CLINICAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING, M.S.

For further information: CMHCGrad@southernct.edu

Application Deadlines

Clinical Mental Health Counseling: January 15 for summer only. Students may start coursework in summer or fall.

Counseling Program

The licensure track program is designed to meet the curricular requirements for the Connecticut State Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). The Masters of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (60 credit hours) prepares graduate students to work in a variety of community counseling agencies, college counseling centers, hospitals, and other counseling settings including private practice. Students develop skills and theoretical knowledge in practicing individual, group and career counseling with diverse populations in either public or private agencies of centers.

The M.S. program is accredited by the Council on the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), which is the premier independent accrediting body in counselor education. A comprehensive exam is required. Students who complete the M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling are prepared to take the National Counselor Examination. This examination is required by the National Board for Counselor Certification (NBCC). It is also required by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health for Licensed Professional Counselors (LPC).

Master Of Science Degree In Counseling - Clinical Mental Health Counseling

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program prepares graduates to work with clients across a spectrum of mental and emotional disorders, as well as to promote mental health and wellness. Clients may be seen individually, in couples, or group settings. Clinical Mental Health Counselors are knowledgeable in principles and practices of diagnosis, treatment, referral, and prevention and often work in interdisciplinary teams with other health professionals (e.g., psychiatrists, social workers, MDs). Employment opportunities may include private practice, community-based mental health centers, hospitals, and other treatment centers. For more information please see the Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs (CACREP) website.

The licensure track program is designed to meet the curricular requirements for Connecticut State Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). The program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (60 credit hours) prepares graduate students to work in a variety of community counseling agencies, college counseling centers, hospitals, and other counseling settings including private practice. Students develop skills and
theoretical knowledge in practicing individual, group and career counseling with diverse populations in either public or private agencies. All Clinical Mental Health Counseling students are required to complete a practicum (100 hours) and internship (600 hours) experiences. Students find practicum and internship placements in a variety of settings, including community counseling centers, child guidance centers, crisis stabilization programs, rape crisis and domestic violence programs, substance abuse programs, college counseling centers, youth services programs and inpatient and residential treatment programs. All practicum and internship experiences must be completed under the supervision of a Licensed Professional Counselor with at least two years of experience in the counseling field. A comprehensive examination and a portfolio submission are required for Masters of Science Degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.

Please note that completion of a Masters program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is only one of the requirements for obtaining Licensure as a Professional Counselor. Each student is responsible for understanding the Connecticut State Department of Public Health licensure requirements, as listed on their website. Application for licensure cannot occur until after post-graduate supervision hours are earned and all other requirements have been met.

A criminal record is a required component of Licensure as a Professional Counselor. Additionally, some sites require fingerprinting and a criminal check when working vulnerable populations, such as children or prisoners.

**Admissions Criteria for Clinical Health Counseling**

**Candidates for the program are evaluated on the following criteria:**

1. Applicants should have a strong academic background and/or potential, as evidenced by a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0. For applicants with undergraduate GPAs between 2.5 and 3.0, GPA Waivers may be possible under certain circumstances, with program faculty and university approval. For information on how to increase your undergraduate GPA to above a 2.5, you can use a GPA calculator to identify how many courses you would need to improve your GPA.

2. Applicants should have a foundational knowledge related to psychology, as represented by holding a Bachelor's degree (in any field) and having at least 3 required prerequisites: Introduction to Psychology, Statistics or Research Methods, and Abnormal Psychology/Psychopathology. It is possible for students to complete prerequisites after acceptance.

3. Applicants should be strongly recommended by 3 individuals who have known them in a professional and/or academic setting and can speak to their potential as a graduate student and clinical mental health counselor, including an assessment of their interpersonal skills and commitment to diversity. At least one recommendation must be from an academic reference (e.g., professor).

4. Applicants should submit a clear, well-written 500 word essay describing the basis of their interest in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling program at SCSU.
5. Applicants should have some experience, either volunteer or professional, in a helping role, as demonstrated on their resume.
6. Applicants should illustrate potential as a counselor, interpersonal skills, and knowledge of the Clinical Mental Health Counseling field within an admissions interview, if invited.

**Application Process**

In order to be considered for admission to the program the following fall, all admissions materials must be received by **January 15**. In order to apply to the program, please follow the steps below:

- Complete the application to Southern Connecticut State University's Graduate school. The application can be found and completed online. A non-refundable fee of $50 must be paid at time of submission with a credit card.
- Send official transcripts from ALL institutions where you have completed coursework to:
  
  Southern Connecticut State University  
  School of Graduate and Professional Studies  
  501 Crescent Street  
  New Haven, CT 06515  
  **If you have attended SCSU, you only need to indicate this on your application; you do not need to send your official transcript.**

- Upload Personal Essay to the portal to which you logged in to apply. The essay should address why the applicant wishes to become a Clinical Mental Health Counselor and attend SCSU's CMHC program.
- Upload a Current Resume or Vita to the portal to which you logged in to apply.
- Have three recommenders upload their recommendation forms and letters directly into the system via a personalized link sent to them when you applied. Please make sure you provided the recommendation form to anyone you list as a recommender, as it is required. At least one recommendation should be from someone who can speak to your academic skills.

**Program Sequence - 60 Credits**

The Clinical Mental Health Counseling program consists of courses in counseling and psychological foundations, professional and ethical issues, advanced group counseling skills, empirically based techniques, and practicum and internship fieldwork. Students may select from a part-time or full-time sequence of study. The programs in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (60 credits) will be planned according to the following general outline:

*As sequencing changes, it is highly recommended that students meet with their program advisor to finalize a list of requirements for graduation.*

**Pre-requisite Requirements**

- PSY 100/102 - Introduction to Psychology - 3 credits
- PSY 259/530 - Statistics or Research Methods - 3 credits
PSY 321/528 - Abnormal Psychology or Psychopathology - 3 credits

**Required Core Courses: Open to Non-Matriculated Students**
CSP 540 - Introduction to Assessment in Counseling & School Psychology - 3 credits
CSP 568 - Counseling and Lifespan Development - 3 credits
CSP 569 - Theories of Counseling - 3 credits
CSP 572 - Career Counseling - 3 credits
CSP 578 - Social and Cultural Diversity - 3 credits
CSP 691 - Research and Evaluations in Schools in Clinical Mental Health Settings - 3 credits

**Advanced Counseling Courses**
CSP 550 - Counseling Skills & Techniques - 3 credits
CSP 656 - Group Counseling - 3 credits

**Advanced CMHC Courses**
CSP 595 - Orientation and Ethics in Clinical Mental Health Counseling - 3 credits
CSP 571 - Diagnosis of Psychological Disorders - 3 credits
CSP 554 - Treatment of Psychological Disorders - 3 credits
CSP 549 - Crisis Counseling - 3 credits
CSP 521 - Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders *Open to Non-Matriculated Students - 3 credits
CSP 601 - Advanced Counseling Skills and Techniques - 1 credit
CSP 605 - Children and Family Counseling *Open to Non-Matriculated Students - 3 credits
Electives in Clinical Mental Health Counseling (2 credits)

**Field Work**
Practicum and Internship at a counseling and fieldwork site
CSP 552 - Practicum Supervision in Clinical Mental Health Counseling - 3 credits
CSP 553 - Practicum & Seminar in Clinical Mental Health Counseling - 4 credits
CSP 676 - Internship & Seminar in Clinical Mental Health Counseling - 4 credits each semester for 2 semesters, for a total of 8 credits

**Capstone**
A comprehensive examination is required.