided the opportunity to develop their skills and succeed in their chosen area of specialization. The faculty's goal is to prepare national leaders in counseling. We provide constructivist and experiential learning environments in our classes and are committed to reflexive leadership. We seek to develop a diverse group of professionals who will excel in knowledge, skills, commitment, and service in a wide range of educational and community settings.

Accreditation

Our faculty is focused on program quality which is exemplified through our commitment to accreditation by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). CACREP accreditation provides recognition of the quality and scope of training as well as assures students that the program is stable and committed to meeting professional benchmarks of quality.

Admission

In our admission process, we consider multiple facets of an applicant's portfolio and background because we believe that successful professional counselors need to be interpersonally skilled, highly self-aware, professionally mature, academically prepared for graduate work, and committed to the values and philosophies of the counseling profession and our programs. Therefore, academic, interpersonal, professional, leadership, and personal components are integrated in our admission decision process. Within these parameters, the faculty members are committed to admitting students who represent diverse backgrounds or who have special abilities to serve diverse populations. Admission is highly competitive.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate solid academic standing and potential, typically evidenced by a GPA of 3.0 or above, and provide a strong personal statement detailing their career goals aligning with clinical mental health counseling. Three letters of recommendation, with at least two from academic references are also required. Those whose first language is not English are expected to submit TOEFL results, with a minimum score of 100 to demonstrate English proficiency.

Applications are considered for **fall semester** starts only, with a deadline of **January 15** of the same year. Applicants should ensure that all of the required materials are submitted by that date. Applicants with materials reviewed favorably by faculty are invited to proceed with an on-campus or online interview before a decision is made.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Synthesize historical and contextual dimensions of professional orientation, assessment, research, career, theory, and lifespan development
2. Construct clinical interventions that demonstrate group skills and foster group development
3. Apply ethical, empirically grounded, and culturally relevant strategies and models in counseling practice
4. Practically apply advocacy and leadership principles in the context of professional clinical mental health counseling
5. Apply social and cultural diversity theories, models, and multicultural competencies in counseling practice and research
6. Construct and implement a comprehensive clinical needs assessment that investigates the needs of diverse clients and provides a pathway to develop systemic methods of clinical intervention

7. Demonstrate application of knowledge of biopsychosocial assessment, treatment planning, cultural genogram, and documentation

with appropriate faculty. Some courses (for example, Practicum) taken elsewhere may not be used to substitute for the same course at SU.

Students on School of Education Scholarships may be restricted from course waivers or transferring in courses.

Major Requirements

The 60 credit Master of Science degree prepares graduates to successfully pursue licensure in the state of New York and other states and credentialing as a Nationally Certified Counselor. For full-time students, the program is designed to be completed in 2.3 years. Below are course requirements, arranged by term for two years of full-time study. Note, this sequencing may vary if students are Caring Gene participants.

Fall		Credits
COU 612	Professional Orientation & Ethical Practice	3
COU 644	Counseling Prepracticum	3
COU 624	Theories of Counseling	3
COU 614	Group Work in Counseling	3
Credits		12
Spring		
COU 727	Foundations of Mental Health Counseling	3
COU 645	Counseling Prepracticum II: Advanced Multicultural Counseling Skills	3
COU 672	Counseling Children and Adolescents	3
COU 626	Social and Cultural Dimensions of Counseling	3
Credits		12
Summer		
COU 651	Crisis Counseling	3
SWK 724	Psychopathology	3
Credits		6
Fall 2		
COU 642	Career Development	3
COU 646	Assessment in Counseling	3
COU 750	Practicum in Counseling	3
COU 628	Life-Span Human Development	3
Credits		12
Spring 2		
COU 758	Research Methods	3
MFT 625	Family Systems and Therapy	3
COU 675	Substance Abuse Counseling	3
COU 790	Internship in Counseling	3
Credits		12
Summer 2		
COU 790	Internship in Counseling	3-6
Counseling Elective		3
Credits		6-9
Total Credits		60-63

Students can complete the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program on a part-time basis. Consultation with the advisor about which courses to take which semester is especially needed for part-time study.

Transfer Credit

The Graduate School at Syracuse University allows students to transfer in up to 30% of the credits required for a master's degree from other academic institutions. Only courses taken within the last seven years in which grades of "B" or better were earned can be transferred. Once matriculated, decisions about transfer of specific courses, as well as decisions about whether any course may be used to waive a required course, are made by the student's advisor in consultation